



U of T Legal Hackers is looking for **~40 student volunteers** to help with their capstone project in collaboration with Prof. Anthony Niblett and staff lawyer at Downtown Legal Services, Benjamin Ries. First year students are encouraged to sign-up.

What is a “capstone” project?

Legal Hackers is committed to taking on a legal tech project each year. Last year, they spent some time collecting information from tenant advocacy groups and legal clinics on the kinds of legal-tech tools that could be useful for them. This year's project is focused on bringing a legal tech tool to life.

Specifically, Legal Hackers will be developing a tool to make sense of s. 83(1) of the *Residential Tenancies Act* (one piece of the main landlord and tenant legislation in Ontario). Section 83(1) gives adjudicators at the Landlord and Tenant Board discretion to grant relief from eviction. It can be the difference between someone losing their home and getting a second chance to make rent and stay off the streets. The adjudicator must consider “all of the circumstances” to determine whether it would be fair to grant relief. But what exactly does “all of the circumstances” mean? Are there some factors that make it more or less likely that a tenant will be able to stay in their home? Since Landlord and Tenant Board decisions are not binding on each other, it can be difficult to predict how an adjudicator will decide a particular case. Legal Hackers will need your help to read and categorize previous Landlord and Tenant Board decisions to see if there are patterns in how these cases are decided. The goal of the project will be to create a tool that could help legal clinics provide targeted advice to tenants in need.

How can you help?

Students will be assigned a number of Landlord and Tenant Board decisions to read and categorize based on a pre-set questionnaire. Each decision is approximately 2-4 pages in length. The questionnaire will ask students to input basic information - such as the amount of monthly rent, the number of months that a tenant has failed to pay rent, and the adjudicator's name, as well as responses to several yes or no questions, such as whether discretionary relief was granted. Virtual training will be provided.

What is the time commitment?

Legal Hackers anticipates that the time commitment will be approximately 4 hours per week for four weeks between now and the end of November. This is assuming 40 student volunteers and 100 short cases assigned to each student. Volunteers should be prepared to attend/watch a virtual training session in October/November.

Where do you sign up?

Please use the following google form to sign up and watch your inbox for an email from Legal Hackers: <https://forms.gle/9edYqzVgoFWNV2o18>

