

Virginia Legal Aid Society - Community Needs Assessment 2011

Introduction

Virginia Legal Aid Society's mission is to resolve serious legal problems of low-income people, promote economic and family stability, reduce poverty through effective legal assistance, and champion equal justice.

VLAS uses legal skills to solve problems in health care, public benefits, housing, family relations, advance directives, consumer, education, and economic self-sufficiency. We serve south-central Virginia, with offices in Lynchburg, Danville, Farmville, Emporia, and Suffolk. Please see our website, www.vlas.org, for a map of our service area and other information about our services.

We would like to ask you a few questions about possible problems facing low-income people in your community. The study covers civil legal needs like the problems listed above, plus other needs you may think of. The findings will help guide VLAS in choosing types of cases to accept and projects to work on during the next five years. This survey is designed to be answered by anyone. We will also be asking low income people to take part in a more detailed survey about problems they have experienced in the last year.

Please feel free to urge others in your community to take this survey, follow our planning process at vlasplanning.wordpress.com, and/or leave us your email or surface mail address at the end of this survey.

Thank you VERY much for your help.

David Neumeyer
VLAS Executive Director
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Knowledge of VLAS

1. Prior to receiving this survey, were you familiar with the services provided by the Virginia Legal Aid Society (VLAS)?

- Very Familiar
- Somewhat Familiar
- Heard of it only
- Not familiar at all

Comments

2. What do you think of the quality of the work performed by VLAS?

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Average
- Below Average
- Poor
- Don't Know

Comments

Community Problems

3. Please tell us what you think are the most important problems facing low-income people in your community. Because we are not able to work on every problem equally, please tell us which problems you think are more important than others:

	Very important	Important	Not very important compared to other problems	Unsure
Access to health care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advance directives like wills, powers of attorney, medical power of attorneys	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consumer problems like lending and car purchases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Domestic violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Government services like trash removal, road repairs, street lights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing problems like affordability, safety, evictions, foreclosures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public benefits like TANF, Food Stamps, unemployment compensation, disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other #1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other #2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain Other(s)

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4. For each problem you identified as important or very important, please describe what is going on in your community with that problem, and describe any suggestions you have for how VLAS might respond to it. The text boxes below will expand if you have more to say than the box appears to hold.

Problem 1

Problem 2

Problem 3

Problem 4

Problem 5

About You

5. I am a (you may check more than one):

- Person who deals directly with low-income individuals such as Social Services, Community Services, school or church employee or volunteer
- low-income person
- judge, court employee, or attorney
- government leader
- VLAS donor
- VLAS board/staff member
- other

Other (please specify)

6. If you would you like to stay informed about our planning process, please:

--regularly check vlasplanning.wordpress.com or sign up there for an RSS feed;

--"like" our Facebook page, or

--give us your email or surface-mail address below. We would be happy to send you our quarterly e-newsletter, and we do not sell or trade addresses to other organizations.

All Done: Thank You!