

# Civil Rights and Discrimination Legal issues in Ohio

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Wednesday December 9th  
9:00am - 12:30pm

Heading to a doctor's appointment; coming home after a long day at work, arguing about who you voted for in the election - these are things most of us take for granted. But entire populations here in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County have to fight for those things every day. Laws passed to combat discrimination are either not strong enough or are being actively combated in the court and the in statehouse. How did we get here? And how do we ensure a better future for everyone?

Join us for a live (virtual) presentation with experts researching and battling against discrimination in Ohio. Speakers from the Ohio ACLU, the Fair Housing Center for Rights and Research, and Equality Ohio will discuss their research and advocacy for civil rights in Ohio.

Agenda		
9:00 AM	Welcome, introductions	Sarah Dobransky
9:15 AM	Housing Discrimination in NE Ohio	Michael Lepley, The Fair Housing Center for Rights and Research
10:15 AM	Break	
10:20 AM	Voting Rights and Voter Suppression in Ohio	Susan Becker, Ohio ACLU
11:20 AM	Break	
11:25 AM	LGBTQ+ Discrimination and the Ohio Fairness Act	Maya Simek, CWRU School of Law; Equality Ohio
12:25 PM	Close	Sarah Dobransky

## Speakers

### Michael Lepley

**Senior Research Associate  
The Fair Housing Center for Rights and Research**

Michael Lepley produces locally and nationally recognized research on housing discrimination, mortgage lending, federal housing program compliance, and municipal land-use regulations. Michael carries out systemic fair housing investigations and provides technical assistance on housing policy to jurisdictions across Northeast Ohio.

Michael represents the Fair Housing Center as a board member of Greater Cleveland Community Shares and as the Fair Housing Committee Chair of the Cuyahoga County Housing Stakeholder Group. Michael is an alumnus of the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and of Clarion University of Pennsylvania.

### Susan J. Becker

**ACLU of Ohio General Counsel  
Cleveland State University (CSU) Law Professor Emerita  
Cleveland-Marshall College of Law Public Interest Leader in Residence**

Professor Becker worked as a reporter and photographer prior to entering CSU's Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. After obtaining her law degree, Professor Becker completed a two-year clerkship with Judge Robert B. Krupansky of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, worked for five years as a litigation associate with Jones Day, and then spent 24 years as a professor at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, the position from which she retired in 2014. Professor Becker maintained a modest pro bono practice throughout her academic career, providing legal counsel to individuals and not-for-profit organizations. Her pro bono practice and her academic scholarship focused primarily on attorney ethics and professionalism, and on the many forms of discrimination that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and non-binary (LGBTQ) individuals commonly experience. Her teaching areas included Civil Procedure, Pretrial Practice, Remedies, Contracts, and Sexual Orientation and the Law.

Since 2015 Professor Becker has served in a volunteer capacity as General Counsel of the ACLU of Ohio, an organization with which she has been associated in a variety of volunteer roles for almost 25 years. Her current ACLU work embraces an integrated advocacy approach that employs litigation, policy development, lobbying, education, and community engagement to protect and advance numerous civil rights and liberties including freedom of speech and religion, racial justice, voting rights, criminal justice reform, LGBTQ equality, reproductive rights, and government transparency and accountability.

She also currently serves as First Vice Chair of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (CMBA) Certified Grievance Committee, an entity charged by the Ohio Supreme Court with investigating allegations of attorney misconduct, and as Public Interest Leader in Residence at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, a

position that involves mentoring law students as they strive to develop effective leadership qualities, experiences, skills, and goals.

Professor Becker is admitted to practice before all Ohio courts, the U.S. District Courts for Northern and Southern Ohio, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and the U.S. Supreme Court, and has been admitted *pro hac vice* in many other jurisdictions.

**Maya Simek**

**Legal Director  
Equality Ohio**

**Milton A. Kramer Law Clinic Center - Human Trafficking Project Director  
Case Western Reserve University School of Law**

Maya Simek is a clinical law professor and co-director of Case Western Reserve's Health & Human Trafficking Clinic. She also serves as managing legal director at Equality Ohio, where she developed and is now supervising a state-wide legal clinic for the lesbian gay bisexual transgender queer (LGBTQ+) community.

Simek focuses her practice on legal issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community and human trafficking prevention and victim redress. Her other areas of interest include community lawyering and the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly with social services, on the efficacy of legal practice. The focus on these areas of interest inspired Simek's spearheading of a law clinic for individuals affected by HIV/AIDS engaging in case management services at the Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center in 2012.

Simek earned her JD in 2010 from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, her MSSA in 2007 from Case Western Reserve's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, and her BS in 2000 from John Carroll University. Simek is admitted to the bar in Ohio and California, and she is an Ohio Licensed Independent Social Worker with Supervision designation (LISW-S).

Webinar Information:

Platform: Zoom Webinars

Registration is available at <https://events.cpl.org/event/7095589>.

Login information: Individual Zoom account and secured password required (link in registration)