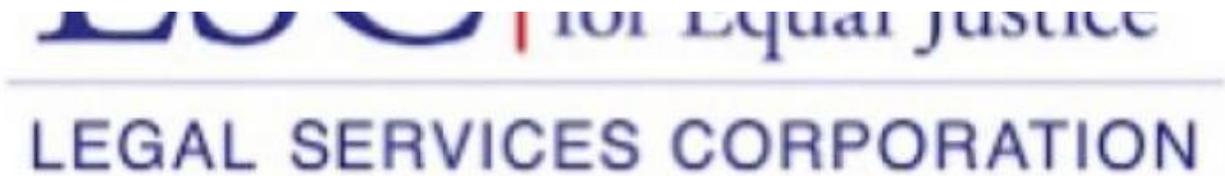# Online Course: Creating Pathways to Civil Legal Justice (WebJunction 2021)

Barriers to civil legal justice disproportionately affect low-income people in the US, creating the justice gap—the divide between the civil legal needs of low-income people and access to the resources to meet those needs. Public libraries are well-positioned to help reduce this gap.

WebJunction in collaboration with Legal Services Corporation with support from the Mellon Foundation and others created a series of self-paced courses that will strengthen public library staff's knowledge and ability to help identify when there is a civil legal issue at play and how to direct library users to relevant, helpful information and services.

The courses cover:

- the role of public libraries in addressing the justice gap

- the difference between legal information and legal advice

- Conducting the legal reference interview; addressing patron stress and anxiety

- Reviewing and strengthening your library's civil legal reference collection

- Exploring trusted local- and state-specific online self-help resources

- Identifying and cultivating relationships with local organizations that offer legal aid, legal referrals

Course 1: The Justice Gap and the US Legal System

- This course overviews the civil legal justice gap in the US and the complexities of the US legal system and how public libraries can provide access to information. This course also distinguishes between providing information and providing legal advice.

Course 2: Civil Legal Issues and Resources

- This course overviews the most common types of civil legal issues and how to choose the most appropriate legal resources for varying situations.

Course 3: Partnering with Legal Service Providers

- This course overviews the range of legal assistance options and how to find and partner with them.

Course 4: The Legal Reference Interview

- This course overviews the skill set necessary for conducting a legal reference interview.

More information about the course:

- Each course is about 2 hours long
- The series is self-paced
- Each course consists of a combination of videos, readings, and interactive activities
- The series is geared toward public library staff but is available to those working in legal aid as well

Series URL: https://learn.webjunction.org/course/index.php?categoryid=60

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