

**Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network
Utility Law Group Training
March 15, 2016
10am – 4pm
Dauphin County Bar Association**

10:00-11:00 Handling a Utility Termination Case – Part 1: Gathering the necessary documents and obtaining the correct information. (1 Substantive CLE credit).

A nuts and bolts of what questions to ask of identify the issues and obtain the correct information from the client as well as and what avenues may be available to resolve the issues. It would be geared towards beginners who have not handled many such cases.

11:00 – 11:15 – BREAK

11:15-12:15 Handling a Utility Termination Case – Part 2: How to handle the top 5 most common utility issues facing legal aid attorneys. (1 Substantive CLE credit).

This training will introduce advocates to the top 5 utility issues legal aid attorneys will likely see and discuss strategies for handling the cases. Emphasis will be paid to utility universal service programs, LIHEAP, payment arrangements, etc., and will teach participants how to maximize the available benefits. In addition, program staff will be trained on effective advocacy strategies to ensure that their clients are receiving maximum program benefits. .

12:15-1:15 Lunch

1:15-2:15 Unique issues and Strategies for addressing utility cases for victims of domestic violence. (1 Substantive CLE credit).

Victims of domestic violence often face unique challenges in establishing and/or maintaining utility service, especially when attempting to leave an abusive home. In this session, the presenters will describe these unique challenges, and the stark consequences to the victim and their children. Presenters will describe the legal protections that exist for domestic violence victims in accessing utility service, and will discuss possible areas for advocacy as well as share the results of a new pilot program between the Pennsylvania Utility Law Project (PULP) and local domestic violence service agencies to provide legal assistance to victims of domestic violence with utility issues, as well as CLS' recent DOJ grant.

2:15-3:15 BREAK

2:30-3:30 Utility Potpourri/Roundtable Discussion. 1 Substantive CLE credit).

Update and discussion about current utility issues affecting low-income households, including LIHEAP update, competitive electric market, and issues related to recent changes to Chapter 14, as well as effective strategies for handling unregulated utility cases.

3:30-4:00 CAUSE-PA meeting and client and legal aid advocates' discussion.