

Expanding **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

**ACROSS
NEW BRUNSWICK**



YEAR-END REPORT
APRIL 2026



Legal Clinic

ADVANCING JUSTICE WHILE TRAINING
TOMORROW'S **LEADERS**.



**FRIENDLY
FACES**
legal aces



TABLE OF **CONTENTS**

1. Course Overview
2. Clinical Legal Education & Access to Justice
Context in New Brunswick
3. Course Structure and Delivery
4. Student Learning and Experience
5. Areas of Clinical Legal Work and Student
Exposure to Practice Areas
6. Outreach & External Projects
7. Impact Highlights 2025-2026
8. Activity Summary (2025-2026)
9. Course and Operational Development
10. Looking Ahead
11. Acknowledgements

1. Course Overview

The UNB Legal Clinic operates as a clinical experiential legal education course within the Faculty of Law at the University of New Brunswick. Offered for academic credit, the course provides law students with the opportunity to engage in supervised legal work while developing foundational skills essential to legal practice.

The clinic course integrates academic learning with hands-on experience. Students participate in real legal matters under the supervision of licensed lawyers, allowing them to apply doctrinal knowledge in a structured, practice-oriented environment. The course emphasizes professionalism, ethical responsibility, and reflective learning as core components of legal education.



Managing real client files and supporting individuals across different communities showed me the true impact of access to justice. This experience has been one of the most meaningful parts of my legal education.”

A.G., 3L STUDENT

2. Clinical Legal Education & Access to Justice Context in New Brunswick

Clinical legal education is premised on the understanding that legal training is strengthened through direct engagement with real-world legal issues. In New Brunswick, this approach is particularly relevant given ongoing barriers to accessing legal services.

Individuals in the province continue to face challenges related to income insecurity, housing instability, and employment disputes, often without access to affordable legal representation. Legal needs frequently arise in areas such as tenancy, social benefits, employment, and small claims processes.

Within this context, the clinic course provides students with exposure to the realities of unmet legal need while contributing, in a supervised capacity, to addressing some of these gaps. The course thereby situates legal education within the broader framework of access to justice.



3. Course Structure and Delivery

The UNB Legal Clinic is delivered as an intensive, full-time experiential course during the academic year and summer months. Students participate in a structured program that includes orientation, skills training, and supervised clinical work over a defined period.

Students are involved in all stages of file progression, including client intake, legal research, drafting, negotiation, and preparation for dispute resolution processes. The course is designed to provide continuity of service through successive student cohorts, ensuring both sustained learning and ongoing file management.

In addition to practical work, students receive instruction in areas such as client communication, ethical practice, cultural competency, and trauma-informed lawyering, reinforcing the professional and social dimensions of legal practice.



4. Student Learning and Experience

The clinical course provides students with a unique opportunity to develop practical legal skills in a real-world setting. Through their work, students gain experience in client interviewing, legal research, drafting, negotiation, and case management.

Equally important, the course fosters the development of professional judgment, ethical awareness, and effective communication. Students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and consider the relationship between legal rules, procedural systems, and the lived realities of clients.

For many participants, the clinic represents a significant component of their legal education, offering insights into the practice of law that extend beyond traditional classroom learning.



The variety of cases allowed me to develop practical legal skills while seeing firsthand the impact of our services in Fredericton, Saint John, and Miramichi. This experience has shown me what a meaningful legal practice can look like."

D.L., 3L STUDENT

5. Areas of Clinical Legal Work and Student Exposure to Practice Areas

Through supervised case involvement, students engage with a range of legal areas commonly encountered in practice. These may include tenancy disputes, employment-related issues, small claims matters, immigration-related files, social benefits issues, and administrative legal processes.

This exposure allows students to observe and participate in a variety of legal contexts within the scope of the clinical course. It supports the development of substantive legal understanding, procedural awareness, and practical lawyering skills in a supervised environment.

Clinical Legal Services and Areas of Assistance

Within the clinical course, students working under supervision may engage with a range of legal matters that reflect common legal issues experienced by individuals in the community. These services include:

- **Employment law matters**, such as dismissals with or without cause, unpaid wages or benefits, and human rights-related concerns arising in the workplace.
- **Housing and tenant matters**, including evictions, rent increases, loss of essential services or utilities, and other disputes between tenants and landlords.
- **Human rights matters**, including providing legal information, conducting research, and assisting with the human rights complaint process.
- **Immigration & refugee-related assistance**, including support with forms and documentation related to asylum claims, temporary work permits, permanent residence applications, and citizenship processes.
- **Provincial offences matters**, limited to assistance and representation in Provincial Court as agents for summary offence proceedings such as traffic tickets, where permitted.
- **Social benefits issues**, including matters involving Income Assistance, Employment Insurance (EI), Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Old Age Security (OAS), and appeals, including issues such as overpayment disputes and benefit eligibility concerns.
- **Small claims matters**, including assistance with claims up to \$20,000 involving unpaid debts, defective goods or services, unpaid work, and certain contractual or landlord-related disputes within the small claims framework.
- **Notary and commissioning services** are also provided where required for legal documentation purposes.

130+
**OUTREACH
CLINICS**

ARE OPERATING ACROSS
THE PROVINCE

FREDERICTON • SAINT JOHN,
MONCTON • MIRAMICHI,
NEGUAC • BILIK FIRST NATION

6. Outreach & External Projects

In addition to file-based clinical work, the UNB Legal Clinic integrates external projects and outreach activities that enrich the experiential learning environment and expand the Clinic's community impact. These initiatives provide students with opportunities to engage with legal issues beyond individual case files and to better understand the broader social and systemic contexts in which legal problems arise.

Students participate in legal education initiatives and collaborative work with community organizations, particularly in areas such as housing, employment, and income security. These experiences reinforce the importance of accessible legal information and early intervention in addressing legal challenges.

A key example of this approach is the Clinic's partnership with the Fredericton Downtown Community Health Centre. Through this collaboration, the Clinic supports individuals facing complex and intersecting challenges, including housing instability, mental health concerns, and barriers to accessing services. Embedding legal support within a community health setting enables a holistic, equity-oriented approach to client care.

All outreach and external activities are conducted within a supervised and structured educational framework, ensuring alignment with the Clinic's academic objectives while strengthening its role as both a service provider and a leader in community-based legal education.



In March 2026, Janelle, a LAW 5200 student enrolled in the UNB Legal Clinic, led an outreach initiative at Sky Way to Heaven Church in Miramichi as part of her clinical legal education.

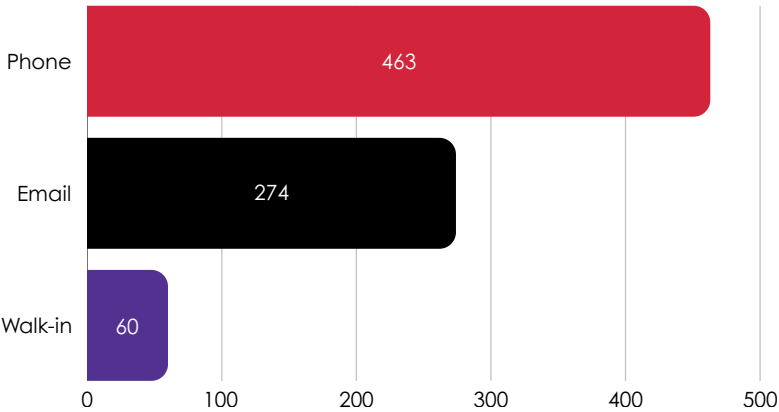


Managing real client files and navigating complex legal issues helped build both my confidence and practical skills. What initially felt overwhelming quickly became rewarding, especially through opportunities like appearing in Small Claims Court. This experience reinforced the importance of access to justice in our communities."

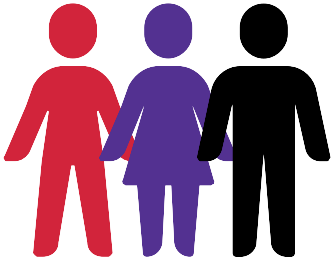
G.R., 3L STUDENT

7. Impact Highlights 2025-2026

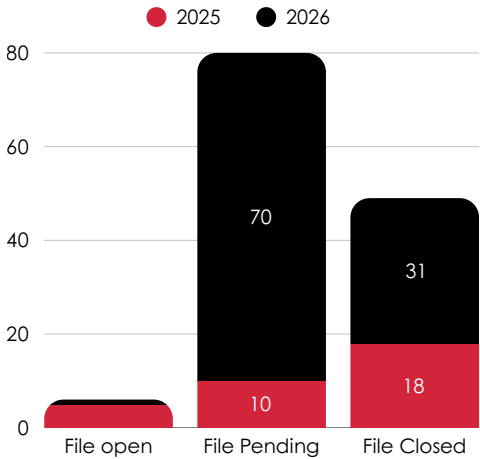
A total of 797 inquiries have been responded to



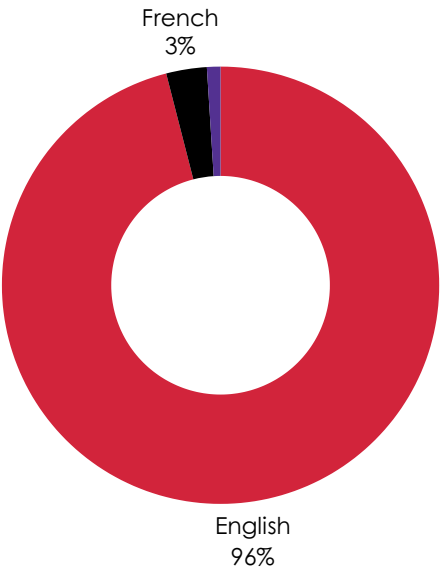
190
Number of Intake
Assessments Received



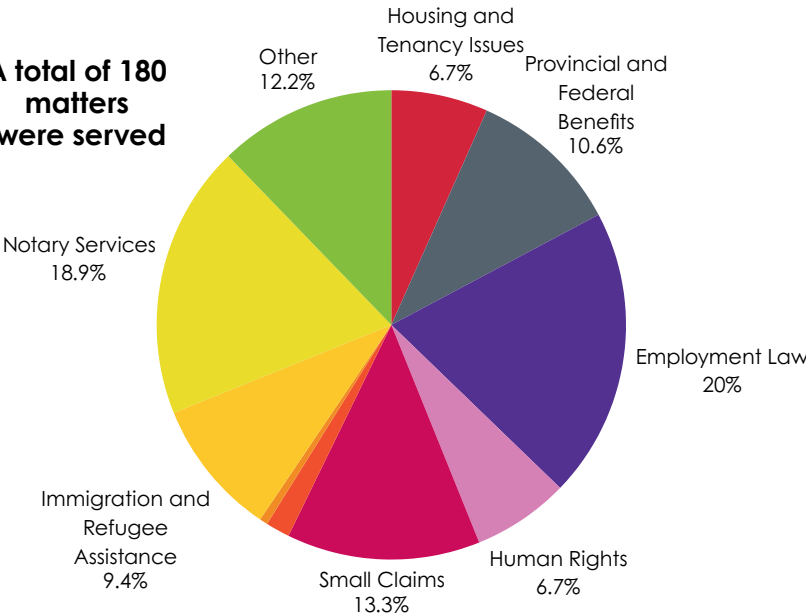
File processed



Language



A total of 180
matters
were served



8. Activity Summary (2025-2026)

During the 2025 academic year, the UNB Legal Clinic experienced a significant operational transition due to limited staffing between March 2025 and March 2026. Key positions, including the supervising lawyer, outreach coordinator, and administrative support role, became vacant during this period. Despite these challenges, the Clinic Director maintained operations and ensured continuity of services. As a result, overall capacity was reduced, which is reflected in the year's activity levels. As of April 2026, the clinic has returned to full staffing, supporting renewed expansion of course activities.

Despite these constraints, students remained actively engaged in supervised legal work. Between January 2025 and April 2026, approximately 14 students participated in the clinic, contributing to around 180 client-related matters, including nearly 190 new intake files. Students handled file management, legal drafting, and research, and supported more than five tribunal or court-related matters, gaining practical experience in formal dispute resolution.

Even with reduced capacity, the clinic continued to deliver meaningful outcomes and strengthen access to justice through student-led advocacy.

Key highlights include:

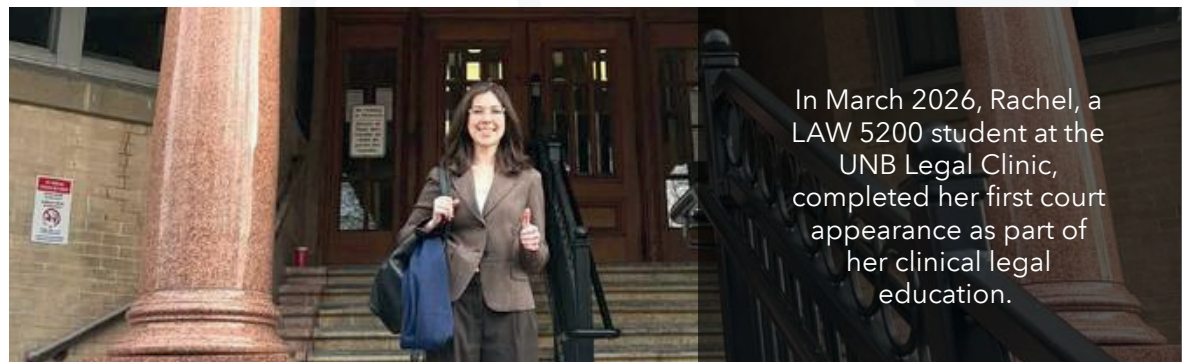
Emergency Refugee Support (2022): Provided urgent assistance to 16 clients through the Immigration and Refugee Clinic in response to increased arrivals at Roxham Road, with students volunteering during exam periods.

First Labour Board Representation by a UNB Law Student: A student carried an employment law case from intake to hearing, including evidence preparation and oral submissions, marking the first known appearance by a UNB law student before the Labour and Employment Board in New Brunswick.

Small Claims Court Milestone (2023): For the first time in New Brunswick, a UNB Legal Clinic student represented a client in Small Claims Court under supervision, demonstrating the value of student representation in improving access to justice.

Access to Justice in Action: Students supported impactful matters, including preparing a will for a homebound senior, assisting with a police complaint process, identifying systemic issues, securing cancellation of a hospital bill for a newcomer client, and supporting employment disputes, such as wrongful termination cases.

These outcomes reflect the clinic's continued commitment to experiential legal education and improving access to justice in the community.



9. Course and Operational Development:

In 2025, several enhancements were made to improve the delivery of the clinical course. These included refinements to intake and supervision processes, improvements to digital file management systems, and expanded student training sessions focused on legal practice skills.

The intake form was moved online to improve accessibility, and the Clinic Director updated internal procedures to allow for more efficient filtering and triaging of cases. Students were also more actively involved in front-line intake processes, strengthening their role in client engagement and initial file assessment.

In addition, the Clinic expanded its scope of services to include immigration and refugee assistance, further broadening the range of legal issues addressed through the course. Additional emphasis was placed on consistency in supervision and feedback, ensuring alignment between learning objectives and practical responsibilities.



In just a few weeks at the Clinic, I gained more practical experience than in years of coursework. The hands-on learning and strong mentorship made a lasting impact and strengthened my commitment to public interest law."

C. LEB., 3L STUDENT

10. Looking Ahead:

With full staffing restored, including an Administrative Assistant, Client Development and Outreach Coordinator, Supervising Lawyer, and Clinic Director, the clinic course is well-positioned for growth in the upcoming academic year. Future priorities include expanding student learning opportunities, strengthening supervision structures, and broadening the scope of experiential engagement.

The course will continue to evolve in response to educational objectives and the access to justice context in New Brunswick.



11. Acknowledgements

The Faculty of Law would like to thank the New Brunswick Law Foundation (NBLF) for its continued financial support of the UNB Legal Clinic. This support forms part of a broader investment in legal education at the University of New Brunswick, aimed at strengthening experiential learning opportunities and supporting the continuation of the Legal Clinic as a permanent program. The Law Foundation has played a central role in the Clinic's development and expansion since its pilot phase launched in 2022.

We also acknowledge the broader network of community organizations and partners whose collaboration supports experiential legal education and access to justice in different communities around the province.

Additionally, the Faculty of Law extends its gratitude to the friends and family of the late Donald A. MacBeath, Q.C., who generously established the MacBeath Fellowship. This fellowship supports students through their summer legal placements and contributes to the development of future legal professionals.



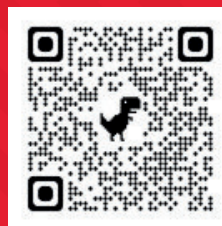
In collaboration with the Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick (PLEIS-NB), the UNB Legal Clinic hosted successful pop-up clinics in Miramichi and other communities across the province, helping New Brunswickers better understand and protect their rights as tenants. The clinic provided accessible legal information and on-site support to community members.

THANK
YOU
for reading!



Connect
WITH US!

Follow us online for
updates on
our clinics and
community events!



750 Brunswick Street,
Fredericton, NB
E3B 1H9
T: 506.452.6313
E: lawclinic@unb.ca