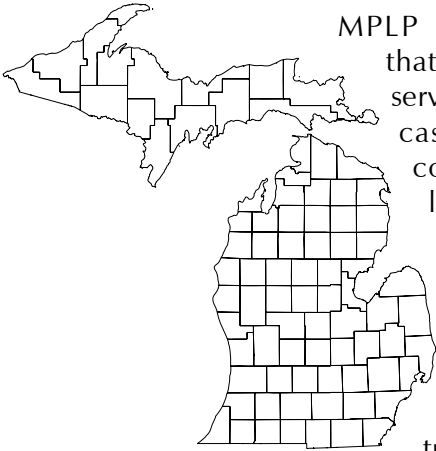


# MICHIGAN POVERTY LAW PROGRAM

2006 MPLP Office Locations: Ann Arbor and Lansing

**MPLP Service Area:** Statewide

**Service Population:** Legal services programs in Michigan



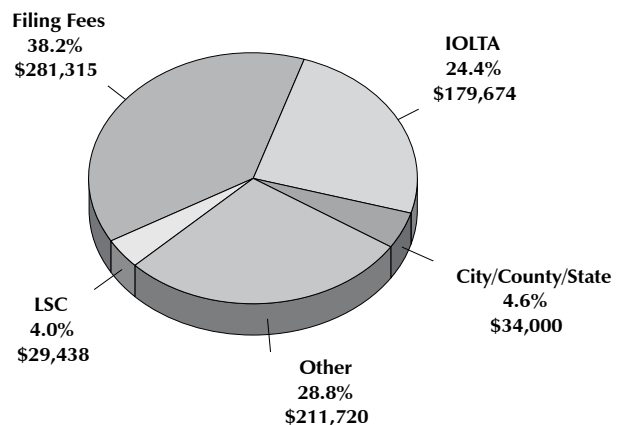
MPLP is a statewide program that supports Michigan legal services providers with direct case assistance, advocacy coordination, substantive law and skills trainings, and technology. MPLP received 1,700 requests for service from legal aid programs, an increase of more than 400 requests from last year. MPLP provides outreach, trainings, and presentations to legal services programs and

A low-income senior in need of affordable housing was unable to pay the \$300 housing application fee. MPLP informed the subsidized property manager that federal rules limit application costs to the actual costs incurred in processing and verifying an application. The manager then voluntarily lowered the application fee to \$50, enabling this senior and others like her to afford to move into this subsidized housing.

other nonprofit agencies in areas such as elder law, consumer law, housing, family law, and public benefits. MPLP provided 25 days of training (including 5 mini-seminars) for 803 attendees and convened 20 task force meetings in legal practice areas that attracted 241 persons. MPLP works with the Michigan Advocacy Project (MAP) on systemic issues such as issues affecting the elderly, housing and family law. MPLP also assists the state's technology initiatives, including the upgrade of the PIKA statewide case management server and support for the EITC ICAN E-File project, which helped secure a dramatic increase for 2006 in the amount of federal and state tax credits that Michigan's low-income residents received.

MPLP created a garnishment work group to address the problem of banks freezing clients' accounts even when the money in the bank account is clearly exempt from garnishment because it is a type of subsistence government income. Michigan law provides a process for a bank depositor to object to garnishment of such funds, but the time it takes to "unfreeze" the account can hurt these recipients who often lose access to their only income and then are unable to pay rent or buy food. The workgroup has proposed changes to the garnishment forms to inform a bank that it is not necessary to freeze accounts containing these funds.

**MPLP Sources of Funding for 2006: \$ 736,147**



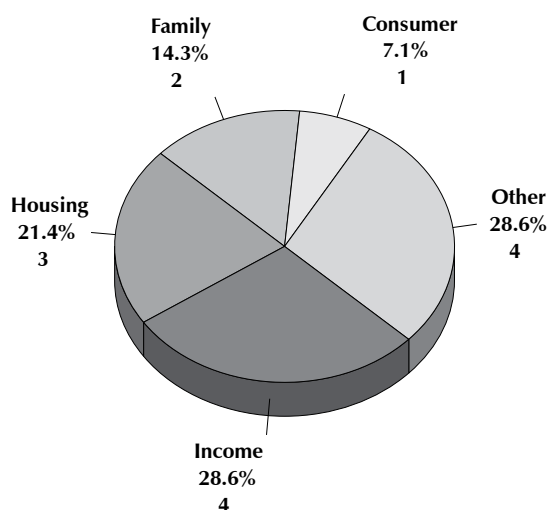
# MICHIGAN POVERTY LAW PROGRAM

Contact: Robert F. Gillett, Director • (734) 665-6181

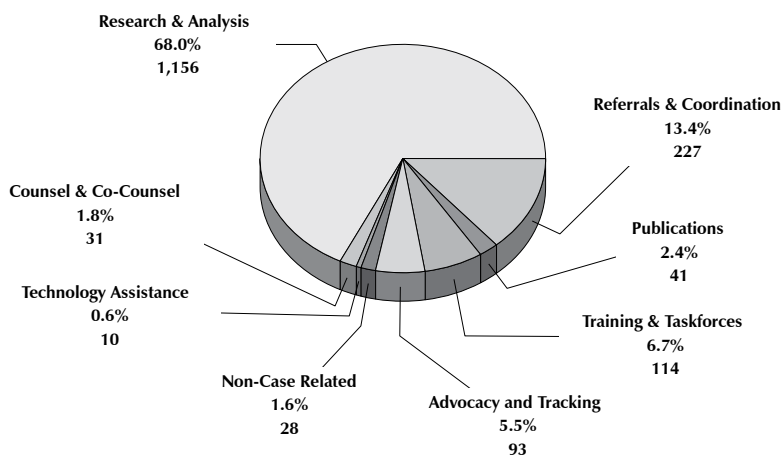
**Community Outreach and Collaboration.** In 2006, MPLP continued to maintain and update the statewide client website [www.michignlegalaid.org](http://www.michignlegalaid.org) which includes legal educational materials, self-help materials and links to forms regarding housing, consumer, family, and consumer law and income maintenance. MPLP is also working with Legal Aid and Defender to translate materials into other languages such as Arabic. MPLP also worked with Legal Aid of Western Michigan to provide technical support and hosting of a Wiki website supporting prisoner re-entry advocacy in Michigan. MPLP also worked with the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, the ARC of Michigan, the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, the Michigan Quality Care Community Council, and Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service to advance long term care reform through the creation of Single Points of Entry (SPEs) in four regions of Michigan. SPEs are “one stop shopping” agencies where consumers can get information about long term care, assessments for all available government programs, support in creating a person-centered long term care plan, and advocacy to ensure the plan is implemented to the consumer’s satisfaction.

**Pro Bono Support.** MPLP has two major pro bono initiatives 1) utilizing many pro bono attorneys primarily as trainers at MPLP task force meetings and trainings and 2) to support cases referred to the Michigan Litigation Assistance Partnership Program (MI-LAPP). The MI-LAPP program is administered by a four-person committee including representatives from the University of Michigan Law School, LSSCM/MPLP, Community Legal Resources and State Bar of Michigan staff. MI-LAPP links complex cases that legal aid programs do not have the resources to take with the large law firms and corporate law departments for pro bono help. MI-LAPP requires participation and collaboration from many partner programs such as local legal service providers, CRL, MPLP, and University of Michigan Law School Clinics to refer and support these cases to larger firm pro bono coordinators.

**MPLP Cases Closed in 2006: 14**



**MPLP Types of Activity in 2006**



**MPLP Completed Activities in 2006: 1,700**

