



## Summer 2021 EJA Fellow:

**Name:** Luc Figueiredo Miller

**Law School:** Brooklyn Law School

**Organization:** Mobilization for Justice, Inc.

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### Update 1:

This week I have worked with clients with psychiatric disabilities to help them secure the housing accommodations they need!

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### Update 2:

I spent the last few weeks assisting several clients apply for much needed COVID-19 related rental relief. Much of the work has involved explaining the process to our clients and potential next steps as well as working to collect the requisite documents. I've also worked with a few clients in speaking with their medical providers in order to bring forward reasonable accommodation requests for their housing situations. Finally, I am in the process of working with a client on their SSI appeal by researching case law to better understand the law and exceptions around SSI overpayment.

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### Update 3:

Over the last few weeks, I have continued to work with clients applying for rental assistance which is a particularly arduous process for people with disabilities. I also spent time preparing a client for their appeal with SSA who recently discontinued their SSI benefits. Finally, I have been working on an appeal with the NYC Human Rights Commission on behalf of a client who was denied a reasonable accommodation by their supportive housing provider. This involved reviewing and familiarizing myself with the state requirements for supportive housing providers and reviewing opposition documents detailing why they denied the request.

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### Update 4:

My last two weeks primarily involved preparing an appeal to a decision to close a client's discrimination case by the NYC Commission on Human Rights. This involved researching pertinent state rules regarding supportive housing for people with disabilities to demonstrate that our client's housing provider did not adequately respond to a reasonable accommodation request made by our client to move to a single occupant home. I also worked more with a client in their SSI termination case counseling them in how to respond to different requests from their local SSA office overseeing their case.



## **Update 5:**

This summer I worked with the Mental Health Law Project at Mobilization for Justice, Inc. in New York, New York. I worked primarily with people who have mental and developmental disabilities in a range of civil matters including housing, consumer debt, and public benefits. I wore several hats this summer. I frequently staffed our team's hotline providing acute legal counseling and triaging clients to figure out how they could best move forward with their legal matter. From there I was also given several clients and provided brief service by researching their legal issue, interviewing them, and recommending steps they could take by themselves if we were unable to take on their case. I also assisted my supervisor in interviewing client's and their medical providers in order to draft medical letters of support for our client's reasonable accommodation requests. I helped clients apply for state COVID relief, and counseled clients one on one to help with their appeals for public benefits termination.

Overall, I grew tremendously this summer. I was given a lot of freedom to take on a small case load and independently develop and move my cases forward. I learned to trouble shoot issues independently so that I could better assess whether was something I could handle myself or something I needed help with. Most importantly I developed in my ability to counsel clients and clearly explain the legal landscape of their case and what options they had moving forward. Overall EJA gave me an opportunity to develop as a lawyer who will meet clients where they are at and provide zealous advocacy on their behalf.