

October 14, 2021

**VOLUNTEER IMMIGRATION ATTORNEYS AND PARALEGALS NEEDED**

**AT FT. MCCOY OPERATION ALLIES WELCOME**

**UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS**

**LEGAL CLINIC**

The Ft. McCoy OAW USCCB Legal Clinic is looking for volunteer immigration attorneys and paralegals to assist our Afghan guests and clients on site. We are asking the legal community to be engaged in the massive Operations Allies Welcome legal assistance.

Note: We may need attorneys for online consultations in the future.

Please read the FAQs below first. If interested, please email

Fort.Mccoy.LOP@gmail.com with a brief summary of your immigration experience and your CV.

**FAQs for Volunteering for the Ft. McCoy OAW USCCB Legal Clinic**

1Q: How much time should I expect to come for?

A: We prefer longer commitments, 1 or 2 weeks. Or, regular volunteering such as once a week. Volunteers should at least make a two day commitment. We expect your assistance from 8:30 am until 5:30 pm, sometimes later, each day. We need attorneys and paralegals with immigration experience. The Legal Clinic is open Monday to Friday at this time but we anticipate opening on Saturday soon.

2Q: Do I need to be vaccinated against COVID?

A: Yes. We want volunteers who consider themselves in good health. Ft. McCoy has 12,500 Afghan guests. It is necessary to wear a mask and practice COVID safety.

3Q: What should I expect?

A: We are providing important legal services for the Afghan guests at Ft. McCoy. For many, this may be the first opportunity to exercise their legal rights and to understand their legal

responsibilities. As attorneys, paralegals, and other volunteers, it is exciting to be part of their experience. However, we have a fast paced environment in a unique situation. There are often necessary interruptions from other attorneys, staff, and others.

We are conducting presentations on legal processes important to our Afghan clients including: Know Your Rights, asylum, SIV options, and humanitarian parole. Please be prepared to conduct these presentations. You will need to work with interpreters who may have varying English language skills but have deep cultural knowledge. Cultural sensitivity is required and all clients are treated with respect.

4Q: What other types of assignments should I expect?

We are creating workshops for several types of forms including the I-485 and I-589. Please be prepared to participate in a workshop.

We are also providing some clients with consultations. The issues vary vastly for each. You may need to complete forms for some clients. The time for each consultation may not be as sufficient as would be in another environment. Their immigration issues are complex. Current policies may change. You will also be asked to make sure your notes and files are organized and collected. There may be some administrative work.

The day can be tiring, but hopefully, exhilarating. In sum, this legal clinic is not business as usual.

5Q. Will I get training?

A. You will get a brief orientation on your first day. We have daily team meetings to orient us on what we are doing each day.

6Q. What organization is responsible for the Ft. McCoy OAW USCCB Legal Clinic?

A. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is responsible for the Legal Clinic at Ft. McCoy and the legal clinics on all other military bases where Afghan guests are present.

7Q. How can I sign up to volunteer?

A: If you are interested, please email Fort.Mccoy.LOP@gmail.com with a brief summary of your immigration experience and your CV. We will review it quickly. We will ask you to provide a photo ID. It usually takes 3 business days to get a pass, sometimes longer. As soon as the pass request is submitted, please use the SignUpGenius scheduler to sign up for dates.

8Q. What should I expect on base at Ft. McCoy?

A. Ft. McCoy Army Base is about 10 miles from Tomah, Wisconsin. It is a very large compound on 66,000 acres. You will need a vehicle to get around. The Legal Clinic is in a multi-use trailer-like structure. You will need warm clothing. You will need to provide your own accommodations. There are local hotels in Tomah and Sparta, Airbnb options, and there is also “on-base housing” through the WMA Billeting Office at 608-388-9900.

We look forward to having dynamic, committed volunteers.