



## **STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES (SLS) OPERATIONAL PLAN**

### **HISTORY**

In 1978, the Board of Trustees approved a “Student Legal Services Plan”. The Plan contemplated using student fees to provide access to independent licensed attorneys to provide information to students for their educational enrichment and to inform students of the practical aspects of the law as applied to individual problems. Litigation services regarding housing problems and litigation services for indigent students were also contemplated. In 2010, in order to improve oversight and control, and ensure compliance with tax laws, the Board of Trustees delegated authority to the campus Chancellors and other authorized administrators to develop, approve, and update the Plan and to convert the SLS attorneys from independent contractors to University employees.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Student Legal Service office is to provide preventive legal education, legal counseling and advice, and individual representation to students in order to enhance student life and student knowledge of their rights and responsibilities, and positively impact student retention.

### **STATUS AND FUNCTIONS OF STUDENT LEGAL SERVICE ATTORNEYS**

The SLS legal staff members are employees of the University of Illinois operating under the Dean of Students. Duties consist primarily of ongoing preventative education to the entire student body and providing legal consultation and representation to eligible students. SLS legal staff will advance student knowledge of their rights and responsibilities through ongoing preventive education efforts and through in-office consultation. SLS legal staff may act as counsel of record in court proceedings and administrative proceedings subject to the limitations and guidelines set forth herein or as approved by the Dean of Students. SLS legal staff shall not accept any remuneration of any kind other than his/her salary for legal services provided.

The SLS legal staff, in discharging their legal responsibilities, must at all times exercise independent professional judgment and shall adhere to the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct of 2010 and as amended. The Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission (ARDC) of the Illinois Supreme Court has primary authority over the professional conduct of legal staff that are licensed to practice law.

### **ADVISORY BOARD**

The Dean of Student may appoint a Student Legal Service Advisory Board. A Student Legal Services Advisory Board would provide advice and counsel to the Dean regarding the mission, policies, and operations of the SLS program upon request.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

SLS may provide services in the areas listed below on behalf of eligible students who have cases in or originating in Champaign County. Any request for services not listed below or prohibited under the “Services Not Provided” section is subject to the explicit approval of the Dean:

- Consultation and representation in civil matters up to the current dollar limitation of Small Claims actions; excluding residential landlord-tenant disputes where the dollar limit may be extended up to the current LM limitation;
- Consultation and representation in traffic, city offenses, and criminal offenses up to and including misdemeanors;
- Consultation and representation in Secretary of State hearings and other similar state agencies where money damages are not at issue;
- Review and evaluation of residential lease contracts, employment contracts and other contractual agreements that are consistent with the mission of the program;
- Review and evaluation of living wills and health care powers of attorney;
- Referral information for matters not covered by SLS;
- Other matters that the Dean shall determine are consistent with the program mission.

### **SERVICES NOT PROVIDED**

SLS shall not provide representation in the following areas:

- Matters not involving Illinois law;
- Felony criminal matters;
- Personal injury and contingency fee claims;
- Business or personal bankruptcy;
- Profit and non-profit business issues and other potentially income producing activities;
- Real estate transactions (excluding residential landlord-tenant matters);
- Tax and income tax issues;
- Immigration issues;
- Wills and trusts (excluding living wills and health care powers of attorney);
- Family law matters, including adoption, dissolution of marriage, child custody and support, legal separation, etc; and
- Other matters that the Dean shall determine are not consistent with the program mission.

### **PROHIBITED SERVICES**

SLS legal staff shall not enter into either a consultative or representational attorney-client relationship in matters involving:

- One eligible student versus another eligible student or matters involving students with competing interests;
- Any actions against the University of Illinois and/or its affiliates (including Allied Agencies) or matters involving the competing interests of the University and/or its affiliates (e.g., a criminal or city violation in which the University is the victim);
- Civil actions against the State of Illinois and its agencies and entities, except as listed above.

- Other matters that the Dean shall determine are not consistent with the program mission.

### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

All students that have paid the appropriate fees are eligible to receive services from SLS staff as set forth herein. Students remain eligible for services from the first day of the semester through the first day of the following semester. Eligibility also includes both the winter and summer breaks for students who meet the following conditions:

1. the student was eligible during the semester preceding the break (i.e., the fall semester before winter break or the spring semester before summer break);
2. the student is eligible for services the semester following the break (i.e., the spring semester after winter break or the fall semester after summer break);
3. the student does not graduate;

Recently graduated students may continue to receive representational services on a specific matter if the attorney-client relationship, for that specific matter, existed prior to the termination of the student's enrollment.

If a student becomes ineligible for SLS services before their case reaches a critical point (e.g., on the eve of the trial) SLS may file any appropriate motion to be withdrawn from representing that student in that case.

Student Organizations are not eligible for SLS services.

### **CASE PRIORITIZATION**


Landlord-tenant matters will be given priority over the other types of matters.

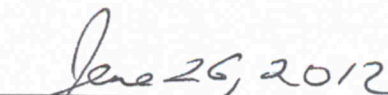
### **PRINCIPLES OF PRACTICES**

SLS may decline to represent an eligible student in certain matters if it determines there is insufficient attorney expertise, available time, or available resources to provide quality representation in the matter.

SLS will at all times comply with the University's Nondiscrimination Policy; the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct of 2010 as amended; and applicable local, state, and federal laws.

### **ADOPTED**

  
Dean of Students

  
Date