

Making a Difference

The need for civil legal assistance has never been greater. Low-income Americans are struggling to keep their jobs, homes and basic necessities for their families, and the number of low-income persons in poverty keeps rising. Even before the 2008 recession, studies in several states found that about 80 percent of the legal needs of low-income families go unmet. Increasing numbers of unrepresented litigants are swamping state courts, especially those that deal with housing and family law matters.

To help uphold the national promise of equal access to justice, the Legal Services Corporation, established by the Congress, provides grants, guidance, training and oversight to 136 nonprofit legal aid programs across the nation. The programs offer a wide range of civil legal assistance to their clients, especially in such areas as family and housing law and consumer matters.

The clients served by these legal aid programs are at or below 125 percent of the federal poverty threshold—an income of \$27,563 a year for a family of four.

Today, civil legal assistance makes a significant difference in the health of low-income communities by providing critical solutions and opportunities for self-sufficiency to low-income Americans.



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