

Kelley Drye and Accenture Host Cabrini Green Legal Aid Expungement Help Desk Training

July 27, 2011

On July 27, 2011, Kelley Drye's Chicago office and Accenture, a long-time client of Kelley Drye, which provides global management consulting, technology consulting and technology outsourcing services, teamed up to host a training session and lunch for Cabrini Green Legal Aid. Cabrini Green Legal Aid offers free legal services to low-income Chicagoans in four areas of law: family, housing, criminal records and criminal defense. Cabrini Green staff attorney, Beth Johnson, provided training for in-house attorneys at Accenture and Allstate and for Kelley Drye lawyers to volunteer at Cabrini Green's Expungement Help Desk. The center is located at the circuit court clerk's office in the Richard J. Daley Center in downtown Chicago.

The Help Desk provides pro bono assistance with applications for expungement and sealing of individuals' criminal records. When a record gets "expunged," it is as if the crime never occurred. When a record is "sealed," law enforcement will have access to the record but the general public will not. One can petition a court for expungement and sealing to remove criminal records from public view. This can remove barriers for individuals who are trying to seek employment and can help eliminate the stigma of having a criminal record. In general, a person can expunge his or her records, if he or she has never been convicted of a criminal offense. For those who have been convicted, sealing may be possible and is available for minor, non-violent, non-sexual misdemeanor convictions and three types of felony convictions. Within these general rules, however, myriad issues arise, including statutory waiting periods, driving offenses, and the types of charges at issue. This makes it extremely important for an applicant to have legal assistance.

Approximately 40 in-house counsel from Accenture and Allstate attended the training, along with associate [Catherine James](#). The Help Desk training provided a networking opportunity and the attorneys who attended can now volunteer at the Expungement Help Desk.