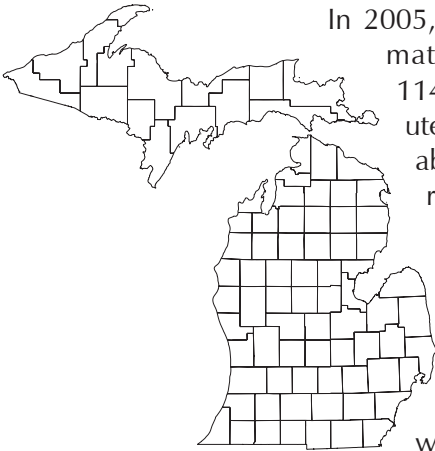


MICHIGAN MIGRANT LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

2005 MMLAP Office Location: Grand Rapids

MMLAP Service Area: Statewide

Service Population: 160,000 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



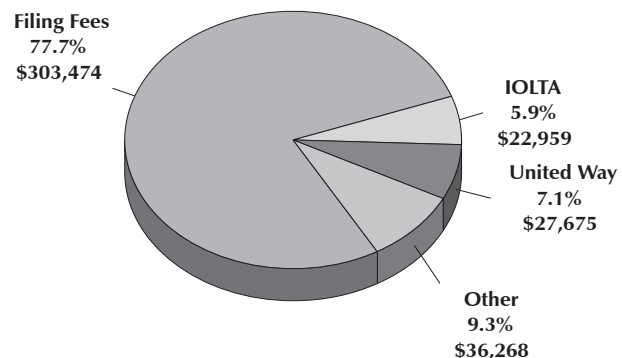
In 2005, MMLAP traveled approximately 20,000 miles visiting 114 migrant camps and distributed 3,103 bilingual booklets about migrant workers' legal rights and responsibilities in Michigan. The booklets are published in English and Spanish and are also available in audio format in several different dialects of native Mexican Indians who speak neither English or Spanish. Many dialects do not

have written forms of communication. MMLAP opened 481 new cases in 2005 and closed 686 cases involving employment, unsafe housing or working conditions, discrimination or other civil legal problems. MMLAP also works with other service providers who regularly encounter migrants through participation in training, task forces, and joint meetings to track migrant legal issue trends. When possible, repeat issues are addressed at a statewide level so that efforts are not being duplicated locally across the state. MMLAP and other training partners also educate attorneys, law clerks, interns and volunteers who work with migrants about legal matters affecting the migrant population.

A young man contacted MMLAP after not being paid for some time for his work on a fruit farm. MMLAP was able to advise the young man of his legal rights and responsibilities as a worker in Michigan. After learning about minimum wage and other applicable laws, the young man thought that he would try to handle the problem without litigation. With advice from MMLAP, the young man talked to the farmer and successfully obtained the pay that was owed to him under the law.

A nurse informed MMLAP that she was seeing dozens of migrant workers with similar serious health problems appearing to be related to improper chemical exposure at a fruit processing plant. MMLAP met with workers and referred the matter to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and MIO-SHA for investigation. When no bilingual investigators were available to talk to workers MMLAP staff accompanied workers, helped them understand the legal process, and communicated their story to the investigating officials so that appropriate action could be taken to prevent further chemical exposure.

MMLAP Sources of Funding for 2005: \$ 390,376



MICHIGAN MIGRANT LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

Contact: Teresa Hendricks, Executive Director • (616) 454-5055

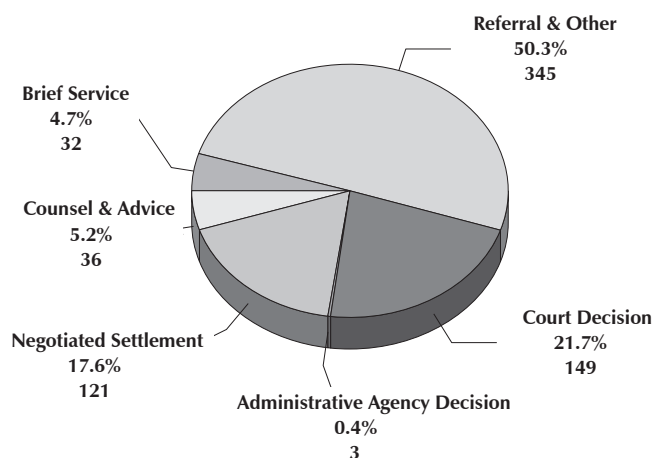
Community Outreach and Collaboration. Community outreach is a vital part of MMLAP’s mission to serve the migrant population. Outreach often occurs in the migrant camps where the clients live and work. Migrant workers have many barriers such as language, transportation, long work hours, or other issues which limit access to needed legal assistance. In addition to the written materials MMLAP distributes at migrant camps, MMLAP staff also continue to speak regularly on Spanish Broadcast radio as a way to get legal education and information out into the migrant camps. MMLAP also shares its written rights and responsibilities booklet with other legal services agencies including the Legal Assistance Center in Grand Rapids, Legal Aid of Western Michigan, Farmworker Legal Services, the Immigration Assistance Project and others. Also, MMLAP attends Migrant Resource Council meetings throughout the state and sits on the Migrant Services Committee for the state.

Client Age	
18 & Under	12
19-59	621
60 & Over	53
Groups	0
Total	686

Pro Bono Support. Given the language barrier and specialized nature of legal remedies for migrants, MMLAP recruits private attorney involvement on a case by case basis. MMLAP co-counseled several cases with private attorneys in Chicago, Illinois; Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan; Pennsylvania and Texas. MMLAP also distributes a list of Spanish speaking attorneys who have agreed to review cases in their areas of expertise. Qualifying clients in need of general help in poverty law issues are also regularly referred to the pro bono program of Legal Aid of Western Michigan.

Client Ethnicity	
White	0
Black	1
Hispanic	664
Native American	0
Asian	0
Other	21
Total	686

MMLAP Types of Service in 2005



MMLAP Cases Closed in 2005: 686

