



## JUSTICE BRIDGE LEGAL CENTER - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. What is Justice Bridge?** Justice Bridge is an access-to-justice incubator or legal residency program. It provides quality legal representation to those who cannot afford traditional rates, while empowering recent law school graduates who wish to develop solo, small firm or non-profit practices.
- 2. Who should consider applying?** Recent law school graduates interested in building practices that serve, in part, modest means clients should consider applying. Applicants must be members of the Massachusetts bar in good standing. They must also incorporate as Professional Corporations or comparable entities (a one-time, approximate \$500 expense), carry their own malpractice insurance, and pay modest monthly membership fees to help defray the program's expenses.
- 3. What are the benefits of membership?** Participants in the incubator receive shared, furnished office space in Boston or New Bedford, referrals of legal business, counseling from experienced mentors, free bar memberships, deep discounts from vendors, practical business skills training, use of a web site and a developing tech platform. The program tracks and monitors data on representation to determine the most efficient techniques for serving clients within their budgets.
- 4. What is the term for participation?** Participants commit to a term of eighteen months to two years and may be permitted to participate as associate members at a reduced fee thereafter.
- 5. What are the monthly membership fees?** After a three month grace period, membership fees for participants in the program are \$250 per month.
- 6. Who are the clients?** Justice Bridge is developing a business niche among existing legal service providers and bar associations. Clients will generally have an annual income of 250-300% of the Federal poverty guidelines (approximately \$70,000 for a family of four). We expect these clients to pay consultation fees, modest retainer fees and a scaled average of \$50 to \$100 per hour for legal services.
- 7. What areas of law will be practiced?** Members will represent clients in a wide variety of civil matters, including: family law, housing, probate, employment, consumer law, claims benefits, and immigration. The incubator will not, however, refer criminal law or contingency fees cases.
- 8. May members handle their own cases while participating in the incubator?** Yes, members are encouraged to develop their own caseload from the start while also accepting legal work from the incubator. Experienced mentors train members to utilize technology and efficiency techniques for developing profitable, rewarding practices on their own.
- 9. May members participate at both locations?** Yes, trainings and in-residence mentors will be available in both Boston and New Bedford. Members may be referred cases from both locations to maximize their participation in, and benefits from, the program.