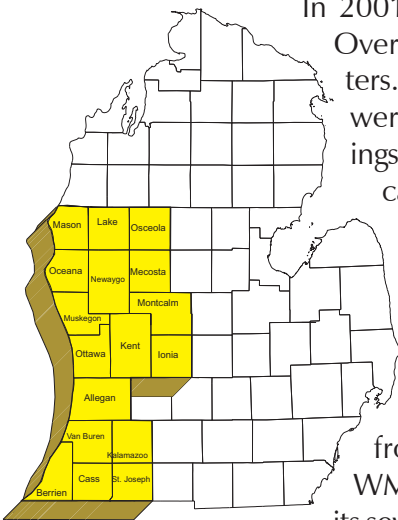


WESTERN MICHIGAN LEGAL SERVICES

WMLS Office Locations: Big Rapids, Grand Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, Niles, and St. Joseph

WMLS Service Area: Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties

Service Population: 272,332 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



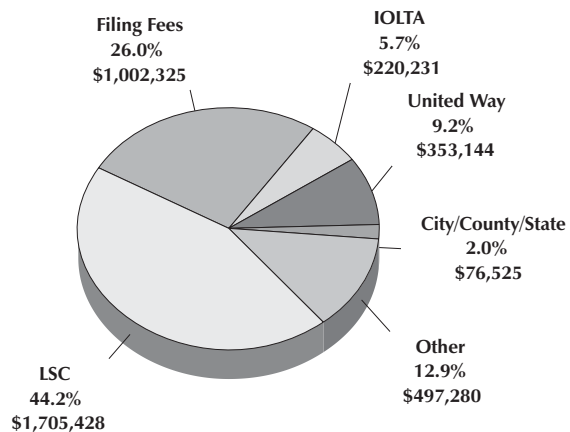
In 2001, WMLS closed 6,875 cases. Over 2,000 involved housing matters. Some 150 disabled persons were represented in benefits hearings, and more than 600 family law cases were litigated, providing desperately-needed personal security to many families suffering from domestic violence. Clients contacted WMLS through toll-free telephone numbers and referrals from human service agencies. WMLS conducted client intake at its seven offices and at satellite locations such as local courthouses and welfare offices.

A 78-year-old widower was victim of an unscrupulous company that grossly overcharged him for new windows financed through a second mortgage on his own home. WMLS defended the man against a breach of contract action when he failed to make payments by asserting consumer protection law claims. During the jury trial, the company agreed to settle for the fair market value of the windows alone and released the senior from the second mortgage.

Emergency intakes were done by telephone in rural counties. WMLS offered telephone advice and brief service via a hotline in several counties. WMLS co-sponsored an Elder Abuse training with Adult Protective Services, the state police, and the sheriff's and prosecutor's offices in Ottawa and Muskegon Counties that was attended by 100 senior network staff members.

A 44-year-old disabled man needed help when his mortgage payment drastically increased above his monthly Social Security income. WMLS helped him to file a homestead exemption to lower his property tax liability to stop his escrow account from being overdrawn to pay taxes. WMLS arranged for a lower monthly mortgage payment to restore the escrow slowly and affordably. WMLS also referred him to a local non-profit agency which successfully helped him refinance his mortgage at a lower interest rate through a rural development program.

WMLS Sources of Funding for 2001: \$ 3,854,933



WESTERN MICHIGAN LEGAL SERVICES

Contact: Michael C. Chielens, Executive Director • (616) 774-0672

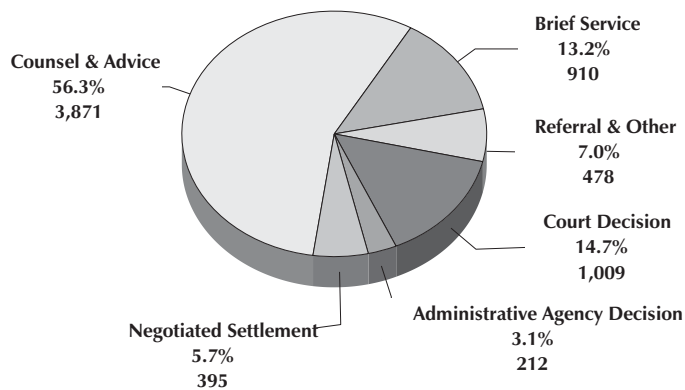
Community Outreach and Collaboration. WMLS attorneys visited community centers, senior citizen centers, transitional housing shelters, and domestic violence shelters to advise clients in various legal matters: foster care, family law, landlord-tenant law, estate planning, elder law, and domestic violence. WMLS staff members trained community agency professionals in poverty law issues, accepted case referrals, and served on the boards of local and state agencies. Through a federal Violence Against Women Act grant, WMLS provided additional services to domestic violence victims and staff at seven shelters and transitional housing programs. WMLS secured a National Association of Public Interest Law Fellow to work with domestic violence victims and connect the office with the domestic violence network in Kalamazoo. WMLS and the Grand Rapids Bar Association continued planning for the opening of the Legal Assistance Center through committees such as Technology, Legal Forms, Operations, Community Networks, Fundraising, Court Liaison, and Access.

Client Age	
18 & Under	60
19-59	5,910
60 & Over	905
Groups	0
Total	6,875

Pro Bono Support. Pro bono program attorneys closed 222 cases in 2001, and 288 new cases were referred to volunteer attorneys. In addition, the program raised \$166,000 in contributions from almost 800 attorneys and judges to the statewide Access to Justice Fund for WMLS. The Grand Rapids Bar Association and WMLS have partnered to start the Legal Assistance Center in the new Kent County Courthouse. Both organizations will staff the center, which will offer Web-based pro se legal forms, information and referral, self-help services and selected case intake. Kalamazoo Bar Association attorneys conduct evening intake for WMLS at Kalamazoo community centers several times each month.

Client Ethnicity	
White	4,320
Black	1,830
Hispanic	257
Native American	66
Asian	24
Other	378
Total	6,875

WMLS Types of Service in 2001



WMLS Cases Closed in 2001: 6,875

