

Stanford Law Answers Attorney General's Call to Address the Covid-19 Housing and Eviction Crisis

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By

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SLS students and faculty among 2,100 law students who dedicated more than 81,000 hours to serve 10,000 households at risk of eviction



On January 28, 2022, the White House and Department of Justice held a virtual event to discuss the status of U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland's August 30, 2021 call to action to help Americans facing eviction. Garland called on lawyers and law school students and faculty to take immediate action to help their communities through Emergency Rental Assistance application support, volunteering with legal aid providers, helping courts implement eviction diversion programs and other initiatives aimed at increasing housing stability and access to justice.

The White House event featured remarks by Garland and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff as well as law school deans, staff and students who have helped provide eviction legal assistance to households and communities across the country. SLS students and Jenny Martinez (<https://law.stanford.edu/directory/jenny-s-martinez/>), the Richard E. Lang Professor of Law and dean of Stanford Law School, joined in the virtual event.

Stanford Law Answers Call to Action on Eviction



"Our mission has always been to represent tenants who otherwise would not have lawyers. And COVID-19's disruption of the economy just exploded the number of those tenants." – Juliet Brodie

Stanford Law School (SLS), along with 98 other law schools from 35 states and Puerto Rico, answered Garland's call, helping to keep eviction filings across the country below 60 percent of historic averages. Leading SLS's efforts to mitigate evictions in Stanford's local community were Juliet Brodie (<https://law.stanford.edu/directory/juliet-brodie/>), director of the Stanford Community Law Clinic (<https://law.stanford.edu/community-law-clinic/>) (CLC) and faculty director of the Haas Center for Public Service, KC Shah, JD '22, and Leah Kennedy, JD '22, along with Lauren Zack (<https://law.stanford.edu/directory/lauren-zack/>), Litigation and Advocacy Fellow at the CLC.



Lauren Zack, Litigation and Advocacy Fellow
for the Community Law Clinic

The CLC is a direct service and trial practice clinic, where SLS students apply their classroom legal knowledge to real-world situations. Building on the decades long history of legal aid work that the CLC has done in Stanford's local communities, Brodie and her students jumped into action to help avoid the pending "eviction tsunami."

"Our mission has always been to represent tenants who otherwise would not have lawyers," Brodie said. "And COVID-19's disruption of the economy just exploded the number of those tenants."

Some of the recent efforts by the CLC team include:

CLC connected with the City of Mountain View and with Community Legal Services in East Palo Alto (<http://www.clsepa.org/>) (CLSEPA) to provide legal counsel that low-income residents living in Mountain View have difficulty finding: Because much of the region's legal aid resources are concentrated in San Francisco and San Jose, low-income tenants living in the corridor between the two urban hubs can have trouble connecting to lawyer.

CLC students and faculty have staffed a clinic at the Mountain View Public Library where each week, city employees hold an Eviction Help Center (https://www.mountainview.gov/depts/comdev/housing/rentstabilization/eviction_help_center/eviction_help_center/default.asp) to help tenants apply for COVID-19 emergency rental assistance. The law students, along with a supervisor, are available to answer questions related to legal papers, including eviction notices residents may have received. If appropriate, the clinic can go on to represent the tenants in litigation or negotiation.

In addition to their direct work with tenants through the Mountain View library clinic, CLC students and attorney Zack have created a suite of "template" legal papers for tenant lawyers around the state.

Read this Stanford News article (<https://news.stanford.edu/report/2021/12/02/helping-low-income-renters-avoid-eviction/#?text=Stanford%20law%20students%2C%20faculty%20help%20hands%20Don%20legal%20aid%20clinic&text=In%20response%20to%20Attorney%20General%20to%20legal%20aid>) to learn more about how Stanford Law students and faculty helped low income renters in California avoid eviction

Listen to the Stanford Legal episode (<https://law.stanford.edu/stanford-legal-on-siriusxm/evictions-and-how-covid-changed-the-discussion-about-government-support-for-societys-most-vulnerable-with-juliet-brodie-and-lauren-zack/>) about the CLC's efforts and the impact of Covid-19 on government support for people at risk of eviction

Learn more about the Stanford Community Law Clinic (<https://law.stanford.edu/community-law-clinic/>)

Read Attorney General Merrick B. Garland's remarks (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-merrick-b-garland-delivers-remarks-white-house-justice-department>) delivered at the White House-Justice Department Convening with Law Schools

About Stanford Law School

Stanford Law School is one of the nation's leading institutions for legal scholarship and education. Its alumni are among the most influential decision makers in law, politics, business, and high technology. Faculty members argue before the Supreme Court, testify before Congress, produce outstanding legal scholarship and empirical analysis, and contribute regularly to the nation's press as legal and policy experts. Stanford Law School has established a model for legal education that provides rigorous interdisciplinary training, hands-on experience, global perspective and focus on public service, spearheading a movement for change.

Related Person(s):

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[Jenny S. Martinez](https://law.stanford.edu/directory/jenny-s-martinez/) (<https://law.stanford.edu/directory/jenny-s-martinez/>)

[Lauren Zack](https://law.stanford.edu/directory/lauren-zack/) (<https://law.stanford.edu/directory/lauren-zack/>)

Related Organization(s):

[Community Law Clinic](https://law.stanford.edu/community-law-clinic/) (<https://law.stanford.edu/community-law-clinic/>)

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