

GinA (Turcotte)

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Via email: admin@mejp.org

Frank D'Alessandro, Director of Legal Services
Maine Equal Justice

Dear Mr. D'Alessandro:

My extensive legal career as a legal secretary and litigation paralegal spans more than 30 years with a focus on advocating for safe housing for people with low incomes. Through my personal experiences as a low-income tenant and my professional work in the legal field, I gained expert legal knowledge and skills related to low-income housing and its legal processes. I am well-informed about SNAP, TANF, MaineCare, Section 8 subsidized housing, 'at-will' leases vs. term leases, private leases vs. Section 8 leases, forcible entry and detainer actions, and other federal and state rules and laws about low income rental housing.

Due to scarce services in Maine that support low income tenants, I created a nonprofit agency in 2012 named MAINE TENANTS JUSTICE LEAGUE which educated hundreds of tenants and landlords in just a few years about laws and rules governing rental housing before I allowed it to be administratively dissolved. In 2020 and 2022, without representation by an attorney, I successfully sued two of my prior landlords for violating the implied warranty of habitability and other housing laws; both cases settled in my favor at mediation.

After securing my position as Jed Davis' complex civil litigation paralegal in 2019, I worked on numerous legal matters regarding housing for low income tenants. One of those matters was originally a losing case due to our client's subsidized lease terms, but it ultimately settled in our client's favor for \$35,000 after I identified a legal anomaly with one of the clauses in her lease. I am confident I can help MEJ's clients in a similar fashion if given the opportunity.

I work best independently with a collaborative team under short-deadlines while handling a heavy caseload in a high-pressure, fast-paced environment. My high-energy, self-governing, inquisitive and detail-oriented personality combined with my ability to work remotely from my home office directly facilitated more than a 200% increase in Jed Davis' total caseload within two years, from 65 cases in 2019 to 140 cases in 2021. I am known to regularly work between 60 – 100 hours per week, depending on the demands of each case.

I will bring a variety of skills and knowledge from numerous industries, including but not limited to legal services, social work, nonprofit, small business, government administration, information technology, and real estate. My college education and professional experience in the mental health field enhances my ability to communicate compassionately and effectively with clients from all socioeconomic classes, especially with clients who have difficulty with their interpersonal and communication skills.

I would cherish the opportunity to further discuss my skills and qualifications, and my ability to augment and strengthen your legal services for your clients. Please do not hesitate to schedule a phone or video interview at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
/s/ GinA (Turcotte)