

**Homeless Rights Advocacy Clinic
Seattle University School of Law
Property Justice Project — Fall 2026 Overview**

Overview

The Property Justice Project (PJP) is an outgrowth of a multi-year partnership with unhoused people, community organizations, and other advocates who want to empower unhoused individuals to recover property lost, seized, or destroyed during Seattle sweeps. The PJP is implementing a community-embedded, limited-scope representation model that expands access to justice for unhoused individuals in Seattle through advocacy from PJP clinic students and trained community partners. It is the first of its kind in the nation.

PJP's current scope of work solely focuses on helping people who have lost property as a result of sweeps within the City of Seattle.

Through this exclusive focus, PJP's efforts encompass 3 primary areas:

- (1) Onsite services at St. Francis House
- (2) Free consultations for other eligible individuals
- (3) Community training programs

Onsite services at St. Francis House

The Fall 2026 semester of the PJP is the launch semester: this cohort will be the first to roll out the project **onsite at St. Francis House**, one of Seattle's primary open-access day shelters for people experiencing homelessness.

At St. Francis House, students deliver direct legal services and community support in a format that meets guests where they are, without requiring them to seek out formal legal help. The model prioritizes visibility and trust-building before formal legal service delivery, pairing volunteer community support with a defined and potentially growing menu of legal services.

Current plans for the PJP services menu include:

- **Know Your Rights education:** distributing pre-approved, plain-language materials and providing verbal explanation on request.
- **Evidence documentation of valued property:** with a guest's informed consent, supporting the photographing and safeguarding of evidence of valued, irreplaceable, and eligible belongings to create a timestamped evidentiary record before a sweep occurs.

- **Property retrieval support:** helping guests navigate the City's process for retrieving belongings collected or impounded during a sweep by tracking applicable deadlines, assisting with required paperwork, and following up with the City if needed.
- **Pursuit of remedies:** where a client's property has been lost or destroyed by the City, the PJP supports clients in pursuing appropriate remedies.
- **Facilitated referrals:** if guests have other legal or support issues outside of PJP's scope, students will identify an appropriate referral and offer to directly assist the individual in accessing and navigating that referral.

Free consultations for other eligible individuals

While PJP operates onsite at St. Francis during regularly scheduled hours, PJP also provides free consultations for eligible individuals offsite. To be eligible for a consultation, the individual must have lost personal property due to an encampment sweep in Seattle. Clinic students and their supervising attorney will determine whether the individual is eligible for clinic help following this consultation. Individuals can request a free consultation with PJP through:

- (1) Phone: Call PJP at 206-398-4727 (or 206-398-HRAP) and leave a message.
- (2) Email: Email PJP at HRAP@seattleu.edu.

The request (voicemail or email) should identify:

- Contact & Identification
 - Full name
 - Phone number (if available)
 - Email address (if available)
 - Preferred contact method
 - Best time(s) to reach them
- Eligibility Verification — Encampment Sweep Details
 - Date of encampment sweep (approximate is ok)
 - Location of encampment in Seattle (general location is fine)
 - Brief description of personal property lost (general categories is fine)

PJP will review each request and respond based on the information provided.

Community training programs

PJP is also developing community training programs to empower community members to help. The first program is a free, open access online series comprising the **PJP Community Basic Training**. The basic training modules are designed to help community members:

1. Understand the rights of unhoused people before, during, and after sweeps;

2. Gain practical skills for assisting unhoused individuals—ethically and with consent—including learning how to:
 - a. document and safeguard property as evidence of ownership;
 - b. determine whether the City is storing someone’s property, and if so, assist with retrieving it;
 - c. file administrative claims with the City of Seattle to recover compensation for property loss;
 - d. communicate with the City’s insurance adjusters concerning those claims; and
3. Recognize the limits of their role and how to avoid the unauthorized practice of law.

We hope to release the PJP Community Basic Training series by the end of 2026/early 2027.

The second training program in development is a **Community Justice Advocate (CJA) Certification Training**. The CJA training program is another cutting-edge, first of its kind initiative that seeks to address access to justice issues and advance community lawyering practices by fully integrating a small, select cohort of trained and dedicated community members into the clinic. This effort is in the early development stages.

Questions?

Feel free to call PJP at 206-398-4727 (or 206-398-HRAP) or email us at HRAP@seattleu.edu.