

2024-2025 Annual Report

We are happy and proud to present to you the legal clinics' annual report for the 2024-2025 academic year. This was a complex and challenging year; even more challenging than the previous one. Difficult times always bring with them human rights challenges, legal needs, and human suffering, and the clinics' mission is to provide assistance, and represent those whose voices are not heard. This year was no different: the clinics worked to promote human rights and represent marginalized populations in various fields.

Alongside the work of our existing clinics, two new clinics were established this year. The first is dedicated to helping the victims of the Iron Swords War. This groundbreaking and important clinic provided legal aid and representation to dozens of clients: displaced individuals, survivors of October 7th attacks, soldiers injured in the war—whose cases raise extremely complex legal and humanitarian issues.

Another clinic established this year is the Environmental Justice Clinic, which aims to promote environmental issues of importance to Israeli society through legal tools. In its first year of operation, the Clinic has already become a key player in various environmental struggles in the North of the country, including the fight against the “Casino” compound in Bat Galim and the obstruction of beach access there, campaigns to stop pollution and rehabilitate the Sa’adia Stream and the Jordan River, and involvement in restoring the Haifa Bay.

Alongside the meaningful activity during the year, this year was marked by tragedy. In June, student Shada Khatib was killed in her home by an Iranian missile, along with her sister, mother, and aunt. Shada was a student in the Human Rights Clinic, led by Adv. Abir Baker. She was a dedicated and talented student who found meaning and purpose in her activity in the clinic and dreamed of continuing to work in the field of human rights. The entire clinic community mourns her loss and shares in the profound grief of her family and many friends she left behind. Despite the intense grief and loss, the students continued their clinical work and even proposed initiatives for clinical activities in her memory. We are certain that Shada's spirit will accompany us and serve as an inspiration for future students as well.

As the year closes, we bid farewell to Adv. Vardit Avidan, who led the Legal Feminism Clinic for nine years and, in the past year, directed the Clinic for Legal Aid in times of War. Over the years, Vardit represented hundreds of clients and advanced dozens of projects for policy-change that positively impacted women's rights in Israel and made a profound mark on the legal world. Vardit is also one of the pioneers of trauma-informed legal practice in Israel, and her working methods enabled her clients not only to promote their rights and achieve their goals, but also to cope with their trauma in a constructive and therapeutic way. Equally important, Vardit has mentored generations of students, serving as both a teacher and a role model. We, the clinical faculty (in Haifa and other institutions across the country), have learned so much from you. We

wish you the best of luck in your new challenges and are confident that wherever you go, you will continue to make the world a better place.

In the coming weeks, I (Tammy) will also conclude my role as Academic Director of the clinics, a role I have been proud to hold for the past decade. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the privilege of contributing to this remarkable program. In particular, I want to thank the clinicians—those currently with us and those I worked with in the past. I learned from each and every one of you: about dedication and determination, creativity, courage, professionalism, humility, and humor. A heartfelt thank you to Adv. Reut Cohen, the clinics' professional director, for her partnership in management this year, and to Ms. Daphna Biran-Kulish, without whom so much of what we do would not have been possible. I wish great success to my successor Dr. Maayan Sudai; I am confident that under her leadership, the clinics will grow in new and exciting directions.

In the following pages, the activities of each clinic will be presented in detail. But before that, we will try to provide a high-level overview of the clinics—in numbers.

What?	How many?
Clinics	8
Students enrolled	105
Court cases	20
Appellate committees, Administrative hearings and Debt Authority hearings	20
Freedom of Information requests	22
Clients	Over 300
Projects for policy change	40
Information leaflets, public campaigns, workshops and public lectures	40
Pro bono mediations	7

The Civil Litigation Clinic

Clinical Director: Reut Cohen

Academic Director: Lihi Yona

The Civil Litigation Clinic develops creative and innovative tools of civil law and civil litigation for promoting and protecting human rights. Traditionally, promoting human rights was performed primarily through Public Law tools—including petitions to the High Court of Justice (Bagatz) or the Administrative Court, Criminal Law in the context of suspects' and defendants' rights, and promoting legislation and policy. While the remedies provided by Public Law are essential for human rights protection, they are inherently limited. Civil law offers a broad range of remedies and tools that can be utilized by the cause lawyer to optimize protection of human rights.

Moreover, it is becoming increasingly clear that many human rights, especially those of marginalized populations, are often violated in their interactions with private entities such as banks, business companies, and even individuals. Therefore, expertise in private and civil law is crucial for the realization of human rights.

The clinic aims to promote human rights, particularly of marginalized populations, through the civil process, and to provide students with skills in civil law and civil litigation. The Clinic's activities with relation to private entities such as banks, insurance companies, healthcare providers, among others also generate novel knowledge that is often overlooked by regulators and legal scholars in these fields, as they seldom focus on the experiences of marginalized communities. The clinic recognizes these failures and works to correct them through regulatory bodies, and occasionally through petitions to the High Court of Justice.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, Adv. Reut Cohen replaced Adv. Haran Reichman as the professional director of the clinics, and therefore she supervises the clinic on a part-time basis. The main implication is that the clinic includes 8 students, and the number of cases and projects was reduced accordingly. This year, the clinics assisted approximately 60 individuals, among which the clinic represented 11 cases in courts, 2 cases in the execution office, 5 cases in health care providers' administrative appeal committees, engaged in 4 projects for policy change, and 1 public campaign. Here is a detailed account of some of these activities.

I. Civil lawsuits for compensation for violation of human rights in criminal proceedings

The clinic represents clients in civil lawsuits seeking compensation for violation of their rights in criminal proceedings. In addition to obtaining compensation for clients, successful tort claims can

deter law enforcement agencies, thereby improving compliance with the law and protecting the rights of future detainees and prisoners.

The clinic is representing three cases in this project, two on behalf of clients who were detained in harsh and degrading conditions, and one case in which a client was arrested based solely on his appearance ("profiling").

In one lawsuit the clinic filed in December 2022, the state submitted a statement of defense, and a preliminary hearing was held in June 2024. During the process, the court proposed ruling by way of compromise (Section 79A of the Courts Law) within a certain monetary range based on the existing evidence or continuing with a full trial. The state declined the offer, so the case will proceed. Witness testimony is scheduled for **November 2, 2025**.

In the second lawsuit (filed July 2023), a preliminary hearing was held on **May 25, 2025**. In that hearing, it was agreed that the court would rule by way of compromise after both parties submitted principal arguments regarding the amount of compensation. In our written arguments, we claimed that the compensation amount should exceed, or at the very least not be less than, the amount routinely granted in cases of wrongful arrests. We claimed that arrest decisions are inherently subject to human discretion, whereas detention conditions are legally mandated, non-negotiable, and not subject to discretion. By this reasoning, the legislator acknowledged that errors in judgment may lead to wrongful arrests—but did not accept that detainees should be denied the legally required detention conditions.

Additionally, we reviewed recent case law showing that in cases where wrongful detention or arrest was accompanied by an additional human rights violation, compensation is relatively high—reaching tens of thousands of shekels. Therefore we argued for a high-end compensation award for our client too. We are currently awaiting the state's response and the court's judgment.

In the third case, the clinic filed a tort claim (December 2023) on behalf of a client who was fully acquitted of the charge for which he was arrested, after the judge concluded, among other things, that the arrest was carried out solely due to the client's appearance. The arrest and the indictment caused the client significant harm. In early April 2024, after requesting an extension, the State Attorney's Office filed a statement of defense denying the clinic's claims. The state also submitted third-party notices, adding two more parties to the case, asserting that if the state is found liable, those third parties should compensate the plaintiff.

The clinic submitted a response to the state's defense, and two pre-trial hearings were held (August 2024 and January 2025). The parties agreed to enter mediation, which was held on April 20, 2025. The mediation concluded in June, with an agreement that the defendants would pay our client NIS 16,000 in compensation.

II. Consumer Protection and the Elderly

As part of a project funded by the David Berg Foundation and the Israel Class Action Fund, the clinic provides legal aid to the elderly in consumer protection cases. Here are several cases in this project.

The clinic is assisting a 77-year-old woman who was the victim of fraud and manipulation, resulting in her transferring approximately 80,000 NIS to scammers. During the summer of 2024, the clinic sent a letter to the bank, arguing that, due to the bank's heightened duties of trust and caution—as well as its awareness of common scam methods and training of its employees to identify such schemes—the bank should have done more to prevent the fraudulent transaction. After the bank responded, the parties scheduled a mediation session (with the Conflict Resolution Clinic). The mediation was held on January 22, 2025, but unfortunately did not succeed. The clinic is currently preparing a lawsuit on her behalf.

The clinic is representing two additional cases of financial scams perpetrated upon elderly individuals, and is in the process of preparing lawsuits on their behalf.

The clinic also joined a coalition of organizations (including clinics from other institutions as well as NGOs) aimed at promoting policy change regarding frauds, in light of the inadequate response from both the police and financial institutions. Two meetings have already been held (March and April 2025). The coalition plans to engage in dialogue with the Bank of Israel and organize roundtable discussions with relevant stakeholders.

The clinic represented elderly people in several other cases concerning consumer protection. In one case, the clinic helped file a small claims court on behalf of an elderly woman who was overcharged by a company selling emergency alert buttons. The client was awarded 3,000 NIS in a settlement. In a second case, the clinic filed an objection to a debt collection procedure, arguing that the agreement was the result of deception and exploitation of the client. A hearing in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court the case is scheduled for November 2025.

III. Legal aid to bank customers

In December 2023, the clinic, together with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), won a grant from the Class Action Fund to provide legal assistance to bank customers. The project involves both individual assistance and policy promotion. Here are several examples of the activities:

- Unregulated ATMs

In recent years, many banks have closed branches to save costs. This has led to the closure of regulated ATMs attached to those branches. Private ATM companies identified this trend—specifically, the lack of regulated ATMs in public spaces—as a business opportunity. Today, the number of private ATMs in public areas far exceeds that of regulated ones. This trend harms primarily disadvantaged groups: senior citizens, benefit recipients, people with disabilities, and others, because private ATMs charge high fees. We are of the opinion that cash withdrawal is an essential service, therefore we are working to develop consumer protections for using private ATMs.

In August 2024, a Freedom of Information request was sent to the Capital Market Authority seeking data on private ATM distribution by city and neighborhood. A month later, the authority rejected the request, claiming it was a trade secret and not legally permissible to disclose. To that we responded that we believe this legal position is incorrect, but we were willing to settle for data without disclosing the names of the companies. In November 2024 the authority agreed to release the data but first notified the operating companies. One company objected, but the authority decided to provide the data nonetheless, and the objecting company did not petition this decision. We are currently analyzing the data.

The Clinic, together with ACRI created a [campaign video](#) (in Hebrew) calling on policymakers to make ATM services more accessible to the public while raising awareness of the high fees charged by private ATMs.

- Checks for insolvent individuals

The Clinic won an important success in allowing insolvent individuals to obtain checks. The law imposes default restrictions on insolvent individuals from possessing checks during proceedings. As a result, many cannot rent housing or pay for informal education—essential services that typically require checks. Courts have discretion to lift the restrictions, but in practice, based on Bank of Israel recommendations, they rarely do. After conducting legal research, the Clinic and ACRI sent a letter in early July 2024 to the Supervisor of Banks and the Insolvency Commissioner, outlining the legal issues, human rights violations, and calling for regulatory reform. In September 2024, we were informed that the Insolvency Commissioner accepted our position and changed the policy. In November 2024, the procedure was officially updated, and we plan to monitor implementation.

- Legal aid

The clinic provided legal aid to over 20 individuals in issues concerning banking. For example, the clinic is assisting an asylum seeker to file a small claims lawsuit against a local authority that illegally froze his bank account. The clinic is also representing an elderly individual whose bank seized his account without leaving the mandatory minimal income funds available. After the clinic contacted the bank to inform them of their duties under the law, the bank only partially complied. We petitioned the Enforcement Authority for an order and are considering filing a civil suit for negligence.

IV. Legal aid for people with disabilities

The clinic assisted an elderly person with multiple disabilities in two court hearings (February and March 2025) regarding a restraining order request filed against him by an employee in his public Health Care Clinic, due to disability-related aggressive behavior. The clinic argued that the incidents leading to the restraining order request were disability related and occurred because the clinic failed to make proper accommodations for the individual's disabilities. Additionally, the clinic argued that it is inappropriate for an employee of a public health care clinic to file such a request as if it were a private matter, and that the involvement of the Health care provider as well as the Ministry of Health is required. The clinic also claimed that this action violates the client's

right to health care, because the same problems would likely arise at any other clinic, and his medical condition makes it difficult for him to switch clinics after 60 years of receiving treatment at the same one. In the first hearing, the court did not fully accept our arguments but agreed that there was no grounds to issue a restraining order. In the second hearing, unfortunately, the court was not convinced by our position and issued the client a restraining order. To help prevent such situations in the future, we connected the client with the municipal welfare department so that he could receive rehabilitation services and appropriate care.

The clinic is representing a young woman with disability who came to us after winning a workplace discrimination case, in which she had been represented by the Commission for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The employer, following the ruling, shut down the business and stopped responding to her attempts to collect the awarded compensation. She opened a case with the Enforcement and Collection Authority, but collection efforts were unsuccessful. After research conducted by clinic students, the clinic filed a request in February for a hearing and to summon the company owners for a financial capacity investigation. After the opposing side was ordered by the registrar to submit written information about the company's assets, it was revealed that the company is insolvent and has no assets. Despite the legal difficulty of doing so at this stage of the process, the clinic decided to file a petition to lift the corporate veil and hold the owners personally responsible. The clinic is currently working on legal research and drafting the request.

Additional projects and areas of work:

- **Protecting basic rights of debtors:** the clinic wrote memoranda and policy papers concerning new regulations that will determine the protected sum needed for “dignified living”, and other issues.
- **LGBTQ+ health:** the clinic submitted a request to the appeals committee of one of Israel's Public Health Care Provider, requesting it to fund Estrogen injections for a transgender client that are not included in the national health basket. We argued, based on medical opinion, that the existing, state-funded treatment is ineffective for the client, and that this is a life-saving treatment with significant physical and mental health implications for the client. The Exceptions Committee rejected the clinic's request in December 2024 but provided certain medical recommendations to the client. After following those recommendations, the clinic resubmitted the request in March 2025, and in April 2025, the committee informed us that the request was granted.

The Dispute Resolution Clinic

Clinical director: Dana Gilo

Academic director: Orna Rabinovich-Einy

The Conflict Resolution Clinic, which is completing its seventh year, is an innovative and unique clinic. It operates under the belief that using mediation processes and other dispute resolution methods benefits the parties involved in a conflict. Therefore, it aims to embed and disseminate the mediation worldview both among the students in the clinic and the broader community.

A significant portion of existing conflicts can be resolved through dialogue and cooperation between the parties as an alternative to going to court. Conducting mediation in a conflict situation can restore damaged relationships and sometimes even improve them by creating new opportunities for collaboration. Additionally, the use of mediation tools empowers parties, allows them to voice their concerns, and helps them take control of the conflict resolution process. Mediation is particularly important for disadvantaged populations. By imparting mediation skills, such as listening, positive messaging, and improving communication abilities, many conflicts can be prevented in advance, and users can achieve their goals while minimizing harm to others.

The activities of the clinic include pro bono mediations and various projects to embed the mediation discourse, including mediation projects within the university, policy advancement on mediation issues, and the development of the mediation community in Israel.

14 students participated in the clinic this year, and all were certified as mediators in the fall semester, and were involved in the following activities:

I. Pro Bono Mediation

The Clinic provides pro bono mediation services in diverse types of cases. Some of the cases are referred to the Clinic by courts and others from various partners and from the community. Mediation starts with “intake” performed by students, which is an important part of the process and involves providing the parties with information, building trust and addressing concerns they may have. Only after gaining the agreement of all parties can mediation begin. This year the students performed 37 intake sessions, and 7 mediations. Some of these resulted in agreements, whereas others did not. The mediations involved a wide range of topics including divorce and family mediation, a disagreement between a lawyer and his client regarding fees, a financial conflict between neighbors concerning repairs performed to the building, a disagreement between a consumer and a furniture store, and more.

Some of the mediations are referred to the Clinic by other clinics in our faculty. For example, the Clinic performed a mediation between an elderly client and her bank, after she fell victim to fraud, and claimed that the bank should be held accountable for not providing sufficient protection. The mediation in this case did not result in an agreement.

II. Mediation Tools Workshops

The Clinic believes that the tools provided by conflict are powerful means to empower marginalized populations and enable them to advance their interests in the best possible way while preserving meaningful relationships in their lives. For this reason, the Clinic conducts workshops to teach conflict management and mediation skills within various frameworks that serve vulnerable populations—such as community housing for people with disabilities, residential homes for at-risk youth, and more.

Students design the lesson plans for these workshops based on the content learned in the mediation course and tailor each plan to the specific target audience in preparation for the workshop, with guidance and supervision from the clinic instructor.

Each workshop consists of three sessions, each three hours long, and covers topics such as: an introduction to conflict, active listening, effective communication, empathy, reaching agreements, and more.

This year the students performed two workshops in the community court, one in Arabic (for the first time), two workshops in an NGO that provides services for women addicts (one for clients and one for staff), a workshop in organization for soldiers injured in the IDF, a workshop in an elderly day center in Kiryat Motzkin.

III. Mediation in Labor Courts

The students in the Clinic participate as observers in mediation processes conducted at the Haifa Labor Court. Following the mediations, students are required to write reports in which they describe the mediation, the use of the various mediation tools by the mediators, and their reflections on the process. At the end of the year, a comprehensive report is submitted by the Clinic to the President of the Labor Court. The students filed over 20 observation reports this year and they will be analyzed over the summer.

IV. Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is an approach that focuses on the needs of crime victims and their healing, as well as the needs of offenders and providing them an opportunity to take responsibility for their actions. A restorative justice process differs from the conventional formal procedure of punishment and rehabilitation, which typically does not address the emotional aspects for victims and offenders after sentencing.

The Restorative Justice Team works to raise awareness of this process as an option for addressing harm in general, and sexual offenses in particular. This year we created several connections with organizations and schools to promote awareness to the subject.

A high school in the North reached out to us following a serious incident involving the use of generative AI to distribute fake nude images of a student. During an introductory meeting, the idea was raised to establish a mediation station within the school to address similar cases in the future. Other organizations include: the Reali School in Haifa, Rambam Hospital, the university's

disciplinary authorities, Magen David Adom (MDA), the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and the Student Union. We hope that these connections will yeald cooperation next year.

V. Jews and Arabs on Campus

The Clinic continued working to ease tensions and improve relations between Jewish and Arab students in the faculty. Last year the faculty held a consensus-building process which resulted in the “Guidelines for Protected Dialogue” charter. Unfortunately, the relationship between Jewish and Arab students continues to be sensitive and complicated.

This year, the Clinic’s director co-led several meetings with clinic students who are also members of the Student Council, as well as meetings with representatives of the Student Council and the faculty administration.

Two sessions were held in which the Charter for Protected Dialogue was presented to the first- and second-year cohorts. These sessions stirred controversy and led to the realization that a reevaluation is needed regarding how the charter is presented and used. Another agreement building process will be held in the summer and will be facilitated in collaboration with an external moderator. At least two students from the Clinic are expected to participate.

Additionally, the Clinic director lectured to various forums (within the university and also in other institutions) concerning the agreement building process in the faculty.

The Environmental Justice Clinic

Clinical director: Inbar Druyan

The Environmental Justice Clinic is a new clinic established this year. Its goal is to provide students with academic training relevant to real-world environmental challenges, including the climate crisis, and to equip them with skills from the practice of environmental law. The clinic works to advance environmental issues of importance to Israeli society using diverse legal tools.

Through its work, the clinic aims to become a significant force for promoting essential public interests for the environment, citizens, and the state as a whole.

This year, 14 students participated in the clinic, working on four overarching topics: sustainable planning; water and marine pollution; the evacuation and rehabilitation of the Haifa Bay; and waste and circular economy

The Clinic operates in collaboration with prominent field organizations, including: Greenpeace Israel, EcoPeace, Lobby 99, Forum Svivat-Galim, Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI), Zalul, and local activist groups like Save Saadia Stream and Clean Up Haifa Bay. These partnerships helped connect the Clinic's projects to fieldwork, deepens the understanding of issues and their complexities, and supports the collection of relevant data to advance these projects. This field engagement positioned the Clinic as an central player in the environmental arena and attracted approaches from residents seeking legal assistance in addressing environmental hazards in their communities.

In addition, academic collaborations were established this year between the Clinic and the School of Environmental Sciences, the School of Marine Sciences, and the School of Public Health at the University of Haifa. These collaborations help boost the Clinic's projects and will continue to be a central pillar of the Clinic's work to ensure its professional excellence.

Despite its recent establishment, the Clinic has already become a meaningful space for learning, investigation, and legal activism, bridging the world of law with the urgent environmental challenges of our time.

Below is a detailed description of some of our activities this year:

I. Sustainable Planning: The Bat Galim "Casino"

The Clinic is involved in promoting public participation processes with planning authorities in the Haifa Municipality. The main campaign in which the Clinic is involved this year relates to the struggle of residents in the Bat Galim neighborhood over the dilapidated structure on the beach known as the "Casino." This campaign seeks to preserve the neighborhood's character and maintain public access to the beach. The Clinic's involvement spans several legal strategies:

- Objection to the Casino Project Plan

Over the course of the year, the Clinic supported and prepared residents for Local Planning Committee Hearings. The Clinic also worked to postpone hearings until clarity was obtained regarding the legality of the lease contract (will be detailed below). Additionally, the Clinic participated in meetings with the Mayor and deputy Mayor and prepared residents and activists for these meetings. The Clinic drafted an objection to the plan (and updated it after amendments were made to the plan by the developer), to be submitted once it is officially filed and open to public comment. Based on legal research and expert consultations the objection claims that the plan infringes on the public's right to access the beach; that it alters the intimate character of the neighborhood into a commercial and touristic zone. We also argue that the plan undermines environmental justice by prioritizing luxury tourism over public accessibility, and that it negatively affects surfers and local surf clubs. We argue that the plan unjustifiably changes land use designation from public open space to hotel development, and that it privatizes public space, erecting barriers between the beach and the local community.

- Coastal Environment Protection Policy Paper

The Clinic drafted a comprehensive policy paper reviewing recent legal actions against coastal construction, their outcomes, and lessons learned. It includes an analysis of relevant case law and promotes the narrative of coastal preservation and the importance of beaches as a natural resource. The document is intended as a basis for future legislative initiatives and for engaging relevant government bodies.

- Property Tax on Abandoned Structures

Another legal strategy the Clinic employs in the Casino struggle involves utilizing property tax. The Clinic supports imposing local property tax on abandoned buildings to encourage urban renewal, reduce environmental hazards, and strengthen municipal financial resilience. A Freedom of Information (FOI) request was submitted to determine whether the Casino's owners are paying property tax and if they are not - to obtain exemption documentation. The city's response, delivered in March 2025, indicated that no tax is being collected. The Clinic is now researching the legal framework for imposing such a tax, seeing it as a tool to accelerate solutions for the site's development and public interest protection.

- Gaining Public Access to the Casino Waterfront

Alongside the other actions, the Clinic is working for immediate removal of the fence currently blocking public access to the sea around the Casino compound. According to the Coastal Environment Protection Law (2004), the shore should be open and accessible to the public. In November 2024, the clinic asked the Haifa Municipality for a copy of the fence construction permit, which was not available on the municipal engineering site. The unsatisfactory response led to a complaint to enforcement authorities demanding the fence's removal. Simultaneously, the clinic began drafting a petition challenging the illegal construction.

- Class Action Lawsuit Against Beach Blockage:

In addition to the aforementioned Administrative Petition, the Clinic is considering pursuing a class action lawsuit regarding the long-term obstruction of the beach. The goal is to seek damages and impose liability on those responsible for closing access to the marine environment for over a decade. As part of this effort, Freedom of Information requests were sent to the Haifa Municipality, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, and the Israel Land Authority to obtain enforcement records. The clinic also contacted both the authorities and the land-holding company with warnings prior to legal proceedings, asserting the fence is an environmental nuisance that must be removed.

- Lease Legality

In November 2024, the clinic requested a copy of the Casino lease agreement from the Haifa Municipality. After the request was denied, a Freedom of Information request was submitted in January 2024 to the Israel Land Authority. Upon receiving the contract, the Clinic identified clauses requiring the site to remain publicly purposed and developed within one year. The company "Dor Chemicals Ltd.," which holds the lease, failed to meet this requirement. The Clinic is therefore preparing a petition demanding the lease's termination and revision due to its violation. We will argue that the company's prolonged inaction breaches both the lease terms and the site's intended public use. In addition, the Clinic is reviewing whether the District Planning Committee has the legal authority to expand development rights on the scale proposed by the current plan.

- Sea Level Rise

The Clinic is conducting a comprehensive legal study on how the Israeli planning system is preparing for the rise of sea level, to ensure sustainable development in coastal cities. Given the Casino building's proximity to the shoreline, the Clinic investigated how changing sea levels (rising or falling) might affect the feasibility of construction, considering climate-related risks. The research focused on how the boundaries of the coastal environment and the "coastline" itself are defined along Israel's Mediterranean coast. This question is critical to challenging coastal development plans and affects the boundaries and feasibility of the project. The Clinic is exploring how to require planning bodies to adjust the reference shoreline in accordance with climate change and intergenerational needs.

Next year, the Clinic will continue representing residents in the necessary legal proceedings to advance the public interest and will also work alongside the municipality to strengthen its municipal enforcement tools on this issue.

II. Waste and Circular Economy:

Approximately 80% of waste in Israel ends up in landfills. Landfilling not only causes soil, water, and air pollution, but also takes up scarce open spaces. The Ministry of Environmental Protection is working to promote a waste management strategy and significantly reduce the percentage of landfilled waste in Israel. The Clinic seeks to transform waste from a nuisance into a resource and aims to promote sustainable solutions for waste treatment in several ways:

- The Clinic is examining how the budgets for treating waste are allocated, including through public calls issued by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, in order to assess whether

the allocations are made effectively. As part of this effort, we submitted a Freedom of Information request in early March 2025 to collect all necessary data. In June, we received a partial response. We will continue engaging with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and navigating the required procedures to further investigate how funds are actually being distributed. Our review of the public calls raises significant concerns about whether the terms set forth are realistically achievable by the private entities seeking financial support.

- The Clinic is also evaluating the effectiveness of landfill levies imposed in Israel and whether the economic incentives they create actually influence major waste producers to adopt advanced solutions to reduce the volume of waste they generate. The research we conducted suggests that instead of placing pressure on large factories or local authorities, the financial burden is passed on to the public by raising prices. We also mapped the existing Producer Responsibility Laws and discovered that their enforcement is so weak that for many companies it is more "cost-effective" to ignore the laws or meet only the minimum requirements, than to invest in collection and recycling systems. These findings will support the clinic in developing policy papers and legal petitions on the subject of waste in Israel.
- In collaboration with Lobby 99, we mapped the types of waste generated by Rotem Amfert Negev Ltd. plants as part of the phosphate production process in the Dead Sea region. The waste created by this company is toxic and possesses radioactive characteristics that pose a significant risk to public health and the entire ecological system. To date, we have conducted a comparative study reviewing global solutions for dealing with dangerous waste, and we are currently drafting a comprehensive policy paper on the issue. This paper will be promoted in partnership with Lobby 99 before relevant government ministries, in preparation for the renewal of the Dead Sea Works concession in 2030.

III. Rehabilitation of the Haifa Bay area

- Cessation of the Petrochemical Industry and Oil Refining in the Bay

The Clinic is working to promote the implementation of 2022 Government Resolution which aims to end petrochemical industry operations and oil refining in the Haifa Bay, with the goal of improving residents' quality of life and in alignment with the global shift toward renewable energy. While various other environmental organizations are involved in this struggle, the Clinic focuses on promoting the rights of approximately 1,500 employees in the factories slated for closure, in order to prevent an additional barrier to shutting down the facilities. To this end, the Clinic conducted a comparative study on the closure of polluting factories in Israel and abroad, examined models for transition to green employment, and consulted with labor organizations. The Clinic is currently drafting a policy paper that will serve as a basis for proposed legislation on the matter, in collaboration with the Israeli Climate Forum, and will continue meeting with experts to promote a model that balances workers' rights with the environmental objectives of the government resolution.

- Undergrounding of the Railway Tracks in the Haifa Bay

The Clinic has been monitoring the plans for the undergrounding and electrification of the railway and has acted to ensure that the voice of future generations is represented in the legal proceedings on the matter. According to experts, electrifying the existing railway tracks could lead to significant delays in the future undergrounding of the railway and would establish irreversible facts on the ground. As a result, a petition was submitted by the environmental NGO “Representatives of Society and the Public” in April, demanding that Israel Railways present relevant alternatives for undergrounding the railway before starting electrification works. The Clinic filed a petition to join the case, and submitted a substantive response opposing the electrification plans and expressed its position in support of the petition, which is scheduled for a hearing in 2026. In addition, the Clinic met with urban planning experts from the Technion's Faculty of Architecture and Town Planning, led by Professor Carl Martens, the Dean of the faculty, with the aim of advancing legal, public, and planning avenues to halt the electrification and promote the undergrounding of the railway as part of a healthier, more economically and environmentally sound Bay Area. The Clinic will continue to engage with planning experts and environmental planning organizations to develop expert opinions that support alternatives for underground rail tunnels.

- Opposition to the Rehabilitation of Bazan Facilities – “Operation Rising Lion”

Following the damage to Bazan Group’s facilities in the bay as a result of Iranian missile strikes, the Clinic submitted a response to the National Planning and Building Council against the draft order issued by the Minister of Energy supporting the rehabilitation of the company’s facilities. Based on the government’s decision that Bazan’s facilities must be closed, the Clinic is working with a coalition of green organizations to oppose the restoration of the company’s infrastructure—beyond what is strictly necessary to maintain the minimal energy supply required for Israel’s energy sector. Additionally, due to the damage, Bazan’s emissions permits were updated, and the clinic is assisting residents in drafting public comments and objections to the regulatory relief requested by the company.

The Clinic also takes part in planning discussions and promotes public meetings and awareness efforts among Bay Area residents to strengthen the public struggle, in cooperation with activist groups such as “Rov Ha’ir” and “Cleaning Up Haifa Bay.” As part of this effort, a meeting was held in July with over 30 residents at the Purple House in Haifa to discuss the future damages associated with restoring the company’s facilities.

IV. Pollution of Water Sources and the Sea

The Clinic seeks to use legal tools to preserve the coastal environment, and other water sources. For example, the clinic monitors administrative and civil enforcement processes related to the pollution of groundwater reservoirs within Israel’s coastal aquifer. The goal is to identify major pollution points according to national monitoring reports and to promote enforcement actions against the polluters. Additionally, the Clinic monitors the annual reports of the Marine Pollution Prevention Fund, as well as the decision-making process of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Marine Discharge Permits within the Ministry of Environmental Protection. These evaluations aim to allow for legal action in appropriate cases.

- Rehabilitation of the Southern Jordan River

As part of a collaborative research effort with the organization *EcoPeace* to prevent sewage discharge into the Jordan River, we investigated the sources of pollution and explored preventive measures to identify the most effective legal pathways for rehabilitating the Jordan River. Our research led us to examine discharge authorization orders in the relevant river segment. In December 2024 and March 2025, we submitted Freedom of Information requests to the Water Authority for data on the discharge permits of the river's two main pollution sources: the *Mekorot Saline Carrier* and the *Beit She'an Wastewater Treatment Plant*. We are currently analyzing the responses to devise a legal strategy that can promote the water quality in the river.

The Clinic is also drafting a position paper on tort liability for pollution in the Jordan River, comparing it to previous Israeli cases and analyzing monitoring reports by the Water Authority to demonstrate a causal link between polluters' actions and ecological harm. We have compiled all existing discharge permits authorizing discharge into the Jordan and are reviewing compliance with the conditions set forth in these permits.

As part of the project, a field tour was conducted for Clinic students. The Jordan Valley Regional Council, the Water Authority, and other experts we collaborate with guided the tour and shared their insights. We had the opportunity to meet stakeholders in the Jordan River rehabilitation project and observe the actual sewage discharge points that pollute the river. We discovered a shared goal among all stakeholders to prevent pollution and a genuine willingness to find alternative solutions. The tour helped us better understand the case and strengthened our motivation to work toward restoring the river.

- Rehabilitation of the Harod Stream

During the second semester, we were exposed to pollution in the Harod Stream caused by wastewater discharged by the *Tnuva Tel Yosef* dairy plant. We began exploring the possibility of initiating a class-action lawsuit regarding this environmental damage. In May 2025 we submitted a Freedom of Information request to the Water Authority asking for monitoring reports and wastewater discharge data from the plant. In July, we received the requested information. From our analysis, it appears that for many years, *Tnuva Tel Yosef* has committed to stopping the discharge of wastewater into the stream. Authorization permits for discharges have consistently included conditions requiring a phased exit plan from the stream, but in practice, this plan has not yet been implemented. In searching for related documents, authorization permits, protocols, and so on, we realized that key information was missing. The permits were published without accompanying protocols, making it difficult to understand the decision-making dynamics. To clarify the missing information, we made contact with key figures in the Water Authority and the local regional council and began working in parallel on a document outlining the ecological importance of the Harod Stream and the need to prevent its pollution.

The Public Defender and Criminal Justice Clinic

Clinical Director: Sharon Ringer

Academic Director: Hagit Lernau

The Public Defender's office was established according to the 1995 Public Defender Act and provides legal representation in criminal procedures for suspects and defendants who do not have access to legal representation. The populations represented by the Public Defender's Office are those with limited means, minors, and individuals with disabilities. The clinic combines theoretical lessons with practical work.

This year, 14 students participated in the Clinic. In the lessons, students discuss the dilemmas faced by defense attorneys, drawing from case law, legislation, professional literature, and films that illustrate these dilemmas. Additionally, topics such as the management of criminal proceedings, the rights of defendants and suspects, and the professional and ethical duties of defense attorneys are explored. In their practical work, the students work in partnership with the Haifa office of the Public Defender's office in the Ministry of Justice. Unlike other clinics at the university where all students work with an "inhouse" clinical director, in the Public Defender's Clinic, students are partnered with practicing attorneys who represent defendants and detainees in criminal cases on behalf of the Public Defender's Office in various courts. Throughout the academic year, students shadow their supervising attorneys, assisting them with a wide range of tasks. Among other things, students accompany the attorneys to court hearings, meet with clients, visit detention facilities, and assist in preparing defenses for suspects and defendants.

The work in the Clinic is very intensive. Students accompany attorneys to multiple court hearings throughout the year, attend meetings with clients, visit detention facilities, and more. The work also sometimes involves dealing with complex emotional situations. On one hand, students come with a strong belief in human rights, in the importance of the right to representation, and in the sanctity of fair process. On the other hand, facing real evidence for the first time—such as victims' statements and videos from crime scenes—can be challenging, as students struggle to balance their emotions. These experiences and insights into the work of a defense attorney are processed during the clinic's classes.

The academic component of the Clinic this year focused on legislative processes and the ways in which policy is formed and normative frameworks are shaped. The classes were dedicated to

understanding the legislative process and the distinction between government and private legislation; mapping the value systems and normative arrangements in the field of criminal law; and discussing evidence-based policy.

In addition, the students attended guest lectures by Adv. Gil Shapira, Head of the National Department for Inmate Representation at the Public Defender's Office, and by Adv. Nili Finkelstein and Adv. Yifat Raveh from the Criminal Division of the Legal Counsel and Legislation Department at the Ministry of Justice.

Students were asked to follow the publication of legislative proposals open for public comment and to regularly consult the Knesset legislation website. They were required to choose a bill related to the criminal justice system and write their seminar paper on that legislative proposal.

The Human Rights Clinic

Clinical Director: Abeer Baker

Academic Director: Ilan Saban

The Human Rights Clinic exposes students to the power imbalances present in society and the resulting violations of human rights. Disadvantaged and marginalized populations (such as ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, crime victims, undocumented individuals, and prisoners) require more assistance than others in realizing their human rights and accessing the legal system.

Students in the Clinic engage in a combination of legal, para-legal, and applied legal research activities. The Clinic operates on an individual level by advocating for the rights of clients before state authorities and approaching relevant judicial bodies. On a broader community level, the Clinic conducts meetings with various disadvantaged populations and their representatives. The Clinic works to change policies where such change is needed by filing significant petitions, drafting legislative proposals, writing position papers, participating in forums, and collaborating with many human rights organizations in the country.

In the academic course, students analyze the law and its potential to serve as a tool for social change through theoretical analysis of human rights theories and fields both domestically and internationally. The seminar addresses various issues in the field of human rights and the ways in which different social change agents have worked to promote and protect the human rights of various groups in the country.

The Clinic enrolled 15 students this year. On June 14th our student Shada Khatib was killed by a missile on her home in Tamra. The students and staff mourn her loss. May her memory be a blessing.

The clinic engaged in the following projects and activities:

I. Status in Israel

The Clinic provides services to various groups of undocumented individuals in the country, including Palestinians, asylum seekers from North Africa, and migrant workers. The legal issues faced by these individuals are diverse, including issues related to residency status, the right to health (both physical and mental), the right to housing and welfare services, debts, employment, family matters, and more. In relevant cases, students work on applications to appropriate authorities, including the Ministry of Interior and its various committees, appeal bodies, courts, and health funds. It is important to note that handling these cases is lengthy and complex due to the numerous issues faced by clients requiring intensive work with various governmental authorities. Here are two examples from about ten cases the clinic dealt with this year concerning legal status in Israel:

The Clinic is handling the case of a young man who immigrated to Israel with his family from Ethiopia when he was a minor. Upon their arrival to Israel his family were converted to Judaism and naturalized, but he was placed in an institution for at risk youth, where no steps were taken to facilitate his conversion. As a result, the young man has been unable to obtain Israeli citizenship. The Clinic repeatedly approached the Ministry of Interior on his behalf, and each time the Ministry required additional documentation, some of which is impossible to obtain from Ethiopia. When these failed, the Clinic filed a petition on his behalf to the Administrative Court in Haifa (December 2023). The court held three hearings, and in the final hearing the Court advised the Clinic's director to accompany the petitioner to the Ethiopian embassy in another attempt to obtain a document from Ethiopian authorities. This, however, was unsuccessful, and the embassy informed that no document could be issued for the client, since the problem lies with the Israeli Ministry of Interior. The Clinic reported this to the court, and asked the court for a judicial ruling, since the client was left with no viable path to citizenship. Unfortunately, the District Court ruled that the Ministry of Interior's conduct did not amount to extreme unreasonableness and therefore dismissed the petition. The court recommended, however, that the Ministry of Interior take the petitioner's plight into consideration, and try to re-examine his case with an open mind. The Clinic appealed this decision to the Supreme Court and a request to exempt the petitioner from the court fee and security deposit was granted. The hearing is scheduled for January 2026.

In another case, the Welfare Department in Kiryat Bialik referred a woman, who resides in town, and was married to an Israeli citizen. The couple have a daughter, who is also an Israeli citizen. The woman separated from her Israeli husband due to violence, and following the divorce the Ministry of Interior notified the woman that the Family Unification application was discontinued and that she would be deported from Israel. The Clinic submitted an urgent request on her behalf to extend her residence permit, and to apply humanitarian provisions in her case. The woman was accompanied by students to the interview at the Ministry of Interior, who helped her deliver the necessary documents and assisted her in presenting her story to the officials. The Ministry granted the request and provided a temporary extension of her permit. Simultaneously, in December 2024, the Clinic filed a formal application on her behalf for legal status in Israel, primarily due to her Israeli daughter's citizenship, and a decision on that application is still pending. Meanwhile the Clinic continued working on temporary extensions of her visa. A meeting scheduled for June 2025 was postponed due to the war, and the Ministry informed the client that her visa would be extended for an additional three months.

II. Language Accessibility to Health-Care

The Clinic is involved in a project to ensure accessibility to health care for members of the Ethiopian community, and especially older individuals, for whom language can be a barrier to adequate health care. Even though translation services to Amharic are supposed to be available, many physicians and institutions do not provide them to their patients.

In order to examine the scope of the problem as well as the services available, the Clinic filed seven Freedom of Information requests to Health Care Providers and to Hospitals in the North, requiring information concerning the number of Amharic speaking patients treated, the number of staff who speak Amharic, whether an interpreter is employed and whether that employment is fulltime/parttime. Additionally, we asked to what extent the institution made use of the telephone

interpretation services provided by the Ministry of Health, whether periodic assessments were conducted concerning translation, and whether complaints concerning language accessibility were made. By July 2025, only two responses were received – from two health care providers. The responses provided only partial information relative to what was requested, but even the limited data reveals points that may serve as a foundation for legal action. For example, one health care provider stated that they do not provide translation services in its phone services meant for appointment scheduling and inquiries. This project will continue next year.

III. Legal Aid in Online Sex Offenses

The Clinic, together with the Law, Technology and Cyber Clinic and the Legal Feminism Clinic, is involved in a project concerning protection from online sex offenses. The internet, and especially generative AI has created grave challenges concerning the protection from online offenses including deep fake, and the quick spread of images and videos. The Human Rights Clinic offers legal aid and assistance especially to victims in the Arab community, where the damage to victims by such crimes is compounded by the risk that women victims face in conservative communities.

For example, the Clinic is assisting a young Arab woman whose images without a Hijab were distributed online without her consent by a man she met on social media. The woman comes from a religious family and was significantly harmed and endangered by the publication. In addition, fake accounts were created using her name and phone number, falsely implying that she was offering sexual services. The Clinic assisted the client in removing the content and closing the fake accounts. The Clinic is considering filing for a protection order on her behalf if the harassment continues, however this is challenging since the woman does not have verified information regarding the perpetrator's identity.

The Clinic is representing another Arab individual whose sexual identity was publicized without his consent as revenge by a man whose romantic advances the client rejected. The perpetrator opened fake accounts through which he sent anonymous messages to the client's family. Following the Clinic's intervention the accounts were removed.

IV. Incarcerated Individuals' Rights

The Clinic is representing a couple, both of whom are serving lengthy prison sentences. The two met while incarcerated, and after demonstrating a genuine relationship were found eligible for conjugal visits. After unsuccessful attempts to conceive naturally, the couple requested fertility treatment through the Israel Prison Service (IPS). The IPS objected arguing that their right to be a parent should be restricted based on the best interest of the child. A previous petition that the prisoners filed was rejected by the court after the hospital designated to perform the treatment informed the court that no doctor was willing to carry out the procedure. The current petition was filed by the couple after finding a hospital willing to perform the treatment, and the couple approached the Clinic asking for representation at the hearing in court (March 2025). In the hearing it was made clear that the hospital that agreed to treat the couple was not authorized to do so because it is not a public hospital, therefore the Clinic is now helping the couple approach several public hospitals.

V. Free speech and political persecution

Following the war there have been many cases of restriction of free speech and political persecution of Arab citizens. The Clinic is representing an activist arrested by the police for organizing a vigil against the continued withholding of the body of a deceased prisoner who died of illness while being held custody for security offenses. The state is refusing to release the body to his family using it as a bargaining chip in negotiations to release Israeli hostages.

However, the client claims that he was not involved in the organization and planning of the vigil, he merely shared an invitation on social media. Importantly, the vigil itself was legal and did not require a police permit. After holding him in detention in poor conditions, he was released before a hearing was held in court. The Clinic is assisting the client in filing a lawsuit for unlawful arrest and detention in degrading conditions. Additionally, the Clinic is examining the official category under which the charges were dropped and ensuring that the category be “lack of guilt” rather than “lack of evidence”. The police have not responded to any of clinic’s preliminary letters, therefore we are weighing the legal options.

The Clinic is representing a student who participated in a demonstration against the war, in which she held images of Palestinian children who had been killed in the war. As a result of her participation the student was slandered in student Whatsapp groups and reported being afraid to attend class. The Clinic contacted the program she is enrolled in and requested that the student be provided support and protection, and that the institution publicly denounce the campaign against her. The program took swift action to remove the inciting content and held those responsible accountable for their conduct.

On a broader scale, the Clinic is concerned by the widespread arrests and indictments of Arab citizens for online expression critical of Israel. To address this concern we filed a Freedom of Information request (March 2025) to the Cyber Unit in the Ministry of Justice, asking for information on investigations and removal of content based on the category of incitement to terrorism. We also asked for information concerning the category of incitement to racism, to compare it with incitement to terrorism. The State Attorney’s office referred us, in lieu of a response, to a report published concerning the activity of the unit.

After the tragic death of our student Shada Khatib, we were shocked to see a video circulated on social media in which people could be heard rejoicing as the missile struck an Arab town (Tamra). The voices in the video sang “May your village burn” a song that has been publicly sung by some Israelis over the past two years as a hateful message against all Arabs. The Clinic resolved to take action against the widespread phenomenon of online incitement to racism and violence against Palestinians—a problem that law enforcement authorities have consistently failed to address. As a first step, the students are compiling a collection of inciting and offensive posts specifically relating to the missile strike in Tamra. So far, 30 cases have been gathered. Next, the Clinic plans to demand that criminal investigation be initiated on suspicions of incitement to racism, incitement to violence, and expressions of support for a terrorist act. In cases where the posts clearly constituted group defamation, we are considering approaching the Attorney General to exercise her exclusive authority to prosecute for defamation directed at a national or cultural community.

The Law, Technology and Cyber Clinic

Clinical Director: Dalit Ken-Dror Feldman

Academic Director: Michal Gal

The Law, Technology and Cyber Clinic aims to address the many legal challenges arising in the technological era. These issues include, among others: privacy protection and Big Data, intellectual property, freedom of expression online, cyberattacks and national security, and suppliers' responsibilities for online breaches. The Clinic combines an understanding of technological innovations with expertise in the relevant legal fields for the regulation of these innovations and uses legal tools as a means for social change and protection of rights in technology and cyber contexts.

In the academic year 2024-2025, 17 students participated in the clinic, working on several projects including the following:

I. The Elderly and Digital Accessibility

In an attempt to ensure online services are accessible to the elderly, the students worked on several fronts:

- Developing a Website Accessibility Index

The Clinic, in collaboration with the Israel Internet Association and other civil society organizations, is preparing an index that assesses how user-friendly websites are for older adults. The goal is to ensure that older people are not hindered in their use of online services due to lack of technological skills. Rather than promoting new legislation or mandating compliance, the project encourages voluntary improvement (self-regulation) through the public release of index results. This approach was chosen in light of the challenges that have arisen in implementing existing accessibility regulations in the digital space. The index will initially focus on private sector websites that provide essential services—such as health care providers, banks, transportation companies, the electric company, the postal service, and pension companies. Government websites will be examined at a later stage if it becomes clear that they are insufficiently accessible, despite statements by the Israeli Digital Directorate regarding intentions to promote this issue.

During the year, six coalition meetings were held in which discussions focused on how to quantify and design the index as objectively as possible. The index, based on approximately 60 reports written by clinic students will be built by an external expert. Through this process, students learn about the needs of the elderly population while engaging with both legal and non-legal regulatory frameworks.

The Clinic is also working on a document examining legal and quasi-legal arrangements in English-speaking countries to understand how digitalization processes are implemented elsewhere and whether they accommodate the needs of older populations.

- Legal advise in individual cases

The Clinic provides advice and assistance to elderly individuals in cases related to digital services. This year the clinic assisted in several cases including difficulty accessing online services provided by the Tax Authority, and "Net Hamishpat" system: the judiciary online system, through which litigants can perform actions and receive updates in their cases.

- User identification in online services

Following the accumulation of several cases, we ascertained that there is a problem with identification in online services that use automated call-routing systems. In May 2025, the Clinic contacted all health care providers and large banks, requesting that once a user is identified by ID number and recognized as a senior citizen, they be given the option to directly wait for a human representative. The banks replied that under a service charter signed during the COVID-19 period, they are already operating accordingly. The health care providers provided partial responses. The Clinic will continue to monitor the situation.

In addition, in July 2025, a notice was issued by the National Identification System stating that a phone number can now only be used for one user's identification. This means that if an elderly person is incapacitated and has a guardian or an active power of attorney, the guardian or decision-maker must purchase an additional phone line in order to continue acting on the person's behalf. This requirement may significantly impair the functioning of many caregivers. The Clinic submitted a letter to the National Digital Directorate and to the Special Knesset Committee for Holocaust Survivors. The Digital Directorate stated that it is examining the issue. The Clinic will follow up on the matter.

- AI Literacy Workshop for seniors

On May 22, 2025, nine students from the Clinic volunteered to conduct a workshop on artificial intelligence tools for about 80 elderly individuals at Beit Nagler in Kiryat Haim. In the workshop, the students explained the concept of artificial intelligence and demonstrated to participants how to use these tools wisely. The Clinic also distributed an informational handout on AI with explanations, enabling participants to continue practicing after the workshop. The event received much praise.

II. Privacy

One of the greatest challenges in terms of human rights in the digital age, is the protection and reconceptualization of privacy. The Clinic is involved in various activities surrounding the right to privacy.

- **Privacy and Artificial Intelligence in the Education System**

The Clinic is writing a policy paper on the integration of AI in education, reference to privacy laws, the Student Rights Law, and relevant academic articles and studies from Israel and abroad. When completed, the policy paper will be presented to the Ministry of Education.

Additionally, the Clinic, together with the Movement for Freedom of Information, submitted a Freedom of Information request regarding pedagogical management software—specifically asking who has access to it, how long records are retained, and more. In December 2024, the Ministry of Education provided a detailed response, including thorough explanations about data retention procedures and the protection of children's privacy. In light of this comprehensive response, it was decided not to pursue the request further.

- Privacy Legislation

There are numerous legislation activities in areas related to privacy. The Clinic is monitoring these processes, examining each bill and when necessary intervening through response papers and participation in Knesset committee meetings. For example, in January 2025, the Clinic joined a call to the Minister of the Interior not to extend a temporary provision that required collecting and storing fingerprints as part of the biometric ID process. This provision was originally enacted for identification in mass-casualty events, particularly after the events of October 2023. The petition argued that the need for collecting and storing fingerprints has since diminished. If such data collection is still deemed necessary, it should be regulated under a separate law.

Another case involved the requirement from Holocaust Survivors who are eligible for compensation to periodically prove they are alive via a facial recognition app called "Panim" (Face). This app allows a survivor's face to be photographed to confirm they are alive. Until now, this confirmation was made in writing by an authorized official. The app raised numerous legal concerns regarding privacy and the technological literacy of Holocaust survivors. A hearing was held on February 19, 2025, in the Knesset Committee for Holocaust Survivors, with the participation of the Clinic as well as clinics from additional institutions. As a result, it was stated that the app would not be mandatory and survivors may continue to verify their status by other means.

During the spring semester, the Clinic drafted a position paper on the right to erase or correct personal data, and on the "right to be forgotten" in the era of AI. The right to be forgotten allows individuals to delete outdated, irrelevant, or inaccurate digital information. While this right has not yet been formally recognized in Israel, individuals do have the right to delete incorrect information or request the removal of personal data from databases. The Clinic is examining whether it is possible to effectively delete data from AI models. The position paper will be submitted to relevant regulatory authorities.

- Privacy policy and large language models

The Clinic, in collaboration with Prof. Tal Zarsky, received funding from the Class Action Fund for a research project on privacy policies and large language models (LLMs). The research has collected over 100 Hebrew-language privacy policies from various websites. These documents will be analyzed and coded using AI tools. The study will examine whether AI models can provide clearer and more accurate explanations than law students when interpreting privacy policies for laypersons. For example, the research will assess whether the models can identify and explain how websites address the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

III. Algorithmic Transparency

This is the third and final year of the EU funded project (together with the Movement for Freedom of Information – MFI)) aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability in the governmental use of Algorithms. To date, the project has led to the submission of 31 letters to various authorities, over 60 Freedom of Information requests, and several legal petitions filed by the Movement for Freedom of Information. In two of these cases, the Clinic actively joined the legal representation; in seven others, the clinic assisted with research, drafting, and strategy.

- Decent Living Calculator

The "Decent Living Calculator" is a digital tool developed by the National Insurance Institute (NII) and was previously available on the NII's website but has since been removed. The Clinic (together with MFI and our Civil Litigation Clinic) filed a petition with the Jerusalem District Court to gain access to the calculator and its algorithm, raising the fundamental question of whether algorithmic transparency falls within the scope of the Freedom of Information Law. Previous hearings (March 2024, June 2024) led to the NII providing several Excel files with details about the calculator, but not the algorithm.

This year, the Clinics and the Movement for Freedom of Information prepared and submitted an expert opinion by Prof. Orr Dunkelman from the Department of Computer Science at the University of Haifa. The opinion argued that disclosing the calculator's code would likely not pose a security risk to infrastructure or other software systems. In the hearing on November 2024, the NII argued that considering increased cyberattacks, there were potential risks to infrastructure if the requested formulas were released. Given these changed circumstances, the court suggested the petitioners withdraw the case, and the petitioners accepted this proposal.

- Information Leaflet: Individual Rights in Algorithmic Decision Making

The Clinic drafted an informational leaflet outlining the rights of individuals facing algorithmic decision-making by government or public institutions. The leaflet explained, among other things, that algorithms can make mistakes, and that laws such as the Freedom of Information Law, the Privacy Protection Law, and the Duty to Provide Reasons Law allow individuals to request explanations and appeal decisions. The leaflet was translated into English, Russian, Arabic, and Amharic and distributed at the December 2024 Cyber Conference held by the Haifa Center for Cyber, Law and Policy, in collaboration with the Federmann Cyber Center at the Hebrew University, the European Union, the Movement for Freedom of Information, and the Clinic. The conference focused on algorithmic transparency and included several sessions with legal and technological experts, including one in which the Clinic director participated.

I. Protection from Online Sex Offenses

The Clinic, together with the Legal Feminism Clinic and the Human Rights Clinic, received a grant from the Class Action Fund for a project aimed at protecting against sexual abuse in the digital space. The project includes individual legal assistance (provided by the other two clinics) and policy advocacy. This year marks the second year of the project.

The Law Technology and Cyber Clinic wrote a position paper concerning the legal tools available for addressing the phenomenon of spreading sexual content without consent. The paper referred to existing legislation in Israel and in other jurisdictions. Two main avenues exist: the first involves removal of content (including placing responsibility on digital platforms), and the second involves "flagging" AI generated content (aimed at addressing the phenomenon of fake sexual images and videos created using artificial intelligence ("deepfakes"). As the policy paper stresses, none of these are currently available under Israeli law, and therefore these could present potential initiatives. However the policy paper also presents the limitations of these possibilities.

The position paper was presented at a closed roundtable held on July 24, 2025, initiated by the three Clinics involved in the project. The round table, which was attended by representatives from civil society, government, and academia, aimed to create a clearer framework for cooperation among these stakeholders and to discuss potential strategies for addressing emerging threats of sexual abuse in the age of AI. These include threats posed by "deep-nudes" (e.g., placing someone's face on a naked body in an image or video; inserting a person into an event that never happened; digitally undressing someone in an image using advanced technologies; generating fake sexual images and videos featuring synthetic characters created by AI trained on vast amounts of data).

The legal Feminism Clinic

Clinical Director: Efrat Lupo-Moskovich

Academic Director: Noya Rimalt

The Legal Feminism Clinic works to identify areas of social life in which gender inequality is manifested and to explore legal and social strategies for addressing it. The Clinic engages with a broad range of legal and social issues while fostering a critical feminist perspective.

This year 15 students participated in the Clinic. They responded to over 35 cases on various legal matters. Some of these inquiries received short-term advice and support, others are ongoing. The Clinic assisted and accompanied clients in filing complaints with the police; represented clients in four court cases, represented a client in a hearing before the Commissioner for Women's Employment, in petitions to the National Insurance Institute, and more. In addition to handling individual cases, the Clinic also runs several broader projects focused on challenging systemic issues. These were selected collaboratively with the students during the first semester learning process.

The academic meetings focused on introducing students to critical feminist thinking and developing the ability to view the world and inequality issues through a feminist lens. They also included project selection and discussions of the individual cases students were handling. We also explored topics including tort law remedies in cases of sexual violence, defamation and silencing, the choice to become a parent or remain child-free, and more.

Below is a detailed description of just some of our activities:

I. Sexual Harrassment and Discrimination in the Workplace

This year we represented three clients who had been sexually harrassed in the workplace. These cases concerned not only the harassment itself but also retaliation following the filing of a complaint—an all-too-common occurrence in workplace harassment cases—and violations by employers of their duties under the law and regulations for the prevention of sexual harassment.

One of the most significant cases the clinic handled involved a female military officer who was undergoing medical residency training and was dismissed after filing a complaint of sexual harassment. Last year the Clinic filed a lawsuit with the Regional Labor Court with a petition for reinstatement as an interim measure while the lawsuit is pending. On August 31, 2024, the court granted the request and ordered her reinstatement to the residency, marking a precedent-setting decision. In response, the state (represented by the Ministry of Health and the hospital through the State Attorney's Office) filed a motion for leave to appeal with the National Labor Court (September 2024), along with a motion to stay execution of the reinstatement order. The Clinic submitted written responses to both motions, and a hearing was held on November 2025, in which the state was instructed to take all necessary steps to comply with the reinstatement order, and the parties were encouraged to engage in mediation to resolve the broader issues in the lawsuit. After considerable negotiation the client resumed her residency at a different hospital, and we are now

preparing for mediation. Meanwhile, we are also pursuing an appeal against the military's decision regarding her eligibility for an additional residency period funded by the army. This matter is being addressed before a judicial authority within the Ministry of Defense, separate from the Labor Court and mediation process.

This case raises particularly complicated questions, because the state's position (both the IDF and the Ministry of Health) is that a military physician training in a civilian hospital is not an employee and therefore has no legal protection against sexual harassment or violation of her rights.

Another case involves a nurse at a hospital who was summoned for a hearing dismissed while undergoing fertility treatments. The hospital filed a request with the Women's Employment Commissioner for permission to dismiss her, and the Clinic represented her at the hearing. We argued that even if the fertility treatments were not the reason for the dismissal, the employer's action was disproportionate and excessive—especially given that it was based on a single patient's complaint. We also revealed significant procedural flaws in the hearing process, including attempts to fabricate additional complaints. Our arguments were accepted, and the dismissal was overturned by the Commissioner, who explicitly adopted our position on all fronts. Recently, the client informed us that the hospital is attempting to transfer her to another position, and we are currently considering legal options to respond to this development.

II. Representation in Silencing Lawsuits (SLAPP: Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation)

Defamation lawsuits filed against individuals who publicized their experience of sexual harassment constitute part of the backlash to the #MeToo movement, that encouraged women and men around the world to come forward with their stories of sexual abuse. Given the structural barriers to filing formal complaints in such cases, public discourse becomes even more vital, and therefore the Clinic works to improve protections for those who disclose cases of abuse.

The Clinic (in collaboration with the Civil Litigation Clinic) is representing a feminist social activist who is one of four defendants in a defamation suit. The case concerns an investigative report, in which the activist was involved, that was published on a platform dedicated to exposing gender-based violence against women in its many forms. The investigation revealed widespread sexual abuse within a spiritual retreat setting involving workshops and festivals, where the managers of the space exploited their power to harm participants, volunteers, clients, and staff. One of the alleged abusers mentioned in the report sued the website, its editor, the journalist, and the researcher, claiming defamation.

As a part of the proceedings, a mediation session took place in December 2024, but was unsuccessful. A preliminary hearing was held in the Be'er Sheva Magistrates Court in January 2025, and we are currently engaged in pre-trial procedures. The Clinic filed a motion to dismiss the case on the grounds that it constitutes a SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation). Our argument is supported by a recent precedent set by the Israeli Supreme Court in *Leave for Civil Appeal 1954/24 Vaknin v. Kibbutz Nir David – Cooperative Society* (Nevo, January 7, 2025). In that case, Justice Solberg opened the door to dismissing SLAPPs, establishing

criteria and ruling that plaintiffs who continue with such suits may be liable for high legal costs—up to the full amount of the claim. Our motion demonstrated why this lawsuit meets the SLAPP criteria and argues that the court should prevent the lawsuit from being heard in the interest of protecting survivors who testified anonymously for the investigative report and would have to expose their identity in court. We further claimed that the plaintiff is using the legal process to try to uncover their identities.

The court partly granted our motion. The court held that there are indications this is a SLAPP and ruled that if the plaintiff chooses to proceed and it is later determined that the claim is indeed a SLAPP, he may be ordered to pay the full amount of the claim—500,000 ILS. Following the decision, the plaintiff informed the court of his intention to continue with the lawsuit, despite the potential cost implications.

Following this, and other cases, we are working to amend Israel's Defamation Law. Defamation lawsuits against survivors of sexual violence, act as a sword hanging over the head of anyone considering coming forward outside the criminal justice system. Public disclosure is a powerful tool for breaking the silence that still surrounds sexual abuse, allowing survivors to seek recognition, process their trauma, and reclaim their voices. They can also potentially prevent future abuse by exposing perpetrators. However, we also acknowledge the rights of the accused to defend themselves against allegations. In light of this complicated web of considerations, we aim to focus on amending the law as it concerns defamation suits against journalistic and investigative bodies that expose sexual abuse. These entities, which we argue act under the "Responsible Journalism Doctrine", conduct thorough and fact-checked investigations prior to publication. They give voice to survivors who cannot or do not wish to go public themselves and thus fulfill a vital social role—preventing further harm and fostering meaningful public discourse. Our proposal is to create a legal presumption that lawsuits filed against journalistic bodies for reporting on sexual abuse would be presumed to be SLAPPs. The burden of proof would shift to the plaintiff to show otherwise. If the plaintiff succeeds, the lawsuit could proceed. Students working on this project are currently conducting comparative legal research to identify similar legislative mechanisms in other countries. The project will continue next year.

III. Training for Mediators

Judges, prosecutors, investigators, legal aid attorneys, and essentially any professional involved in cases of sexual assault in the legal system undergo training on the subject. The importance of such training is due to the complexity of trauma and post-trauma manifestations among survivors—complexities that at times clash with the needs and frameworks of the legal system, particularly the criminal justice system. Anyone working in this field must exercise sensitivity, understand the nuances involved, and provide an appropriate response.

Mediation has become an integral part of the legal landscape—as seen in mandatory mediation sessions (known in Israel as *Mahut* meetings), in the preference of parties to resolve disputes through mediation instead of litigation, and in the overall expansion of mediation as a method of dispute resolution.

Accordingly, mediators play an increasingly significant role also in cases involving sexual assault. Many civil claims arising from sexual assault are brought to mediation at the parties' request. However, in such cases, a mediator—who is expected to lead the process—may have no knowledge or familiarity with sexual trauma. Based on the Clinic's experience, including a case we encountered this year, mediators who are unfamiliar with the dynamics of sexual trauma may inadvertently cause further harm—through inappropriate comments, victim-blaming language, and actions that undermine the process.

Therefore, the Clinic is currently researching the training, regulation, and oversight of mediators, with the goal of formulating a principled request to mandate training for mediators and to establish specific guidelines for appointing mediators in cases involving sexual assault. During the spring semester, the students distributed questionnaires to mediators and attorneys who have represented parties in such mediation proceedings. The aim was to identify needs and gather perspectives from the field regarding how mediators conduct themselves in processes involving sexual trauma. This project will continue next year.

IV. Online Sexual Harassment

The Clinic, together with the Human Rights Clinic and the Law, Technology and Cyber Clinic received a grant from the Israel Class Action Fund to provide legal aid in cases of online sexual harassment, including the disseminations of sexual content (authentic and fake) online.

The Clinic assisted several clients including a client whose former partner extorted her in a financial dispute by threatening to distribute nude images of her if she did not withdraw the lawsuit. She later discovered that he had created a fake social media profile in her name and uploaded nude photos of her. A police complaint was filed, and the images were eventually removed. We continue to support the client through the ongoing legal process.

In another case, our client, who was an IDF soldier at the time, was harassed by another soldier who created a fake profile in her name on a hookup app, shared photos of her, and violated her privacy and reputation in various ways. The criminal case ended in a conditional settlement. The Client is now seeking formal acknowledgment of the serious harm caused and financial compensation. We submitted a pre-litigation letter, and we are currently negotiating a settlement in which the perpetrator will compensate the client.

In another interesting case, a counselor in a high school reached out to us regarding a case in which intimate videos of a student were circulated by a former partner (also a student). The counselor contacted us on the student's behalf, seeking guidance on how to support her in light of the legal proceedings initiated by her parents. The student's parents and the counselor were advised and supported by the Clinic over a period of time. Ultimately, they decided not to pursue criminal proceedings, in accordance with the student's wishes and preferences.

This case is part of a broader initiative of Restorative Justice in cases of sexual harassment. Together with the Mediation Clinic, we aim to put forward alternative solutions to such cases, especially when minors are involved or when the parties are a part of a close community.

Restorative Justice enables solving crises in a mutually beneficial way, while giving sufficient notice to the emotional and social needs of all sides and ensuring safety and inclusion.

V. Gender and Health Care

In the Spring semester, the clinic began a collaboration with the *Forum for Law, Gender, and Social Policy* at the Faculty of Law, and with *Forum 21*—a coalition of organizations working to promote women's health rights, with an emphasis on reproductive rights and abortion—and. The main focus of this collaboration is a project concerning access to contraception for minors.

In Israel, girls under the age of 18 are legally prohibited from requesting or receiving a prescription for contraceptives without their parents' (or legal guardians') knowledge and consent. This restriction prevents young women from accessing contraception at an age when they are already sexually active (and above the age of legal consent) and may result in unwanted pregnancies, abortions, increased risk of sexually transmitted infections, and even childbirth at a young age. This situation constitutes a violation of their right to health as recognized in international conventions.

The issue is legally complex, as it requires legislative amendment or administrative regulation through directives issued by the Ministry of Health. As part of the collaboration with the forums, a working group was formed who will advance a position paper on the issue, with the Clinic focusing on the legal aspects involved.

The Clinic also provided targeted help in comparative research about the funding of abortions for women without legal status. The research is a part of work on a position paper by Forum 21.

The Clinic for Legal Aid in Times of War

Clinical Director: Vardit Avidan

Academic Director: Lihi Yona

The Legal Aid Clinic in Times of War is a new and unique clinic that was established in the 2024–2025 academic year, in response to the urgent need that arose after the outbreak of the “Iron Swords” war. Last year (2023-2024) the Clinics received various inquiries related to the war, which were handled by the clinicians in an emergency format. Since the war, and the legal challenges it creates, continued, we decided to establish a new clinic dedicated solely to addressing issues that arise and emerge during wartime. The Clinic provides legal assistance to victims of the war and engages in conceptualizing and addressing these new legal dilemmas.

Attorney Vardit Avidan was chosen to lead this complex task of heading the Clinic. Over the past decade, she successfully led the Legal Feminism Clinic and brings extensive experience in managing legal proceedings across many areas of law, as well as expertise in trauma and psychological harm. The Clinic operated this year with eight students. Here are some of the cases and projects the Clinic was involved in:

I. Recognition as Terror Victims: the Case of Online Presence

The Clinic is representing five cases in which people who were not physically present in the October 7th attack but who are seeking recognition as terror victims after they were online with family members during the attack and suffered significant psychological harms as a result. Under current law, recognition as a terror victim is granted only to those physically present at the event, and therefore these individuals are not eligible for recognition and support. The Clinic is working to change the legal interpretation of the law to include these extreme cases of psychological harm suffered by individuals who were not physically present.

In one case, a woman was on the phone with her mother when terrorists entered her mother’s home. The call was abruptly disconnected, and shortly afterward, the terrorists uploaded a video to the mother’s Facebook page showing her being murdered. Our client and her children (the grandchildren of the victim) saw the horrifying footage on social media, leaving them with deep psychological trauma and lasting difficulties. The client submitted a claim to be recognized as a terror victim, but her claim was rejected because she was not physically at the scene of the attack. The Clinic submitted an appeal on her behalf, and a hearing took place in the District Court in May 2025. In the appeal, we argued that the decision was arbitrary and discriminatory. Additionally, we emphasized that Hamas deliberately targeted families and, given the unique and unprecedented nature of the case, recognition is warranted. The court has requested the state’s response to the claims, which is expected in September 2025. A decision will be made after the state’s position is received. We hope the legal proceedings will lead to a change in policy and recognition of the rights of all individuals who were so personally and directly harmed during the war.

II. Recognition of Psychological Trauma by the Ministry of Defense

The Clinic is representing reservist soldiers in proceedings before the Ministry of Defense, seeking recognition for the disability they have as a result of psychological harm they suffered in the war, including helping them obtain required medical documentation, preparing for the hearing and representation.

III. Legal Aid for Nova Music Festival Survivors

The Clinic provided legal aid and advice to survivors of the Nova music festival, who experienced profound trauma during the attack that has impacted their personal and professional lives. For example, the Clinic represented a Nova survivor whose boating license was revoked following recognition of his post-traumatic condition. The Clinic submitted an appeal on his behalf, arguing that his psychological condition should not automatically lead to the suspension of his license, and that sailing is an essential part of his psychological rehabilitation. We are pleased to report that the appeal was accepted and his license was reinstated.

In another case, the Clinic represented a Nova survivor who was dismissed from her job due to her mental health condition. The Clinic sent a letter to her employer requesting that they reconsider their decision. We are currently awaiting the employer's response.

IV. Limiting Legal Fees

Over the months since the October 7 attacks, it has become known that some lawyers have exploited the vulnerable situation of victims by charging excessive legal fees. The Clinic approached the Israeli Bar Association arguing that attorneys' fees in claims submitted by victims of terror attacks should be capped. The Clinic emphasized that such a restriction is already instated in cases involving recognition as an IDF disabled veteran, and therefore a similar cap is justified for recognition for terror victims. Several bills on this matter are currently being promoted, and the Clinic will keep track of the developments.

V. Legal Aid and Representation to the Residents of Northern Israel

Throughout the year, the Clinic met with local government officials from various northern municipalities to assess the needs of residents. In response to the many needs identified, there was an intention to establish a walk-in legal Clinic in Kiryat Shmona. However, difficulties in securing a location and scheduling led to the decision that referrals would instead be made to the Clinic via local social services. Indeed, several such referrals were made, and we have provided assistance and legal consultation to evacuees on a variety of issues including eligibility for compensation, housing, and employment.

For example the Clinic represented a woman in her 60s from Kiryat Shmona who worked as an assistant and cook at a foster home and at the start of the war was placed on unpaid leave. The law requires employers faced with this situation to apply for wage compensation from the state on behalf of their employees. The client's employer failed to do so, and as a result our client received no income for a year. The Clinic (in collaboration with the Bar-Ilan University Elder Law Clinic) filed a labor court claim on her behalf, demanding that the employer pay her wages. The case is pending, and we are currently awaiting the statement of defense.

VI. Medical Treatment Compensation – Policy Paper

Medical Treatment Compensation is an insurance category intended to reimburse victims of hostile acts and disabled IDF veterans for lost income due to medical treatments. Eligibility requires that the individual is employed but unable to work, is not receiving other income, and is undergoing recognized medical treatment. In practice, the system is complex, with strict criteria and reliance on medical approvals, and creates challenges in proving entitlement, even when theoretical eligibility exists.

In June 2025, the Clinic contacted a private insurance company on behalf of several clients who did not return to their jobs after their injury. The insurance company refused to pay Medical Treatment Compensation, claiming the individuals were not actively employed. This created an absurd situation: harm sustained during their service prevented them from earning an income, but at the same time disqualified them from receiving compensation for that very loss of income.

The Clinic is writing a policy paper that presents this challenge, arguing that it is a crucial failure in the recognition system, which harms reservists and civilians harmed during wartime. The paper calls for immediate adaptation of the eligibility criteria to cover these cases.

VII. Legal Rights Guide – June War with Iran

Following the war with Iran and the complex reality it created for many citizens—including employees, business owners, renters, parents, people with mental health needs—the clinic issued a legal rights guide written in accessible language. The guide provides essential legal information on employment rights, property compensation, alternative housing, rental contracts, eligibility for psychological support, and the three main compensation tracks: through the National Insurance Institute, the Property Tax Authority, and the Labor System.

The goal of the guide is to empower individuals to understand their rights without needing legal advice, thus reducing accessibility gaps to critical information during times when many people find themselves disconnected from services, guidance, or advice.

VIII. Compensation for Displaced Residents from Holon

The Clinic is representing several residents from Holon whose house was destroyed in the war with Iran in June 2025. After their houses were hit, the clients were evacuated to hotels under wartime evacuation arrangements. The residents approached the Clinic after they were informed that their hotel stay would end at the end of June, after only 40 days of hotel accommodation from the time their house was hit, without alternative housing or arrangements, and without sufficient time to recover and to find suitable housing. The Clinic submitted an urgent request to the government and the Holon municipality that their hotel stay be extended at least until a proper housing solution is secured. This request is based on the fundamental human need for shelter and food security and aligned with emergency protections for displaced persons in times of crisis. We are continuing the representation.

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