



NECHV



# Incorporating legal Assistance into your Homelessness Prevention Housing Program

**Marta Budu-Arthur, MSW, LICSW**

Director of Community Stabilization Services

*In collaboration with,*

**Julie Frohlich, Esq.,**

Senior Staff Attorney, Veterans Legal Services

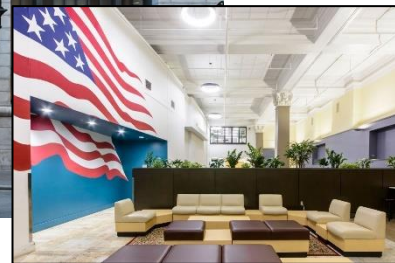




# New England Center and Home for Veterans

(NECHV) is a multi-dimension service and care provider dedicated to assisting Veterans who are facing or are at-risk of homelessness

- Founded in 1989 by Vietnam Veterans
- NECHV offers a broad array of programs and services that enable success, reintegration, meaningful employment and independent living
- 100 employees
- Close to 300 residents reside at NECHV's downtown Boston facility





# New England Center and Home for Veterans

- Transitional/Emergency Housing - Clinical Case Management, Supportive Counseling, Safe Haven, GPD, Housing Search
- Community Based and Stabilization Services- SSVF and Permanent Supportive Housing
- Employment Services and Job Training
- Behavioral Health Services
- Onsite medical clinical - Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program





NECHV



# SSVF Program Overview

## SSVF Services Include the following:

- A Stabilization case manager that works with each Veteran
- Comprehensive referral services for employment opportunities, legal services, healthcare and more
- Help obtaining VA and other public benefits
- Individualized housing and financial assistance stability plans
- Temporary financial assistance for housing needs and related expenses





NECHV



# Veterans Legal Services Overview

- Veterans Legal Services is a non-profit organization that provides free civil legal aid to economically disadvantaged veterans in MA.
- VLS was founded in 1991 by law students who recognized that the legal needs of residents at the New England Center & Home for Veterans (NECHV), a shelter and service center, were going unmet.
- VLS's Senior Staff Attorney, Julie Frohlich, Esq., runs the legal clinic at NECHV for VLS. Julie has practiced law for 33 years, the last two at VLS. Julie may be reached at 857-317-4474 or [Julie@veteranslegalservices.org](mailto:Julie@veteranslegalservices.org).





# Why Legal Services?

**RISK FACTORS:**

- Physical and Mental Health Challenges
- Family Breakdown
- Frequent moves/housing instability
- Poverty/job disruption/swings in Income
- Substance Use



**LEGAL PROBLEMS:**

- Evictions/Housing Problems
- Veterans' Benefits Denials
- Family Law Issues
- Consumer Debt
- And More



**HOMELESSNESS AND INSTABILITY:**

- Compounding problems – both legal and clinical

“The unmet legal needs of veterans are one of the **root causes** of [veteran]homelessness.”

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs



# Common Civil Legal Issues among Veterans

<p><b>Consumer Debt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bankruptcy</li> <li>• Credit Report Errors</li> <li>• Debt Collection</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public &amp; Veterans Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denied Application</li> <li>• Termination</li> <li>• Overpayment – DUA/PUA</li> </ul>
<p><b>Records</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORI Sealing Eligibility</li> <li>• Military Separation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discharge Upgrade</li> <li>• Other Records Corrections</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Family</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alimony</li> <li>• Child Custody</li> <li>• Child Support/Parenting Time</li> <li>• Divorce</li> </ul>
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility</li> <li>• Landlord/Tenant Disputes</li> <li>• Eviction</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power of Attorney</li> <li>• Health Care Proxy</li> <li>• Will</li> <li>• RMV</li> </ul>



NECHV



# Typical Case Mix for A NECHV Clinic

1. Landlord-Tenant dispute, post-possession arrearage, security deposit
2. Discharge upgrade
3. Child Custody and Support Arrangements, Modifications
4. Benefits appeal
5. Divorce
6. CORI sealing
7. RMV/OUI Suspension





# NECHV Screening and Referral Process

Legal clinics are scheduled each week and are by appointment only.

1. Weekly Case Conferences are conducted to identify legal issues to be referred to Legal clinic. Veterans Legal Services lawyer is in attendance at case conferences and conducts trainings for Staff. In addition, case managers refer Veterans independently.
2. NECHV case manager - Reviews whether veteran might be eligible for help from VLS.
  - o History of Military Service
  - o Civil Legal Issue
  - o SSVF Income Eligible (50% Area Median Income (AMI))
  - o Massachusetts Resident
3. Complete Legal Clinic Referral Form.
4. Ensure veteran read, completed, and signed an Authorization for Release of Information.





# Release



## Authorization for Release of Information



I authorize any representative of the New England Center and Home for Veterans (NECHV) and any representative of Veterans Legal Services (VLS) to exchange all documents and information related to my legal issue(s).

I understand that the documents and information exchanged could relate to my

- court cases,
- criminal records,
- family,
- finances,
- health,
- medical issues, and
- any other documents and information that might be necessary or helpful in evaluating or resolving my legal issue(s).

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Levels of Service

- Brief Advice and Counsel in One Time Phone Conversation
  - No court appearance
  - Typically no further contact after phone call
  - Examples – CORI question, criminal case status
- Limited Assistance Representation
  - Typically assistance filling out court forms
  - Advice and counsel
  - No court appearance
- Full-blown representation
  - All in
  - Court appearances



# Questions? Comments?

Marta Budu-Arthur, MSW, LICSW  
Director of Community Stabilization Services  
New England Center And Home For Veterans

[Marta.Budu-Arthur@nechv.org](mailto:Marta.Budu-Arthur@nechv.org)

[www.nechv.org](http://www.nechv.org)

Phone:617-371-1706

Julie A. Frohlich, Esq.  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Veterans Legal Services

[julie@veteranslegalservices.org](mailto:julie@veteranslegalservices.org)

[info@veteranslegalservices.org](mailto:info@veteranslegalservices.org)

[www.veteranslegalservices.org](http://www.veteranslegalservices.org)

Phone: 857-317-4474



**NECHV**



**NEW ENGLAND CENTER**  
AND HOME FOR VETERANS  
EDUCATION | SUPPORT | EMPLOYMENT | HOUSING