NAME OF EVENT: Drafting Policy for Movements: Turning Community Priorities Into Policy

DATE | TIME | LOCATION: November 19, 2026 | 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM EDT | CUNY School of Law, 2 Ct Square W, Long Island City, NY 11101

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:
Join the CUNY Law State Policy Lab and the American Constitution Society for a practical, 90-minute introduction to legislative drafting. This training will walk participants through the process of translating policy goals into statutory language, from identifying the problem a bill is meant to address to drafting definitions, substantive protections, enforcement mechanisms, and other key provisions. We will also examine common drafting mistakes and how seemingly small choices in statutory language can determine who is protected, who is excluded, and whether a law works as intended.

Throughout the training, we will approach legislative drafting as a collaborative process. Participants will consider how legislative staff, advocates, attorneys, and directly impacted communities can work together to turn community priorities into effective and enforceable policy.

The training is designed for current and incoming legislative staff and elected officials, advocates, legal-services attorneys, students, and others interested in developing practical legislative drafting skills.

SPEAKERS' NAMES AND BIOS:

- **Amanda Jack**, Policy Director, Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Practice
- **David Siffert**, Executive Director of the State Law Initiative at NYU Law
- **Jared M. Trujillo**, Associate Professor & Executive Director of the CUNY Law State Policy Lab, CUNY School of Law

AGENDA OF PROGRAM: 4:00-5:30 PM EDT (1.5 hours of CLE)

Time	Topic	Content
4:00-4:10 PM	**From Community Priority to Legislative Intervention**	Identifying the problem legislation is intended to address; distinguishing the policy objective from the legislative mechanism; determining what existing law already does; identifying gaps in existing statutory schemes; understanding the roles of directly impacted communities, advocates, legislative staff, elected officials, and legislative counsel in developing legislation.
4:10-4:25 PM	**Anatomy of a Bill**	Core components of legislation; titles and purpose provisions; legislative findings; definitions; substantive rights, duties, prohibitions, and requirements; enforcement provisions; effective

		dates; severability, savings, and related provisions; understanding how the pieces of a bill operate together.
4:25-4:45 PM	**Turning Policy Goals Into Statutory Language**	Translating a policy objective into enforceable legal rules; identifying the regulated actor, protected person or class, prohibited or required conduct, and triggering conditions; drafting definitions; choosing mandatory versus discretionary language; avoiding ambiguity, overbreadth, loopholes, and unintended exclusions; examining how seemingly small drafting choices can substantially change a bill's operation.
4:45-5:00 PM	**Enforcement, Remedies, and Implementation**	Designing legislation that can function after enactment; private rights of action and administrative enforcement; remedies, penalties, attorney's fees, and other enforcement mechanisms; agency authority and rulemaking; reporting and transparency requirements; implementation timelines; considering whether enforcement mechanisms adequately serve the legislation's stated objectives.
5:00-5:15 PM	**Drafting With, Not Merely For, Communities**	Incorporating the knowledge of people directly affected by proposed legislation; identifying who should participate in the drafting process and at what stage; testing statutory language against lived experience; recognizing how definitions, exceptions, eligibility requirements, and enforcement choices can include or exclude affected communities; maintaining the underlying policy objective through negotiation and amendment.
5:15-5:25 PM	**Putting It Together: Drafting Exercise**	Participants apply the principles covered during the program to a short legislative drafting problem; identify the policy objective and relevant actors; evaluate proposed statutory language; identify ambiguities, loopholes, or implementation problems; discuss potential revisions.
5:25-5:30 PM	**Questions and Closing**	Participant questions; key drafting principles and resources for continued legislative drafting work.

Materials for Program:

- Jared Trujillo, Danielle King, Scott Levy, Kathleen McKenna, Eli Northrup, and Alana Sivin, Drafting Justice: Legislative Drafting and Strategy for Movement Lawyers, Chapter 1: What Makes a Movement Lawyer?, CALI eLangdell Press (forthcoming 2027).
- Jared Trujillo, Danielle King, Scott Levy, Kathleen McKenna, Eli Northrup, and Alana Sivin, Drafting Justice: Legislative Drafting and Strategy for Movement Lawyers, Chapter 7: Anatomy of a Bill, CALI eLangdell Press (forthcoming 2027).