

**LAW 379D.001 / 380C.001: Women's Legal Clinic | Externship and Reflection Seminar**  
**Peter A. Allard School of Law, UBC**

**Rise Women's Legal Centre Questionnaire – Summer 2023 and 2023-2024 Academic Year**

This questionnaire is designed to help potential applicants to the Rise clinical externship program understand the clinical environment at Rise and our approach to working with clients who may have experienced family violence. Please contact Vandana Sood [vsood@womenslegalcentre.ca] or Kim Hawkins [khawkins@womenslegalcentre.ca] if you have any questions or concerns about our work at Rise. Please provide your answers to the questionnaire below in lieu of a cover letter/statement of interest.

In addition to this questionnaire, please provide a 2 page résumé, a copy of your law school transcript, and if you are a 1L, a copy of your December grade report. \*\*Please note that grades are only one part of our consideration of applications. We encourage applications from all interested students. Here is some information on Rise and how we approach this work:

- While legal services at Rise are limited to self-identified women, we welcome applications from all law students including students with all gender identities and sexual orientations, Indigenous students, students with disabilities, and others with the skills, lived experience and knowledge to productively engage with diverse communities.
- Rise is a full-time, full-term 15 credit clinical program where students are responsible for all aspects of client and file management. Due to workload, students are generally not permitted to register in any other courses during their clinical term. Rise alumni have described their clinical experience as rewarding, yet fairly intense.
- Students are expected to be at Rise from 9am-5pm, Mondays-Thursdays.
- \*\*During the three week orientation session, students are expected to be at Rise from 9am-5pm, Mondays-Fridays.
- Rise staff will supervise and support your work, but you are expected to exercise autonomy, sound judgment and initiative.
- At Rise, we provide services to all who identify themselves as women and who are seeking legal assistance with their family law matters. Rise clients come from all walks of life and represent the diversity of women's experiences. We are especially attentive to the harms associated with gender-based violence, as many Rise clients are survivors of violence in intimate relationships, sexual assault, or childhood sexual abuse.
- We work from the perspective that women are their own best experts. We provide legal advice and share available options with clients, but the choice of which option to pursue is ultimately that of the client.
- Our approach to this work is collaborative and non-judgmental. We listen to clients, validate their experiences, help them explore available options, and provide them with legal advice, information and connection to community resources as necessary.
- We work from an intersectional feminist, anti-oppression, and decolonizing perspective.
- We understand that violence against women is an outcome of multiple and intersecting factors, including racism, sexism, colonization, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, classism, and others.
- We commit to understanding and interrogating our own assumptions in order to be better advocates and allies.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Why you are interested in a clinical term at the Rise Women's Legal Centre?
2. The Rise Clinical Externship Program calls on clinicians to reflect on their own life experiences and critically engage with issues of power and privilege both within the legal system and in society at large. At Rise, self-reflection and critical analysis of systems is a key part of developing a professional identity. Please describe your comfort with self-reflection, and how you imagine this process will be for you.

3. Statistically, women leave and return to abusive relationships many times before they leave for good. At Rise, you may find yourself giving legal advice to women who have not yet separated from their spouse, who live in dangerous situations and may not yet be ready to leave, or who may decide to return to their abusive partner following an initial separation. As advocates, we may sometimes be troubled about a client's actions or decisions.

a) Consider how you would feel if a client with whom you work has taken actions that trouble or confuse you, or make you uncomfortable. How do you think you would feel and react in that situation?

b) Clients may disclose experiences of violence and abuse. It is inevitable that we will be impacted emotionally by the experiences of our clients. Have you worked in other situations with clients who have disclosed upsetting information, and what personal strengths or strategies could you use in this type of situation?



6. Please use this space to add any further comments which you feel may be helpful to you or to us. As we encourage applications from students with diverse backgrounds and experiences, applicants are welcome to self-identify membership in equity-seeking groups as they feel comfortable and willing.