



Outcomes & Impacts

COMMUNITY

Service to Our
Communities



Monterey College of Law

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MCL Delivers Hundreds of Hours of Urgently Needed Services to Residents of the Communities It Serves Each Year

MCL students, graduates, faculty, and staff support our local communities in dozens of ways, including through donations, coordinated volunteer efforts, free or low-cost legal clinics (which are semester-long courses for students), and free or low-cost mediation services through the Mandell Gisnet Center. Hundreds of hours of service, valued at more than \$1,000,000, are provided each year across MCL's four physical campus and online locations.



As part of a coordinated emergency response, MCL students, graduates, staff, and faculty volunteered to provide legal assistance to families displaced and harmed by the 2023 flooding in Monterey County.



Residents of Pájaro, California, meet with MCL graduates and students for help with issues ranging from housing to FEMA paperwork required for needed relief funds. (De-identified photo)

Clinic Courses in Common Areas of Need Provide Communities with Critical Legal Services and Students with Practical Legal Experience, in English and Spanish

Clinical courses, in a wide variety of areas of law that significantly serve local residents, give MCL students practical training in court procedures and client interactions.

For example, MCL provides a regular, low-cost clinic for residents of Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties on immigration issues such as potential paths to a green card, family petitions, fiancé visas, DACA renewals, and citizenship/naturalization applications.

MCL faculty supervise and mentor students in small group clinical settings, sharing decades of law practice knowledge and experience to help MCL graduates prepare for law practice.

MCL Community Clinics – Number of Appointments Per Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 through May
Immigration	38	30	29	28	23
Collections	56	30	36	36	15
Limited Conservatorship	91	116	88	87	41
Guardianship	47	42	41	31	12
Small Claims	243	329	287	275	88
Family Law	108	88	78	90	--
Unlawful Detainer	103	85	73	94	31
Restraining Order	31	19	31	59	31
“Catch-all” Clinics (includes Small Claims, Family Law, and other topics)	250	243	330	318	106
TOTAL	967	982	993	1018	347

MCL has also partnered with the People’s Justice Project, California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA), local district attorneys, probation departments, and public defenders, to provide a Clean Slate Clinic for residents of San Luis Obispo and neighboring counties, in which students assist dozens of community members per year in petitioning for expungement of criminal convictions hindering their access to employment, housing, and other benefits and opportunities. Faculty for the Clean Slate Clinic also hold in-person clinic days for hundreds of community members to receive these services, and students have the opportunity to participate in these service days.

MCL students in Bakersfield have worked with the Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance (GBLA) organization to earn clinical experience. GBLA has been providing high quality legal services to Kern County’s low-income and elderly since 1968. KCCL students assist GBLA as interns. Empire College of Law, MCL’s newest campus, is expected to feature clinical opportunities for students, too.

MCL community legal clinics are supported by grants and individual donations. If you would like to support these programs, please [click here](#).



Mediation Programming Provides the Court with Much Needed Dispute Resolution Services and Gives Students Conflict Resolution Experience

The Mandell Gisnet Center for Conflict Management (MGC) administers several court-directed mediation programs in partnership with the Superior Court of Monterey County. The Executive Director of the Mandell Gisnet Center is MCL's Associate Dean of Clinical Education, and in this role, she serves as the ADR Administrator for Monterey Superior Court.

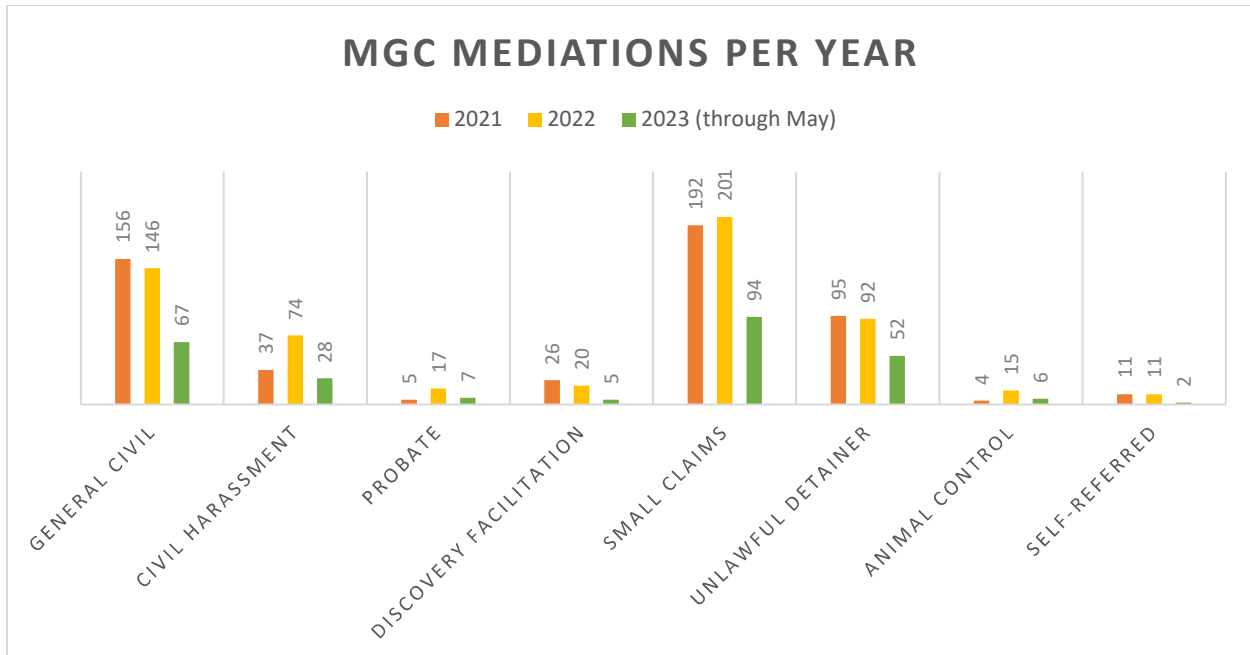
Mediation is a form of alternative dispute resolution in which a neutral third person helps the parties reach a voluntary resolution of a dispute. Mediation is an informal, confidential, and flexible process in which the mediator helps the parties to understand the interests of everyone involved and explore and work towards options for resolution that may be preferable to litigation.



MCL faculty and students participating in a mediation training hosted by MGC.

Students enrolled in the mediation practicum course, as well as volunteer community mediators, mediate in small claims, landlord/tenant, animal control, and other neighbor disputes. In addition, MGC maintains a panel of local pro bono attorney mediators who mediate in larger lawsuits. All MCL students are introduced to mediation skills through the required Core Mediation course.

MCL handles thousands of calls per year from people seeking services through the community legal clinics and/or the Mandell Gisnet Center for Conflict Management. Community members are assisted by clinical staff who schedule a clinic appointment, assign a matter to a mediator, or refer the client to private counsel or other local resources. Several hundred mediations are conducted or facilitated each year.



An example of the services provided is the NEIGHBOR project, which provides mediation assistance for local disputes between community members, in English and Spanish.

Todos hemos experimentado conflictos, de problemas con vecinos, dueños de vivienda, inquilinos, o nuestra familias, que nos causan estrés e infelicidad. The NEIGHBOR Project ofrece mediación muy asequible como una manera de resolver los problemas con la ayuda de mediadores entrenados e neutrales que se aseguran que todos sean escuchados y ayudan a nuestros clientes a llegar a soluciones satisfactorias mutuas. También ofrecemos educación y entrenamiento en mediación.

Contact the NEIGHBOR project at (831) 582- 5234 or email neighborproject@mandellgisnetcenter.org



Monterey College of Law
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