

## **Statutory Restrictions on LSC-funded Programs**

The Legal Services Corporation Act (42 U.S.C. § 2996 *et seq.*) stipulates that LSC-funded programs cannot use either LSC or private funds for certain activities. The 1996 Appropriations Act (Pub. L. 104-134) and subsequent legislation introduced new restrictions that apply to funds from all sources—federal, state, local, and private—except tribal funds.

### **The LSC Act prohibits participation in:**

- Political activities, including voter assistance or voter registration.
- Criminal cases, except for minor offenses in Indian tribal courts.
- *Habeas corpus* actions challenging criminal convictions against officers of the court or law enforcement officers.
- Organizing activities, including training for—or encouraging of—political or labor activities.
- Proceedings or litigation to procure non-therapeutic abortions or compel the provision of abortion services over religious or moral objections.
- Proceedings involving desegregation of public schools, military service or assisted suicide.

### **In 1996, Congress prohibited additional activities, including:**

- Lobbying government offices, agencies or legislative bodies except for limited situations.
- Representing people who are not U.S. citizens with limited exceptions such as lawful permanent residents, H2A agricultural workers, and victims of battering, extreme cruelty, sexual assault or trafficking.
- Class actions.
- Claiming, collecting or retaining attorneys' fees.
- Soliciting clients in-person.
- Abortion-related litigation of any kind.
- Representing prisoners.
- Representing people who are being evicted from public housing because they face criminal charges of selling or distributing illegal drugs.
- Most activities involving welfare reform.
- Redistricting activities.
- Influencing the time or manner of census-taking.