

MICHIGAN POVERTY LAW PROGRAM

2008 MPLP Office Locations: Ann Arbor and Lansing

MPLP Service Area: Statewide

Service Population: Legal services programs in Michigan



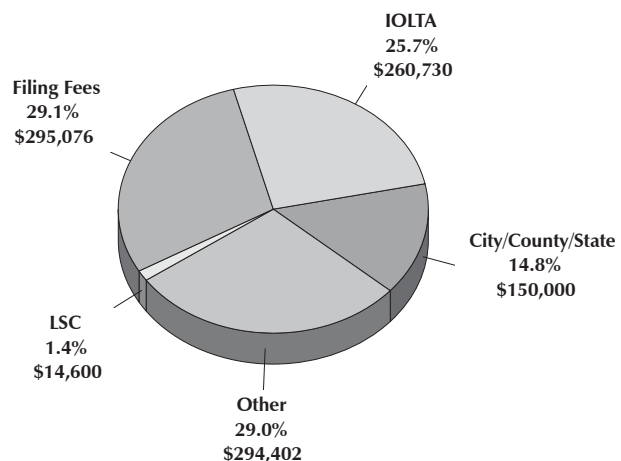
MPLP is a statewide program that supports Michigan legal services providers with direct case assistance, advocacy coordination, substantive law and skills trainings, and technology. MPLP received 1,595 requests for service from legal aid programs. MPLP provides outreach, trainings, and presentations to legal services programs and other nonprofit agencies in areas such as elder law,

A nursing home banned a woman with advanced multiple sclerosis from using her power wheelchair. She then could not move, including from where she had been placed in front of a glass window during a tornado, and could not seek help unless parked near a nurse's station. After MPLP threatened to sue because the nursing home was violating the law, the facility allowed the woman to use her chair and she is now mobile with a much improved quality of life.

consumer law, housing, family law, and public benefits. MPLP provided 15 days of training for 624 attendees and convened 20 task force meetings (including 10 mini-seminars) in legal practice areas that attracted an additional 267 persons. MPLP works with the Michigan Advocacy Project (MAP) on systemic issues such as issues affecting the elderly, housing, family law and the mortgage foreclosure crisis. MPLP also assists the state's technology initiatives, such as the Case Q Project that will create a cross platform case transfer system in the Pika case management system so that programs can electronically transfer client case files. MPLP also provides support for the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) electronic tax filing project, which helped secure approximately \$13 million in total refunds for Michigan users, with 9,500 users for the 2008 tax season. This amount is a dramatic increase from 2007, when 7,749 users obtained \$8.7 million in tax refunds. In 2008, MPLP's websites recorded over 3 million hits from clients and advocates.

A disabled individual got a notice to repay disability benefits because he continued to work after his benefits were approved. He incorrectly assumed that his employer had been reporting his wages as a parking attendant. MPLP demonstrated that the employer made many allowances for him to be able work, including being assigned to the same place and coming to work late or missing work as needed. The overpayment was waived because the man was working in the equivalent of a sheltered environment.

MPLP Sources of Funding for 2008: \$1,014,808



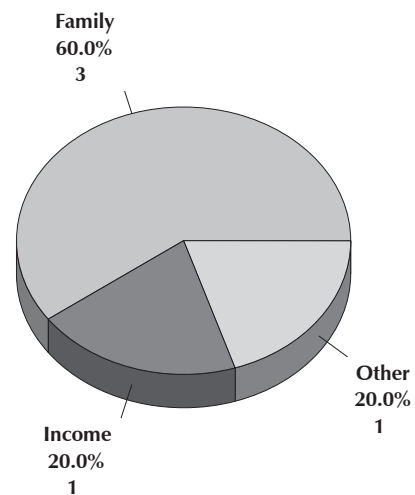
MICHIGAN POVERTY LAW PROGRAM

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

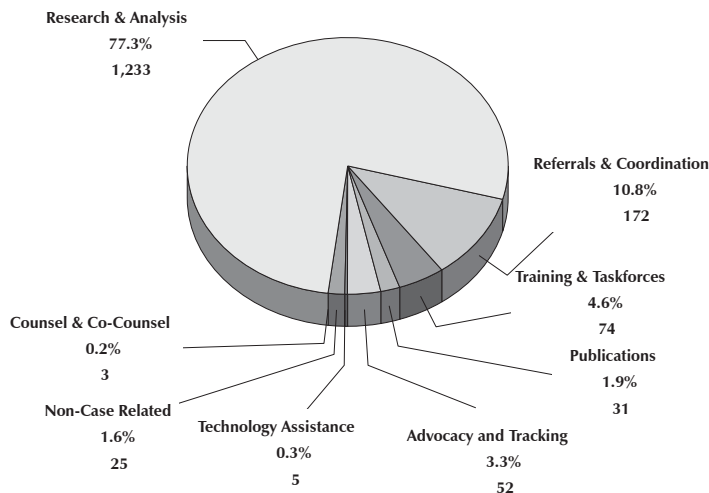
Community Outreach and Collaboration. MPLP maintains the statewide client website located at www.michiganlegalaid.org, which includes legal educational materials, self-help materials and links to forms regarding housing, family, consumer law and income maintenance. MPLP continues to work with Legal Aid and Defender to translate materials into other languages such as Arabic. MPLP, working with Legal Aid of Western Michigan, continues to host and support the Wiki website supporting prisoner re-entry advocacy in Michigan. MPLP also works 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 regarding creation of Single Points of Entry 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. MPLP also assists the Michigan Foreclosure Prevention Project in coordinating advocacy and addressing issues related to Michigan's mortgage foreclosure crisis.

Pro Bono Support. MPLP has three major pro bono initiatives 1) utilizing many pro bono attorneys as trainers at MPLP task force meetings and trainings; 2) consulting with programs that are developing state wide pro bono initiatives to address unmet legal needs; 3) consulting with programs that need assistance with complex cases or cases that raise statewide issues. LSSCM's Executive Director, is chair of the State Bar's Pro Bono Initiative which permits MPLP to coordinate with and support pro bono initiatives across the state. MPLP receives attorney financial donations through the Access to Justice Fund.

MPLP Cases Closed in 2008: 5



MPLP Types of Activity in 2008



MPLP Completed Activities in 2008: 1,595

