

September 9, 2022

Dan Ruben
Executive Director
Equal Justice America
13540 E. Boundary Road
Building II, Suite 201
Midlothian, VA 23112

Dear Mr. Ruben,

I spent the summer working at EBCLC's housing division. I supported low-income tenants in Berkeley and Oakland. Serving as support at an eviction trial, doing consults with clients, writing letters to greedy landlords, and doing research into the most obscure corners of tenancy laws in CA were all part of my regular tasks. I developed rapport with various clients, repeatedly helping some as their issues developed.

I learned a great deal about the tenant protection landscape in the East Bay. From the rent adjustment petition (RAP) before the Rent Board to other organizations that provide free legal assistance to tenants in the East Bay.

I got my first experience in court, as an observer I followed a civil case almost the entire length of the trial. The jury delivered us a win in record time which was nice, but more importantly, our client got to keep their apartment. I also got to assist on the post-trial motions for attorney's fees and compensation and a Response to a Motion for Production of Documents. Learning this part of these more banal parts of the trial process was important for learning about all the work involved in a civil trial. I will not speak at length about my clients in order to preserve their confidentiality. However, I was able to help people throughout the east bay with a wide range of different problems, from infestations to harassment, to illegal increase in rent and evictions. I found my experience invaluable and learned a lot.

My one complaint was that the work was remote and being remote left me isolated at home for weeks on end. I needed more interaction to learn completely or feel camaraderie with my colleagues fully. It only makes more excited for this coming summer. I hope to work at a public defender's office in the East Bay.

Thank you for the support this summer it meant the world.

Muki Barkan
UC Berkeley