

# **Legal Services Corporation of Virginia**

*Report to the Commonwealth and the General Assembly  
On The Work of Virginia's Legal Aid Programs  
FY 2015-2016*



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# Legal Services Corporation of Virginia

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The Legal Services Corporation of Virginia  
by the Resource for Great Programs, Inc.  
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# Executive Summary

*In FY 2015-2016, LSCV's Legal Aid Programs Produced Results That Touched Everyone in Virginia.*

**More than 66,690 low-income Virginians were directly benefited.**

The civil legal aid programs funded by Legal Services Corporation of Virginia (LSCV) enabled low-income Virginians to address critical legal issues directly affecting their families, homes, income, jobs and access to vital services such as education and health care.

**LSCV distributed \$10.9 million to legal aid programs.**

In FY 2015-2016, LSCV provided grants to a statewide network of non-profit organizations, including nine local legal aid programs and a statewide support center. Collectively these programs served every community in Virginia via 35 offices located strategically throughout the state. This funding came from the Virginia General Assembly in the form of general revenue and special filing fee appropriations, and from the Virginia "IOLTA" (Interest On Lawyers Trust Accounts) program that LSCV began administering in 1995.

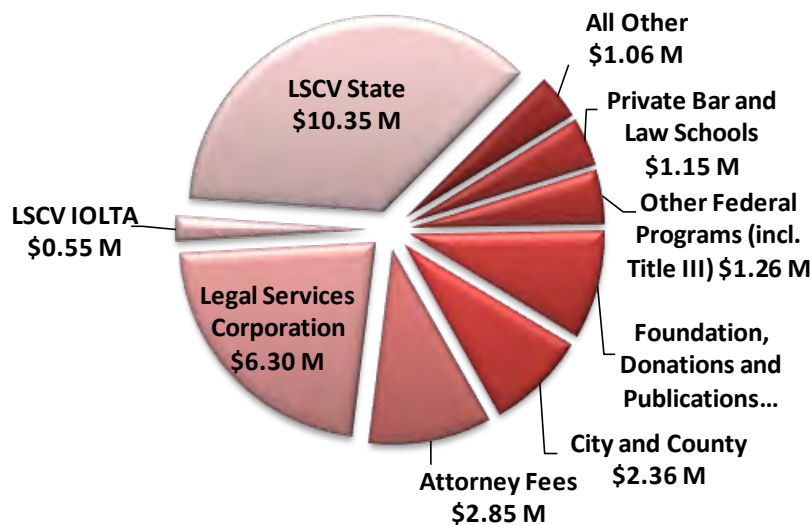
**The state and IOLTA dollars distributed by LSCV leveraged additional millions of dollars from other sources.**

LSCV-funded legal aid programs received an additional \$17.5 million from a variety of sources, including the federal Legal Services Corporation, local governments, foundation grants, bar associations and community fundraising efforts.

**The results achieved by LSCV-funded programs helped everyone in Virginia.**

- ◆ **Producing \$75.8 million in economic benefits.** The work of legal aid advocates brought millions of federal dollars into Virginia that would otherwise have been lost to local economies. These dollars provided 505 jobs and, with additional savings from avoidance of such costly social problems as homelessness, yielded a net return of \$2.67 for every dollar invested.
- ◆ **Enhancing family stability and safety.** Legal aid in domestic violence cases enabled survivors to lead more productive lives, reduced crime and increased the likelihood that affected children would not become victims or perpetrators of violence in the future.
- ◆ **Preventing homelessness.** Through successful advocacy that prevented eviction and home foreclosure, legal aid lawyers kept families in their homes and reduced the social and economic costs of emergency shelter and other services for the homeless.
- ◆ **Making other institutions work better.** Lawmakers referred constituents to legal aid for legal help. Courts relied on legal aid to help people navigate the legal system and address legal problems before they enter the court system.

**FY 2015-2016 Legal Aid Funding**  
(All Sources): **\$28.40 Million**



## Executive Summary (continued)

- ◆ **Empowering people to seek fair solutions through legal channels.** In addition to representing clients, legal aid advocates reached 119,280 people through telephone-based legal “hotlines,” pro se (self-help) programs, distribution of legal education materials, and preventative legal education efforts. These results empowered the people who used these programs to better understand and act upon their legal rights and responsibilities as tenants, parents, employees, spouses, and consumers.
- ◆ **Partnering with other organizations to solve community-wide problems.** Legal aid programs worked with private law firms, the courts and more than 100 agencies across the state that served low-income Virginians. In FY 2015-2016, private lawyers completed 2,994 cases for legal aid clients and contributed 15,604 hours valued at \$2.3 million through pro bono programs operated by LSCV-funded legal aid organizations.
- ◆ **Maximizing bang for the buck.** Virginia legal aid programs promoted high productivity and quality through participation in LSCV’s statewide evaluation and outcome measurement systems that have been in place for more than a decade. Legal aid programs participated in a statewide student loan repayment program implemented by LSCV in 2008, fostering quality and efficiency by

minimizing the loss of experienced attorneys who may otherwise seek higher-paying jobs to cover debt service on their student loans.

### The Justice Gap:

#### Legal aid is effective. Yet, in FY 2015-2016, legal aid advocates could help only a fraction of those in need...

because of increased demand for services during the recession of 2007-2015 and cuts to three of legal aid’s major sources of funding: IOLTA, filing fee revenue and federal grants. Due to historically low interest rates, annual IOLTA funding has declined by \$4 million since FY 2007-2008. The revenue from the legal aid filing fee add-on has declined by \$1.8 million since 2009. In addition, census-based cuts in federal funding have resulted in a loss of almost \$1.2 million for Virginia legal aid programs over that same time period. While LSCV’s general revenue appropriation increased incrementally during the recession, cuts from these other sources far outstripped those increases. Every dollar spent on legal aid in FY 2015-2016 yielded an economic return far exceeding the investment, yet today’s legal aid funding level is far less than it was three decades ago. Until the resources have been found to bridge the gap between the need for legal assistance and the capacity to provide it, “Equal Justice Under the Law” will remain an empty promise for our state’s most vulnerable citizens.

### Funding

In FY 2015-2016,  
LSCV distributed \$10.90 Million in  
Funding for Legal Aid Programs.

For more information about LSCV and its programs, please visit our website at:  
[www.valegalaid.org](http://www.valegalaid.org).

**IOLTA Funds: \$0.55 million.** In 1995, LSCV began administering Virginia’s IOLTA program after its conversion from a mandatory to an opt-out program. Virginia banks that choose to offer trust accounts for attorneys and title companies remit the net interest to LSCV on a monthly or quarterly basis.

**State Funds: \$10.35 million.** LSCV receives funding to provide civil legal services to Virginia’s low-income population from the Virginia General Assembly in the form of general revenue [\$4.35 million] and special filing fee appropriations [\$6.00 million] in FY 2015-2016.

# Introduction *In FY 2015-2016, the Work of Legal Aid Advocates Benefitted Every Community in Virginia.*

## This Report at a Glance

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The statewide network of civil legal aid programs funded by LSCV provided legal assistance that enabled more than 66,690 low-income Virginians to address critical legal issues directly affecting their families, homes, income, jobs and access to vital services such as education and health care.

**In FY 2015-2016, LSCV provided \$10.9 million in grants to nine local legal aid programs and a statewide support center that collectively serve every community in Virginia.**

This funding came from the Virginia General Assembly in the form of general revenue and special filing fee appropriations, and from the Virginia “IOLTA” (Interest On Lawyers’ Trust Accounts) program that LSCV began administering in 1995.

**By helping those in need, LSCV grantees helped everyone in Virginia.**

Legal protection from domestic violence reduced crime, allowed survivors to go back to living healthy, productive lives, and reduced the likelihood that children will become victims or perpetrators of violence in the future.

**Keeping families in their homes saved tax dollars.**

Legal aid helped clients avoid eviction or foreclosure, not only preserving their homes but reducing the need for expensive emergency shelter and keeping children in school who without legal aid would have become homeless.

**Bringing income into the state strengthened local economies.**

By securing Social Security Disability Insurance benefits for disabled people who are unable to work, legal aid enabled those people to live in dignity and also brought millions of dollars into communities that would otherwise be lost to the state and local economies.

**By helping their clients, LSCV-funded programs made other institutions work better.**

Lawmakers referred their constituents to legal aid for legal help. Courts relied on legal aid to help people navigate the legal system, negotiate solutions that otherwise would require litigation, and screen out non-meritorious cases before they entered the court system.

**Legal aid is cost-effective.**

In FY 2015-2016, every dollar of revenue for a legal aid program produced \$2.67 of measurable economic impacts and many other benefits that are not quantifiable. (See box, “The Economic Impact of Legal Aid far Exceeds the Funds Invested,” on page 4). These dollars were in addition to the intangible benefits that come from providing fair solutions to critical legal problems faced by Virginians living in poverty.



# Direct Legal Assistance

**In FY 2015-2016, Legal Aid Advocates Helped 66,694 Low-Income Virginians Obtain Fair Solutions to Critical Legal Problems.**

Direct legal assistance is the core service of LSCV grantees. In FY 2015-2016, LSCV-funded legal aid advocates completed 28,574 cases, providing direct measurable benefits to 66,694 people. They provided free legal help to people who live at or near the poverty level. They performed intake and provided advice and brief legal assistance on a centralized, regional

basis with the help of sophisticated phone systems and database technology. Clients needing more in-depth assistance were referred to legal aid attorneys and paralegals working out of program offices located in cities and towns throughout the state, or to private attorneys who serve these clients on a pro bono basis.

## Snapshot of LSCV-Funded Legal Assistance

**46%**

**Family: 30,700 People**  
Legal problems include domestic violence, child support, divorce, child custody, parental rights and guardianships.

**Snapshot:** Jennifer sought assistance from Legal Services of Eastern Virginia after learning her oldest daughter had been raped by her father. After working with therapists, detectives, forensic exams, new therapists, social workers, and multiple lawyers, the daughter herself had to work up the courage to testify against her father about the worst thing that had ever happened to her. Jennifer was awarded custody of the kids, received child support, and obtained a divorce. The father is currently in jail, awaiting his trial.

**22%**

**Housing: 14,898 People**  
Legal problems include unlawful eviction, denial of access to public or government-subsidized housing, and illegal mortgage foreclosure.

**Snapshot:** Rhonda came to Blue Ridge Legal Services in a panic after her landlord obtained a court order evicting her from her home. She missed her court date, believing it had been continued to a later date. Her landlord alleged Rhonda was delinquent on rent. BRLS determined that her receipts not only established that she was current on her rent, but that she had actually overpaid the landlord. Based on arguments regarding the discrepancies in the landlord's accounting, the judge set the case for a new trial. BRLS met with the landlord and negotiated an agreement in which Rhonda was given full credit for all rental payments, had \$500 in late fees and damages dropped, and Rhonda was able to remain in her home.

**14%**

**Consumer/Finance: 9,570 People**  
Legal problems include illegal taking of property, wage garnishment, denial of credit and fraudulent consumer practices.

**Snapshot:** Irma, a disabled senior became worried about her debts when she saw a TV ad for "debt relief." When she responded, she thought she was going to obtain a bankruptcy, for which she was given the name of a cooperating Virginia lawyer. In actuality, she had committed herself to a "Debt Resolution" program where 15-19% of her monthly Social Security would be drawn for a year and used for the fees of the program and to negotiate settlements with creditors. On advice from Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley she stopped payments and demanded a refund, with no response. LASRV made an ethics complaint against the Virginia attorney who permitted his name to be used as a front for the scam, and a portion of the payments was refunded rapidly. The debt relief company was eventually put out of business for good.

**6%**

**Income Maintenance: 3,789 People**  
Legal problems include eligibility for or termination of SSD (disability), SSI (Supplemental Security), unemployment compensation or public benefits.

**Snapshot:** Bob contacted Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society after he was terminated from his job and denied unemployment benefits. He was discharged for violations of company rules. Legal Aid appealed that decision as Bob left work early because his severely special needs daughter required a trip to the emergency room and his wife could not load her into the van. He called his boss but repeatedly got a busy signal. He then left a message with a co-worker regarding his family emergency. At the hearing, it was successfully argued that Bob was entitled to unemployment insurance benefits and that he did not engage in work-related misconduct.

**12%**

**Other: 7,737 People**  
Legal problems include education, employment, juvenile, health, individual rights and other miscellaneous matters.

# Economic Impact *In FY 2015-2016, Virginia Legal Aid Programs Produced \$2.67 in Income, Jobs and Cost Savings for Every Dollar Invested.*

Legal aid is cost-effective. During FY 2015-2016, LSCV-funded legal aid programs produced \$75.8 million of measurable economic impacts and many other benefits that are not quantifiable. (See box, "The Economic Impact of Legal Aid in Virginia Far Exceeds the

Funds Invested" on the next page.) These dollars were in addition to the intangible benefits that came from providing fair solutions to critical legal problems faced by Virginians living in poverty.

## The Economic Multiplier Effect

### *Legal Services Secures Federal Benefits*

Representation by Virginia legal aid advocates brings federal funds into Virginia each year that otherwise would be lost to local economies.

**\$24.0 million**

- ◇ Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits
- ◇ Federal share of Medicaid benefits
- ◇ Federal support to Legal Aid Providers

### *Federal Benefits Stimulate Local Economies*

Most of the money from federal benefits is spent immediately on necessities. In turn, these federal funds provide income for local businesses and wages for working Virginians.

**Necessities for Families:**

- ◇ Food and Housing
- ◇ Health Care
- ◇ Prescriptions
- ◇ Utilities
- ◇ Transportation

### *Communities Experience a Big Multiplier Effect*

Each federal dollar circulates 1.65 times\* (\$24.0 million in federal benefits multiplied by 1.65) in local communities.

**\$39.6 million\***

- ◇ Income for local businesses
- ◇ 505 jobs for people throughout Virginia

\*Total impact was estimated by applying the widely accepted U.S. Department of Commerce "Regional Economic Multiplier" for payments to low-income families in Virginia, indicating that every federal dollar brought into Virginia circulates through local economies 1.65 times and supports 24 jobs.

# The Economic Impact of Legal Aid in Virginia Far Exceeds the Funds Invested

In FY 2015-2016, the total economic impact of legal assistance provided by Virginia legal aid programs was \$75.8 million, a return of \$2.67 for every dollar of local, state, or federal funds invested.<sup>1</sup>

## The Impacts Include:

### \$33.4 million in direct benefits for low-income families.

- ◇ **\$24.0 million** in federal benefits including Social Security Disability, Supplemental Security Income, the federal share of Medicaid, federal support for legal assistance programs and other federal benefits;
- ◇ **\$2.5 million** in child support payments for needy Virginia children and their families;
- ◇ **\$6.9 million** from other revenue-generating legal aid outcomes including unemployment compensation, spousal support and consumer settlements;

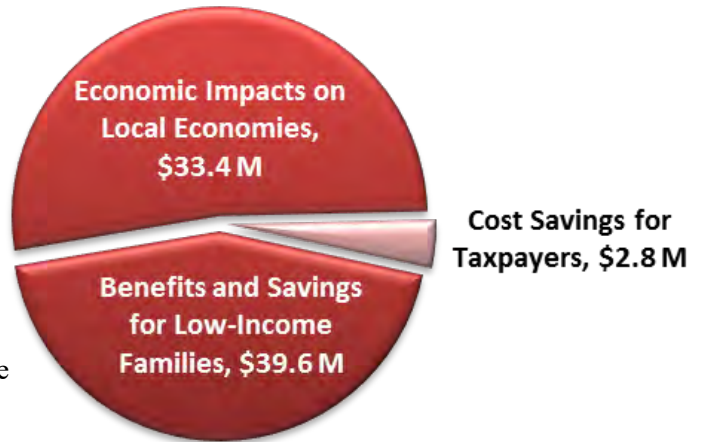
### \$2.8 million in cost savings for Virginia taxpayers.

- ◇ **\$1.7 million** in savings in costs related to domestic abuse. Advocates enabled 451 families to be protected from domestic violence. Studies indicate an average savings of \$3,763 per family in the costs of medical care for injured victims, lost productivity, and targeted education and counseling for affected children.
- ◇ **\$1.1 million** in savings in emergency shelter costs. In FY 2015-2016, LSVC programs' homeless prevention work helped 535 low-income families (1,381 family members) to avoid the need for emergency shelter, saving an estimated \$13,203 per family.

### \$39.6 million in additional economic activity for local communities through the economic multiplier effect (see graphic on page 3).

### Additional Benefits (*not quantified*):

- ◇ Savings from crime prevention and reduction in law enforcement assistance.
- ◇ Savings from keeping children in school whose attendance would otherwise have been interrupted by homelessness and/or domestic abuse.
- ◇ Efficiencies in Virginia courts made possible by legal aid assistance to clients and self-represented litigants, such as materials and training on how to follow court procedures.



<sup>1</sup>See Appendix D for computations



# Empowerment *In FY 2015-2016, Virginia Legal Aid Advocates Helped 105,710 People to Help Themselves.*

In addition to providing direct legal assistance that benefited more than 66,690 Virginians in FY 2015-2016, legal aid advocates helped 105,710 additional people understand and act upon their legal rights and responsibilities as tenants, parents, employees, spouses, and consumers (see statistics below). For this, LSCV-funded programs used three powerful strategies: telephone legal “hotlines,” pro se (self-help) assistance, and community legal education. In addition, LSCV funded [www.valegalaid.org](http://www.valegalaid.org), the statewide legal information website for low-income clients and pro bono attorneys.



**Telephone Legal “Hotlines”:** *Providing expert legal advice that can prevent small problems from becoming big ones.*

Virginia Poverty Law Center was able to purchase advertisements in areas throughout Virginia most likely to be the target of payday and car title lending practices with the aid of a grant voted to marketing the number to the community. The Responsible Lending Coordinator was featured, detailing the issues of predatory lending and providing the toll-free number. The marketing helped as more people trapped in the vicious cycle of payday or car title lending called to find out what options they had to help them break free. Each caller is treated with dignity and respect and provided with the tools and resources they need for their specific situation.

- **Self-Help Assistance:** *Legal Services of Northern Virginia* staff members provided presentations to community groups and also set up booths/tables at local community events and staffed them with employees to answer questions from the public and potential clients, as well as provide presentations. Some of our community legal information efforts included various presentations to community groups on housing, family and debtor’s rights, presentations at shelters, government agencies, including the Department of Family Services and non-profit service providers on domestic violence, housing and consumer issues and presentations at Senior Centers.

- **Community Legal Education:** *Legal Aid Justice Center* did a tremendous amount of legal education for community members, social services staff, legislators and other policy makers. Statewide efforts and expertise on driver’s license suspension, debt, immigrant advocacy, prison healthcare, and education/juvenile issues led to many requests and other opportunities to share information in ways that help others to make good decisions regarding how to make policy that works on one end and how to interact with systems on the other. LAJC does education across a broad range of topics and audiences with very different goals and strategies employed.

## People in Virginia who Benefited:

<p><b>Summary</b> Brief Legal Assistance Provided by Virginia Advocates in FY 2015-2016</p>	<p>◇ 13,601 received legal advice and counsel from the telephone intake and advice systems that reach every community in Virginia, thereby serving people who otherwise would have no access to legal assistance from any source.</p>
	<p>◇ 38,873 received legal education through presentations to community groups and printed materials.</p>
	<p>◇ 2,207 received assistance through legal clinics, help desks at court and other help to self-represented litigants.</p>
	<p>◇ 375,610 unique visits to program websites which resulted in 31,151 legal education and 33,479 self-representation materials being downloaded.</p>

# Partnerships

*In FY 2015-2016, LSCV-Funded Programs Collaborated with Others to Solve Community-Wide Problems.*

## Partnerships Helped to Leverage the Impact of Assistance.

Legal aid programs worked with private law firms, the courts and more than 100 agencies across the state that serve low-

income Virginians -- please see box, "Leveraging Resources: Partnerships Multiply the Impact."

### Pro Bono Statistics

In FY 2015-2016, volunteer lawyers participating in LSCV-funded programs achieved the following results.

Number of cases completed:	2,994
Hours Contributed:	15,604
Dollar Value of Services*:	\$2.3M

\*Estimated conservatively at \$150 per hour

### Leveraging Resources

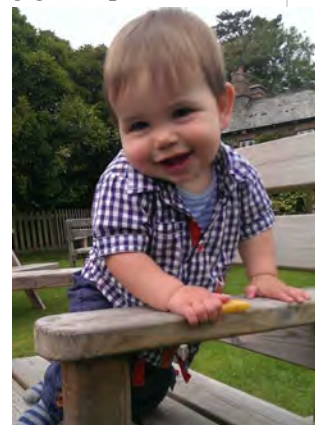
Partnerships Multiply the Impact

#### ◇ Technology as a Tool.

*Central Virginia Legal Aid Society* partnered with the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, LAJC, Blue Ridge Legal Services, local law firms and Capital One, to develop the JusticeServer application, which is a case management system and online portal linking volunteer attorneys to legal aid cases. JusticeServer will be expanded to all legal service providers to use as a portal or access point for pro bono attorneys to select cases.

#### ◇ Knowledge is Power.

*Virginia Legal Aid Society* Farmville staff members participate as active members in the local United Way coalition, working with other members to inform low-income persons about available resources and services; on the V-STOP State Team, setting goals, priorities and allocations for Violence Against Women Act funds available in Virginia; on the Project 2025 Enhanced Access to Legal Assistance for Older Adults in Virginia resources committee; on the Crossroads Community Services Board; on the Boards of several Housing complexes providing subsidized housing to mentally disabled persons, and on the Piedmont Senior Resources advisory board.



# Productivity and Quality *In FY 2015-2016, Legal Aid Programs Produced More “Bang for the Buck.”*

## **Virginia Legal Aid Programs Use Their Funds Wisely.**

Because funds are so limited in comparison to the need for services, LSCV-funded programs strive continually to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. They apply state-of-the-art systems and standards that they and their peers across America have developed over decades of legal aid practice. For example, Virginia legal aid programs apply a specialized, statewide case management software system, funded by LSCV, that enables them to share data, track intake patterns and measure the impacts of their work on behalf of their clients.

## **LSCV-Funded Programs Maximize Results for Clients.**

High performance standards are

demonstrated through rigorous evaluation. All grantees are reviewed and audited by LSCV using data from a comprehensive, statewide reporting system implemented in 1997.

## **LSCV Grantees Track Measurable Outcomes.**

LSCV has been a national leader in the field of helping the legal aid organizations it funds to apply outcomes measurement systems to provide critical tools for ensuring the highest standards of quality, accessibility, and effectiveness for the legal work performed on behalf of low-income people across Virginia. Within programs, outcomes measurement provides invaluable feedback on performance. Externally, it allows individual programs and the statewide legal aid community as a whole to assess the impact legal aid has on low-income individuals and families and their critical needs.

## **Legal Aid Programs Deploy a High-Quality Legal Staff.**

They work to attract and keep the most highly qualified lawyers and paralegals. For example, LSCV implemented a statewide program in 2008 that provides legal aid attorneys with student loan repayment assistance meant to encourage promising young advocates to continue in legal aid rather than seeking higher-paying jobs elsewhere to support the burden of their student loans. LSCV grantees provide their advocates with training and mentoring that foster use of best-practices in their work for clients.

### **New Programs, Extraordinary Results**

- ◇ *Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society's* Fre\$h \$tart program has provided financial literacy counseling concurrent with free civil legal representation for low-income clients who seek help with consumer law, debt problems, public benefits or income maintenance issues. Clients received more specific counseling, including such topics as spending choices, budgeting and money management, managing debt, predatory lending, and savings through tax refunds (including both EITC and child tax credits), among others. More than 600 low-income residents benefitted from these services.
- ◇ Due to Virginia Hunger Solutions outreach efforts, a program managed by Virginia Poverty Law Center's Public Benefits Attorney, 206 high poverty schools across 26 school divisions adopted the Community Eligibility Provision, allowing them to offer breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge. This represents a 139% increase from the prior school year. Nationally, the increase was 20%. The Virginia Board of Education honored Virginia Hunger Solutions with a "Resolution of Recognition" for Partnerships to Combat Childhood Hunger.

# The Justice Gap

**Legal Aid is Effective, yet in FY 2015-2016, Our Advocates Could Help Only a Fraction of Those Who Needed it.**

The legal services programs funded by LSCV are providing essential services that help thousands of low-income Virginians each year to address critical legal issues directly affecting their families, homes, incomes, jobs, and access to vital services. Yet the gap between the need for these services and the capacity of these programs to address them is profound. The American Bar Association estimates that despite serving almost 2 million clients annually, the nation’s collective civil legal aid effort is meeting only 20 percent of the legal needs of low-income

Americans. This has been confirmed by the Virginia Low-Income Civil Legal Needs Assessment, a study commissioned by LSCV and completed in March of 2006. Resources are so limited that legal aid programs have to turn away tens of thousands of applicants each year who have nowhere else to turn. As a result, the lives of poor Virginians and many other Americans are made harder and the economic and other benefits that legal aid could provide are lost to our state.

## Fact Sheet The Need for Legal Aid

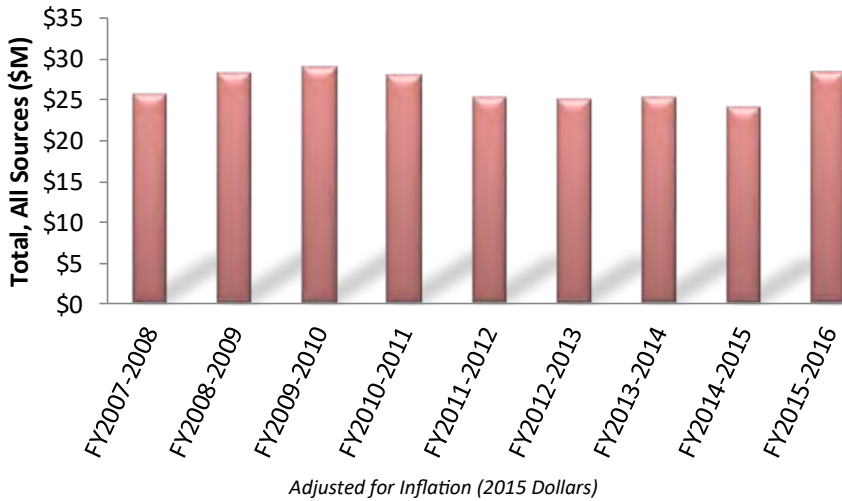


- ◆ **More than one million residents of Virginia are living in poverty.** More than 800,000 people in our state are living below the poverty level, and another 200,000 have incomes that are less than 125 percent of the federal poverty guideline. As a result, roughly one in eight Virginians is eligible for free civil legal services from LSCV grantees.
- ◆ **The need for legal services for the poor is overwhelming.** According to the 2006 Virginia Legal Needs Survey issued by LSCV, 48 percent of low- and moderate-income households experience a legal problem each year. In Virginia, this translates to 400,000 legal problems annually.
- ◆ **People feel disenfranchised.** The LSCV Legal Needs Survey showed that most low- and moderate-income people feel shut out from the legal system. They do not turn to the courts for solutions because they believe the system will not help them.
- ◆ **Legal aid gets results, yet LSCV-funded programs cannot help all who need it.** For example, studies show that legal aid is the most effective public service for reducing domestic violence. Legal representation is essential; most victims who go to Protective Order hearings without legal representation fail to obtain their orders and remain at risk from their abusers.

# Funding

**More Dollars are Needed to Fulfill the Promise of Equal Justice Under the Law.**

## Virginia Legal Aid Funding FY 2007-2016



Legal Services Corporation of Virginia and its grantees have been working hard to close the “Justice Gap.” Legal aid advocates have joined with the courts, state legislators and community leaders, and with local businesses, banks and foundations to expand funding for legal aid. These efforts have borne fruit, yet the tough economic times of the Great Recession stalled progress at the very time additional legal assistance was needed by people threatened with joblessness, foreclosure and other critical legal problems.

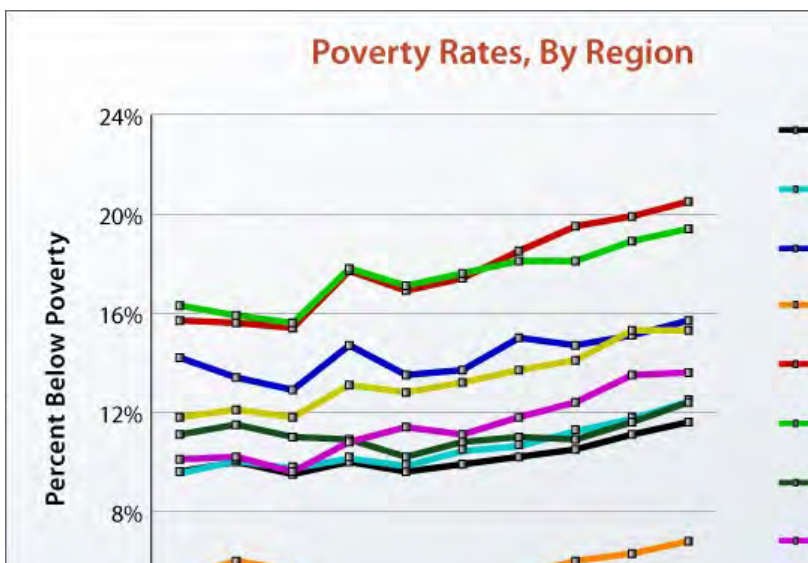
Even with the help of modest state general revenue increases for legal aid, staff layoffs of 20% of legal aid’s workforce during the great recession continue to negatively impact service delivery. And, while funding from the national LSC ticked up by \$600,000, LSCV and its programs continue to suffer the long-term effects of the \$4 million annual decline in IOLTA funding and the \$1.8 million decline in state filing fee funding.

At the same time, the poverty population in Virginia grew by over 30 percent in the decade between 2000 and 2010, according to the U.S. Census. And since 2007, the struggling economy has flooded legal aid programs with applicants needing help.

The net impact of legal aid staff layoffs following the loss of funding over recent years has been dramatic.

This represents a severe blow to already-stressed local economies and a lost opportunity for communities everywhere across Virginia. The promise of justice is little more than an empty pledge when our most vulnerable citizens do not have access to the legal help they need to protect them from fraud and deception and provide access to such basic needs as shelter, medical care and family safety.

## Poverty Rate in Virginia



Source: Virginia State Government web site:  
<http://vaperforms.virginia.gov/indicators/economy/poverty.php>

## **Conclusion** *Legal Aid is a Sound Investment. With More Resources, Much More Could be Accomplished.*

Every dollar spent on legal aid for low-income Virginians yields a return to society far exceeding the investment. Funding for legal aid promotes fairness and equality, helps families in crisis secure access to safety net programs, saves dollars for taxpayers and generates economic activity in local communities, providing income and jobs for working Virginians. This commitment deserves the support of every citizen. A study by the American Bar Association has found that more than 80 percent of the civil

legal needs of the poor are unmet. This is an unacceptable shortfall in our civil justice system. Until the resources have been found to bridge the gap between the need for legal assistance and the capacity to provide it, “Equal Justice Under the Law” will remain an empty promise for our state’s most vulnerable citizens.

### **The Impact of Additional Funding**



**Every \$1 million in new funding enables our programs to provide 2,348 more people in Virginia with direct measurable outcomes including:**

- ◇ Children and women escaping the ongoing nightmare of domestic violence;
- ◇ Veterans and people with disabilities receiving health care or SSI benefits;
- ◇ Families faced with foreclosure and eviction remaining in their homes; and
- ◇ People who have nowhere else to turn being empowered to resolve other critical legal problems affecting their families, homes, and basic income.

# Appendix A:

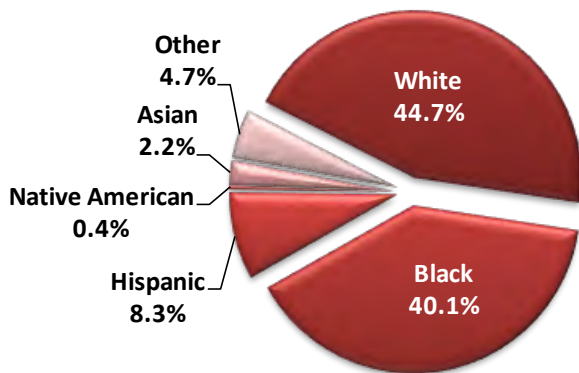
## Case Statistics and Client Demographics

### Case Statistics: Number of Closed Cases by Major Reason Closed

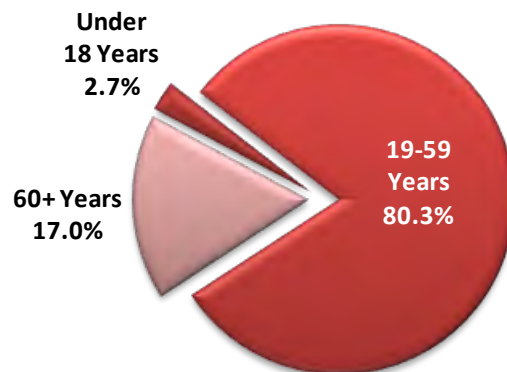
Organization	Counsel & Advice	Limited Action	Negotiated without Litigation	Negotiated with Litigation	Admin. Agency Decision	Court Decision- Uncontested	Court Decision- Contested	Court Decision- Appeals	Other	Extensive Service	Grand Total
Blue Ridge Legal Services	1,110	510	34	96	26	433	91	-	-	38	<b>2,338</b>
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society	2,423	187	33	65	37	178	74	-	6	91	<b>3,094</b>
Legal Aid Justice Center	1,040	225	67	102	130	15	74	5	93	50	<b>1,801</b>
Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia	4,177	260	20	147	167	525	191	1	-	495	<b>5,983</b>
Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley	723	140	18	29	23	24	29	-	5	10	<b>1,001</b>
Legal Services of Northern Virginia	4,122	863	37	208	41	480	377	-	36	207	<b>6,371</b>
Rappahannock Legal Services	343	101	15	50	26	93	212	1	45	6	<b>892</b>
Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society	2,616	140	7	84	14	496	155	-	-	94	<b>3,606</b>
Virginia Legal Aid Society	2,286	310	94	31	85	195	42	-	-	40	<b>3,083</b>
Virginia Poverty Law Center	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,840</b>	<b>2,736</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>2,439</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>28,169</b>

### Client Demographics

**Ethnic Group**



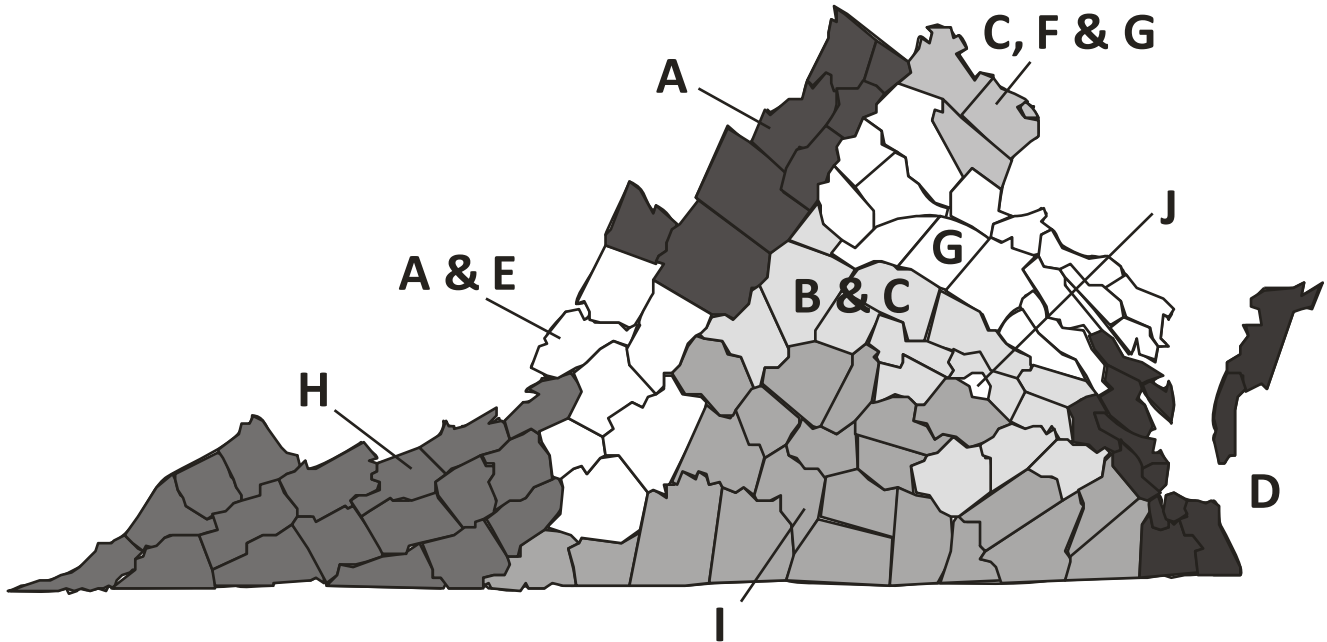
**Age**



# Appendix B:

## Local Legal Aid Programs Funded by Legal Services Corporation of Virginia

*LSCV FY 2015-16 grant allocations shown in parentheses*



**A** Blue Ridge Legal Services (BRLS); Harrisonburg, Winchester, Roanoke, Lexington (\$619,710)

**B** Central Virginia Legal Aid Society (CVLAS); Richmond, Petersburg, Charlottesville (\$1,183,269)

**C** Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC); Charlottesville, Falls Church, Petersburg, Richmond (\$585,511)

**D** Legal Aid Society of Eastern Virginia (LSEV); Hampton, Norfolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, Belle Haven (\$1,753,157)

**E** Legal Aid Society of Roanoke Valley (LASRV); Roanoke (\$566,565)

**F** Legal Services of Northern Virginia (LSNV); Falls Church, Alexandria, Fairfax, Leesburg, Manassas (\$1,398,806)

**G** Rappahannock Legal Services (RLS); Fredricksburg, Culpeper, Tappahannock (\$489,941)

**H** Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society (SWVLAS); Marion, Castlewood, Christiansburg (\$1,097,724)

**I** Virginia Legal Aid Society (VLAS); Lynchburg, Danville, Farmville, Suffolk (\$1,292,950)

**J** Virginia Poverty Law Center (VPLC); Richmond (Statewide Program) (\$740,413)



## Appendix C:

### Outcomes Produced for Clients by LSCV-Funded Programs in FY 2015-2016

<i>Category</i>	<i>Major Benefit Achieved</i>	<i># of Cases</i>	<i># People Directly Affected</i>
<b>A. Major Benefit Was Achievement of a Legal Objective</b>			
Family	Obtained a divorce or annulment	1,657	3,581
Family	Obtained or maintained custody of children	450	1,258
Miscellaneous Benefits	Obtained a living will and/or health proxy or power of attorney	829	1,136
Family	Obtained protection from domestic violence	445	1,105
Miscellaneous Benefits	Obtained a will	492	645
Consumer/Finance	Obtained federal bankruptcy protection	212	592
Housing	Overcame denial of tenant's rights under lease	19	535
Family	Obtained, preserved, or increased child support	168	470
Consumer/Finance	Stopped or reduced debt collection activity	201	455
Housing	Prevented eviction from private housing	164	440
Family	Obtained name change	211	413
Housing	Prevented eviction from subsidized housing	165	402
Consumer/Finance	Avoided or ended garnishment or levy	122	345
Income Maintenance	Obtained, preserved or increased unemployment insurance benefits/rights	152	246
Family	Obtained guardianship or conservatorship	78	245
Income Maintenance	Obtained, preserved or increased SSI benefit/right	124	242
Housing	Delayed eviction providing time to seek alternative housing	92	236
Housing	Prevented eviction from public housing	76	216
Housing	Avoided, or obtained redress for, illegal or unfair charges by landlord	79	205
All Problem Areas	Other, none of the above	2,801	6,110
<b>B. Major Benefit Was Access to Legal Information, Advice and/or Assistance From a Lawyer or Paralegal</b>			
All Problem Areas	Received legal advice & counsel	19,409	46,488
All Problem Areas	Received non-litigation advocacy services	562	1,179
All Problem Areas	Received referral to another agency	66	150
<b>Total, All Cases:</b>		<b>28,574</b>	<b>66,694</b>

## Appendix D: Economic Impacts Breakdown

A. Benefits and Savings for Low-Income Families					
	Back Awards	Monthly Awards	Duration in Years	Subtotals	Total (\$ Millions)
<b>1. Federal benefits for low-income families</b>					<b>\$24.0</b>
Social Security/SSI	\$1,276,363	\$92,822	9.7	<b>\$12,080,852</b>	
Other Federal Awards	\$54,490	\$29,529	3	<b>\$1,117,538</b>	
Federal operating grants for legal aid programs (LSC, Title III, Other Federal Funds)				<b>\$7,566,555</b>	
Federal share of Medicaid benefits received (61.58% total average annual benefits)				<b>\$3,214,692</b>	
<i>Cases in which Medicaid benefits were obtained or preserved</i>				23	
<i>Average annual benefit*</i>				\$8,878	
<i>Years Duration</i>			4		
<b>Calculation (Cases x Average Annual Benefit x Years Duration)</b>				<b>\$816,790</b>	
<i>Cases in which SSI eligibility was obtained or preserved</i>				124	
<i>Average annual benefit*</i>				\$8,878	
<i>Years Duration</i>			4		
<b>Calculation (Cases x Average Annual Benefit x Years Duration)</b>				<b>\$4,403,562</b>	
<b>2. Income from child support payments</b>					<b>\$2.5</b>
Family Law: Child Support	\$180,765	\$64,270	3	<b>\$2,494,486</b>	
<b>3. Income from other legal aid outcomes</b>					<b>\$6.9</b>
A. Unemployment Compensation	\$310,918	\$33,026	0.5	\$509,074	
B. Family Law - Alimony	\$68,510	\$12,873	3	\$531,948	
C. Affirmative Landlord	\$760,594	\$197,374	1	\$3,129,082	
D. Affirmative Employment	\$158,406	\$0	1	\$158,406	
E. Affirmative Consumer	\$339,671	\$4,373	1	\$392,147	
F. Affirmative Education	\$265,814	\$43,618	1	\$789,227	
G. Other Benefits	\$1,016,559	\$29,125	1	\$1,366,059	
<b>Total Direct Impact on Low-Income Families</b>					<b>\$33.4</b>

*Continued on next page*

## Appendix D (continued):

B. Cost Savings for Taxpayers		
<b>1. Savings in costs related to domestic violence</b>		<b>\$1.7</b>
<i>Cases for which families obtained protection from Domestic Violence</i>	451	
<i>Average cost per victim**</i>	\$3,763	
<b>Calculation (Cases x Average cost per victim)</b>	<b>\$1,697,270.98</b>	
<b>2. Savings in emergency shelter costs</b>		<b>\$1.1</b>
<i>Cases for Which Eviction was Avoided or Delayed or Foreclosure was Averted</i>	535	
<i>Percentage for which homelessness was avoided***</i>	15%	
<i>Average cost to taxpayers per homeless family****</i>	\$13,203	
<b>Calculation (Cases x Percent homelessness avoided x Average cost to taxpayers)</b>	<b>\$1,059,545</b>	
<b>Total Savings for Taxpayers</b>		<b>\$2.8</b>
C. Economic Impacts on Local Economies		
<b>1. Economic stimulus from Federal dollars circulating in local economies</b>		<b>\$39.7</b>
<i>Federal benefits for low-income families (A1 Above)</i>	\$24.0	
<i>Multiplier (per U.S. Dept. of Commerce "RIMS II" Data)</i>	1.65	
<b>Total Estimated Economic Impacts</b>		<b>\$75.8</b>

\* Estimates based on data from the Virginia Department of Social Services Annual Statistical Report (2015), pp. 23-24. Dollar amounts have been adjusted for inflation.

\*\* Source: "Increasing Access to Restraining Orders for Low-Income Victims of Domestic Violence: A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Proposed Domestic Abuse Grant Program," L. Elwart, et al. (December 2006), page 13. Note that the amounts listed here have been adjusted for inflation.

\*\*\* We estimate that 15 percent of the people who were saved from eviction (or from having their mortgages foreclosed) would have had to go into emergency housing as a result. The reason this percentage is less than 100 is that some portion of the families who are evicted or foreclosed avoid homelessness by moving in with friends or family or by finding a rental in a different location. We found no studies on which to base a more definitive estimate of this percentage for Virginia. However, we believe 15 percent is a conservative estimate. A study in New York State ("The Homelessness Prevention Program: Outcomes and Effectiveness," New York State Dept. of Social Services, 1990; Table 3.2.) provided a figure of 22 percent for an estimate of cost savings we produced for the IOLA Fund of New York in 2010.

\*\*\*\* Based on available research, our conservative estimate of the average cost of emergency housing for a homeless family in 2007 was \$11,550. A Massachusetts study found the average cost of a stay in emergency housing ranged between \$11,550 (for a transitional stay) and \$48,440 (for a long-term stay) -- see Dennis P. Culhane, "Emerging Research on the Cost of Homelessness," 2007 -- copy available from the authors. We found no comparable studies for Virginia, so we used the low end of this range as an assumption for estimating the cost savings of preventing homelessness in Virginia. Note that this amount, adjusted for inflation, was \$13,203 in 2015.