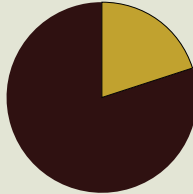


Why Legal Aid Matters

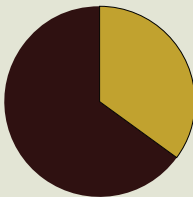
All North Carolinians deserve justice...regardless of income. But thousands cannot afford to pay an attorney. Legal aid attorneys help people with civil (non-criminal) legal matters when they have no other place to turn. These attorneys are a critical part of the safety net of the community. Despite this clear need, there is only one legal aid attorney for every 15,500 low-income people. In contrast, there is one private attorney for every 442 North Carolinians. Nationally, 80% of the civil legal aid needs of the poor go unmet.

Ability of Low-Income North Carolinians to Secure Representation in Civil Legal Matters



- 20% successfully secure representation
- 80% are unable to secure representation

North Carolinians Qualifying for Assistance from Legal Aid Agencies



- 35% qualify (3.1 million)
- 65% do not qualify (5.7 million)

Source:
North Carolina Equal Access to Justice Commission

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*The Annual Access to Justice Campaign of
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LANC Client Stories

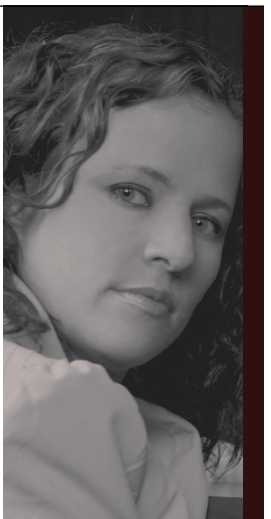


Preventing Mortgage Foreclosure

Sandra Martinez came to the LANC office in Durham with a pending foreclosure. Both documented immigrants, she and her husband were hard working, but they found their incomes substantially reduced as a result of the housing/construction bust. The downturn in the overall economy had greatly lessened both their earning capacity and their opportunities to save. LANC notified their loan servicer of our intent to file a lawsuit in order to prevent the foreclosure. Further, our staff developed a plan to delay the foreclosure and seek modification of the loan. As a result of these efforts, it was discovered that the Martinez family qualified for a substantial reduction in their interest rate and a reasonable amortization period. The loan servicer, realizing that our attorneys were committed to preventing this foreclosure, decided to dismiss the foreclosure proceedings.

Providing Consumer Advocacy

Cindy Norris was referred to our Low Income Taxpayer Clinic for assistance with an Innocent Spouse petition. She and her ex-husband had owned a business together, and Cindy had been responsible for the accounting and tax preparation. When she and her husband separated, he took control of the business, and she no longer had access to the financial records. Her husband made numerous distributions and failed to pay estimated tax. In 2005, during separation negotiations, Cindy learned of the tax issues but was urged by her attorney to file jointly with her husband, because her husband agreed to pay any IRS indebtedness as part of the property distribution. In fact, he was ordered to pay the 2005 tax indebtedness in their divorce decree. Cindy, however, began to receive IRS notices indicating that she owed a tax debt and threatening collection. Because her ex-husband was not paying child support, Cindy was solely supporting the children. She filed an Innocent Spouse petition. When it was preliminarily denied, she came to LANC, and we represented her throughout the appeals process. Ultimately her appeal was approved, and she was relieved of liability of approximately \$14,600 and any interest and penalties.



Protecting Victims of Abuse

Teresa Kerr was washing clothes when Ben came home in a drunken state. He shook her, grabbed her by the hair, and threw her to the floor. In a rage, Ben began to dump detergent and food on the floor. Terrified, Teresa fled to their bedroom. Ben followed her and grabbed her by the hair again while still attempting to hit her in the face. When Teresa ran outside to escape, Ben grabbed a knife and chased after her. He threatened her and attempted to puncture the tires of the car. When Teresa ran down the street for help, Ben got into the car and tried to run over her, but she got away and managed to contact the police. LANC represented Teresa and obtained a protective order, under which the defendant was ordered to have no contact with her for one year. Teresa was also awarded temporary physical custody of their five-year-old son for one year.

In all cases, we have used pseudonyms to protect the identity of our clients.

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ABOUT LEGAL AID OF NORTH CAROLINA



Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC) is a statewide, nonprofit [501(c)(3)] law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity.

LANC serves eligible clients in all 100 counties of North Carolina through 24 geographically based offices. We also operate five, statewide project units that focus on special areas of the law. LANC's attorneys handled more than 24,000 cases across North Carolina in 2008. Approximately 39 percent of the state's total population of 8.2 million people (3.1 million people) is now eligible for LANC's legal services.

LANC has a staff of 125 attorneys. The work of the legal staff is also supplemented by pro bono efforts from the private bar and is complemented by the work of law school interns from across the state.

LANC receives funding from the federal Legal Services Corporation (LSC), Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts (IOLTA Program), the State of North Carolina, foundation grants, United Way, law firms, and individual donors through the Access to Justice Campaign.

LANC is governed by a Board of Directors composed of attorneys and client representatives from across the State.

OUR MISSION

Legal Aid of North Carolina is a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity.

Please
Help Us
INVEST IN
JUSTICE

*"At their best,
lawyers assure
the availability
of legal services
to all."*

Rules of Professional
Conduct of the North
Carolina State Bar,
Chapter 2, Rule 0.1 [8]

Make a financial donation.

Help vulnerable people in our communities—children, the elderly, people with disabilities, families at risk of homelessness, women trying to escape domestic violence—who come to Legal Aid of NC for help in solving problems they are facing. To make a secure on-line donation now, go to www.legalaidnc.org.

Volunteer your pro bono services.

Potential clients are typically low-income persons who have legal needs in civil matters, such as domestic violence, child custody, consumer fraud, and landlord/tenant disputes. They also include victims of natural disasters.

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to ensure that low-income people in North Carolina have access to high-quality, free legal assistance and representation to meet their basic needs.



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