

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE AND THE CUMBERLANDS

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VOLUNTEER LAWYERS TO PROVIDE LEGAL ADVICE FOR HURRICANE EVACUEES

LEGAL AID SOCIETY, NASHVILLE PRO BONO PROGRAM AND NASHVILLE BAR ASSOCIATION TO SET UP LEGAL CLINICS AT RED CROSS SHELTER

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Sept. 14, 2005 – If you are a recent evacuee from the Gulf Coast, your first priority is to cover the basics: food, shelter and clothing. But, putting your life back together after such a catastrophic event may also require the help of a good lawyer.

That's why The Legal Aid Society and the Nashville Pro Bono Program are organizing more than 100 volunteer lawyers from the Nashville Bar Association to staff a legal clinic for evacuees. It will be at the Red Cross Service Center, 2201 Charlotte Ave, beginning Wednesday, Sept. 14. The volunteer lawyers will be on hand from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. every day but Sunday for as long as they are needed, said Lucinda Smith, director of the Nashville Pro Bono Program.

“A newly arrived evacuee is going to have a lot of questions,” Smith said. “This is a case where lawyers cannot wait for the evacuees to ask for help, because they may not know what help is available. Legal Aid staff and the volunteer lawyers will take a proactive approach to legal assessment. We'll provide advice on topics such as public housing issues and emergency benefits.”

Smith said that those who need further legal assistance would be referred to staff attorneys with Legal Aid and the Nashville Pro Bono Program.

Also on hand to provide assistance will be representatives from the Metro Davidson Housing Authority and Metro Human Relations.

Founded in 1968, the Legal Aid Society is nonprofit organization that gives free legal help to people who have nowhere else to turn. It has offices in Nashville, Gallatin, Clarksville, Murfreesboro, Columbia, Tullahoma, Cookeville and Oak Ridge.

For more information, call 1-800-238-1443.