  

**Strengthen your Core —  
A Virtual Training for Supervisors of Legal Work**

*presented by MIE and* *CORT\**

March 24 - 26, 2021, starting at Noon Eastern each day

***(draft) Description of Sessions***

*additional session descriptions will be added as they are confirmed*

**Core Duties of Legal Aid Supervisors**–**­**This session provides an overview of the multidimensional role of the legal services supervisor, and the importance of making the time for intentional and proactive supervision. It introduces the many opportunities for supervision skill‐building that this training offers through:

* Instruction in core legal services supervision concepts;
* Discussion and access to exercises in key supervision skill areas including effective feedback methods, racial equity, supervision systems, project management, work planning and leadership;
* Updates to traditional methods required by remote supervision, and an increased awareness of racial equity issues present in our supervision; and,
* An exchange of ideas with colleagues who grapple with similar supervision challenges in their daily work.

**Supervision Systems**– This session will provide an overview of a comprehensive and intentional supervision system. We will discuss the importance of intentional supervision and review the components of a supervision system that will build strength in your unit and program and help ensure quality legal work is provided to clients. The challenges of supervising remotely will be considered as aspects of quality systems are reviewed.

Learning Objectives include:

* The importance of intentional supervision, particularly in a remote environment;
* Purposes of a supervision system: why we do it and making time for it;
* Essential components of a supervision system:
* Setting Expectations,
* Monitoring Ongoing Work,
* Evaluating Performance, and,
* Promoting Professional Development; and,
* How these systems can help address common problems we all face as supervisors.

**Building Effective Supervision Systems**– In this session we’ll dive into the nuts and bolts of practical tools that will help make your supervision systems successful, such as using your case management system data for ongoing monitoring and staff evaluations. We’ll look at how to onboard in a way that sets clear expectations from day one, and we’ll explore ways to mentor and support new staff. Finally, we’ll examine new ways to use policies, tool and technologies, including videos and e-learning, to get your messages across, even from a physical distance.

Learning Objectives

* Review the types of reports available in your case management system and discuss how they can be used for good supervision;
* Learn how to communicate expectations starting with an effective onboarding process and continuing throughout the years; and,
* Suggest the use of polices, tools and technologies that can assist with supervision systems, particularly when supervising remotely.

**Difficult Conversations and Effective Feedback**–Supervision fosters professional development, conveys performance expectations and providesoversight that protects clients. Performance feedback is a fundamental supervision tool. To begood supervisors, we must be skilled at providing effective feedback. It doesn’t come naturally to many, but it is a skill that can be improved. This session presents a reliable, practical method that supervisors can use to provide effective performance feedback. It explores the importance of setting the right context for feedback, the elements that make up a constructive feedback conversation and the successful use of exploratory questions.

Participants will:

* Consider how to set the right context for providing feedback;
* Learn how to quickly prepare for an effective feedback conversation;
* Examine the role of exploratory questions; and,
* Observe feedback demonstrations.

**Work Plans**–Workplans are simple and useful tools for supervisors. They help us to focus on and accomplish top priority work. They also help us to manage time more effectively. When used with supervisees, workplans have an additional value: they clearly articulate job expectations.

This session explores the strengths of workplans. It provides an opportunity for participants to look at their own use of time and to define improvements that will promote success in their work. The session also introduces a basic method for developing a workplan and guides participants through the preparation of a workplan draft.

Participants will learn to:

* Use workplans to strengthen effectiveness;
* Analyze time‐use to promote better job performance; and,
* Create workplans for use “back at the office.”

**Project Management**– As supervisors, our jobs often involve more than representing individual clients. A few basic project management skills can help us to become more effective in our work. These are not skills that we learned in law school, but they are important and easy to master.

Want to modify a system to make your unit run better? Take on a major advocacy project? Develop a training? Create a brief bank? Institute a case handling protocol? Draft community education materials? Develop intake priorities? Start a community‐based coalition?

Once project management skills are in our repertoire, we can undertake new and more ambitious work with greater confidence. We can also manage ongoing work more successfully. This session introduces the basic elements of legal services project management, and will also introduce online tools that will help make the planning easier.

Participants will learn how to:

* Identify core elements that define a project;
* Set concrete and achievable project goals;
* Build a strong project team;
* Create a project plan;
* Utilize online tools for organizing projects, and,
* Plan for efficient project management.

**Retaining a Quality Staff and Building a Culture of Professional Development**– This session will be a moderated panel discussion of two experienced and two newer legal aid supervisors touching on the necessary ingredients to help retain staff once you have invested the time and effort into training them. The panel will touch on how retention begins with the hiring process and aligning new staff with the goals of the organization; the importance of transparency in supervision and program activities, secondhand trauma and the awareness of the difficulties of legal aid work, creating leadership opportunities, formal and informal, and how all of these issues tie into other important topics that will be covered throughout this training.

 Participants will learn:

* Why employees decide to stay with an organization, and why they leave;
* Retention starts at the interview;
* Creating mentorship relationships and leadership opportunities;
* The importance of the relationship of each employee to their supervisor; and,
* Where else in this training these elements come into play.

**Leadership and Leading Change**– This session will introduce the MIE Principles of Leadership in Legal Aid and review how each applies to the supervision of legal work. The presenters will discuss common supervision challenges, such as supporting staff through emerging racial equity issues, supervising a diverse staff, and remote supervision, tying these challenges to the leadership principles and other concepts in the training. The session’s goal is to provide guidance and inspiration to program participants to take what they have learned and apply it to make positive change in their programs.

* Learn principles of effective leadership;
* Understand differences between leadership and management;
* Consider your leadership strengths and weaknesses;
* Examine racial equity in the context of leadership and leading change;
* Use leadership principles to address common supervision challenges, particularly in the remote work environment; and,
* Review and apply the elements of leading change in your own work.

*\*MIE is co-sponsoring this training with the Ohio, Michigan, West Virginia and Indiana Region IV Committee on Regional Training (CORT).*