



2019

ANNUAL REPORT



Access to Justice
Campaign

ENSURING ACCESS AND FAIRNESS
FOR ALL IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Dear Donors and Friends,

By supporting the Access to Justice Campaign, you directly support low-income individuals and families in Michigan who would not otherwise have access to an attorney. Your 2019 support reflects a 32% increase in annual donations from the legal community for 15 civil legal aid programs throughout the state. In 2019, the ATJ Campaign distributed a record 1.8 million dollars to the legal aid programs in Michigan. When you prioritize giving to the Access to Justice Campaign, you lead by example in helping Michigan's most vulnerable during times of challenge and strife. As you know, having access to an attorney levels the playing field and changes lives for the better.

Legal aid offices in Michigan handle approximately 50,000 cases a year, with a disproportionate number for people of color. These cases involve preventing evictions and foreclosures, safely escaping abusive relationships, reinstituting necessary health and income benefits, and removing barriers to employment. To quantify your donation even further, 97,240 children and adults in Michigan benefitted from the help of a legal aid attorney in 2019. Countless more benefitted from legal information provided through legal aid offices.

With 2020 bringing a catastrophic pandemic, the legal needs of low-income people are multiplying. Legal aid offices are working tirelessly to help families facing legal issues exacerbated by the pandemic and the growing number of individuals who qualify for assistance. Your support has made a significant difference in legal aid's ability to respond and help families in need.

Thank you for supporting the campaign to ensure access to justice and fairness for all.



Ed Pappas
Board President, Michigan State Bar Foundation



Dennis Barnes
President, State Bar of Michigan

2019 Civil Legal Aid at a Glance

Thanks to your support we can provide access to justice for Michigan's most vulnerable people.



1,944,317

Number of low income
people in Michigan eligible
for legal aid services



97,240

Total children and adults in
households served (**42,914 children**)

45,036

Total number of
cases in 2019



7,104

Survivors of
Domestic Violence assisted



55%

Percentage of People
of Color served



10,265

Older adults helped

1,655

Veterans given
free legal help



17,898

Number of tenants
and homeowners
facing homelessness



6,115

Consumers
protected by legal aid

2019 ATJ Campaign Participating Programs

The Access to Justice Campaign proudly supports seven regional programs that increase meaningful access to legal advice and representation for low-income people.

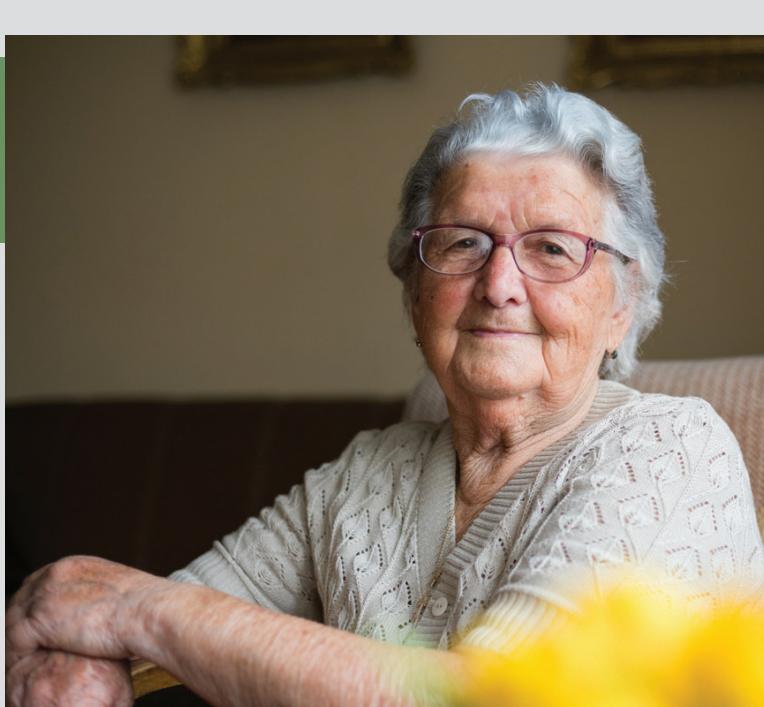
- Civil legal aid attorneys help those who cannot afford an attorney, and are the critical element in preserving homes, protecting families and maintaining incomes for Michigan's most vulnerable families.
- More than 1.9 million people in Michigan qualify for free civil legal aid because their annual income is below 125 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (\$32,750 for a family of 4).
- Legal aid programs work tirelessly for equal justice for all.



Vulnerable Older Adult Protected

A client contacted legal aid because her social security benefits and Medicare had been terminated. She had a heart condition requiring daily medication that was unaffordable without insurance. The legal aid attorney met with the Social Security Administration (SSA) about the alleged overpayment and it was determined that the benefits had been terminated due to a glitch in the SSA system.

Restarting the client's Medicare would have normally taken up to three months, but legal aid was able to get the process expedited and resolved within two weeks to ensure the continuation of lifesaving medications.





Survivor of Domestic Violence Helped

A young survivor of domestic violence came to legal aid for help. She had been verbally, physically, and emotionally abused by her husband, often in front of her nine year old son. With legal aid's help, the client obtained a divorce and received custody of her son, with parenting time granted to her ex-husband. On one of the rare weekends he used his parenting time, he fled to Ohio with the child and falsely accused her of child abuse. Legal aid represented her again and obtained an order requiring her ex-husband to return the child to her in Michigan. The client was grateful for the help and indicated, "I felt empowered having an attorney by my side at the hearing."

Our Regions at a Glance

Metro Region

(40.62% poverty)

- Lakeshore Legal Aid
- Michigan Legal Services

Western Region

(20.52% poverty)

- Legal Aid of Western Michigan*

Eastern Region

(15.22% poverty)

- Legal Services of Eastern Michigan
- Center for Civil Justice

Northern Region

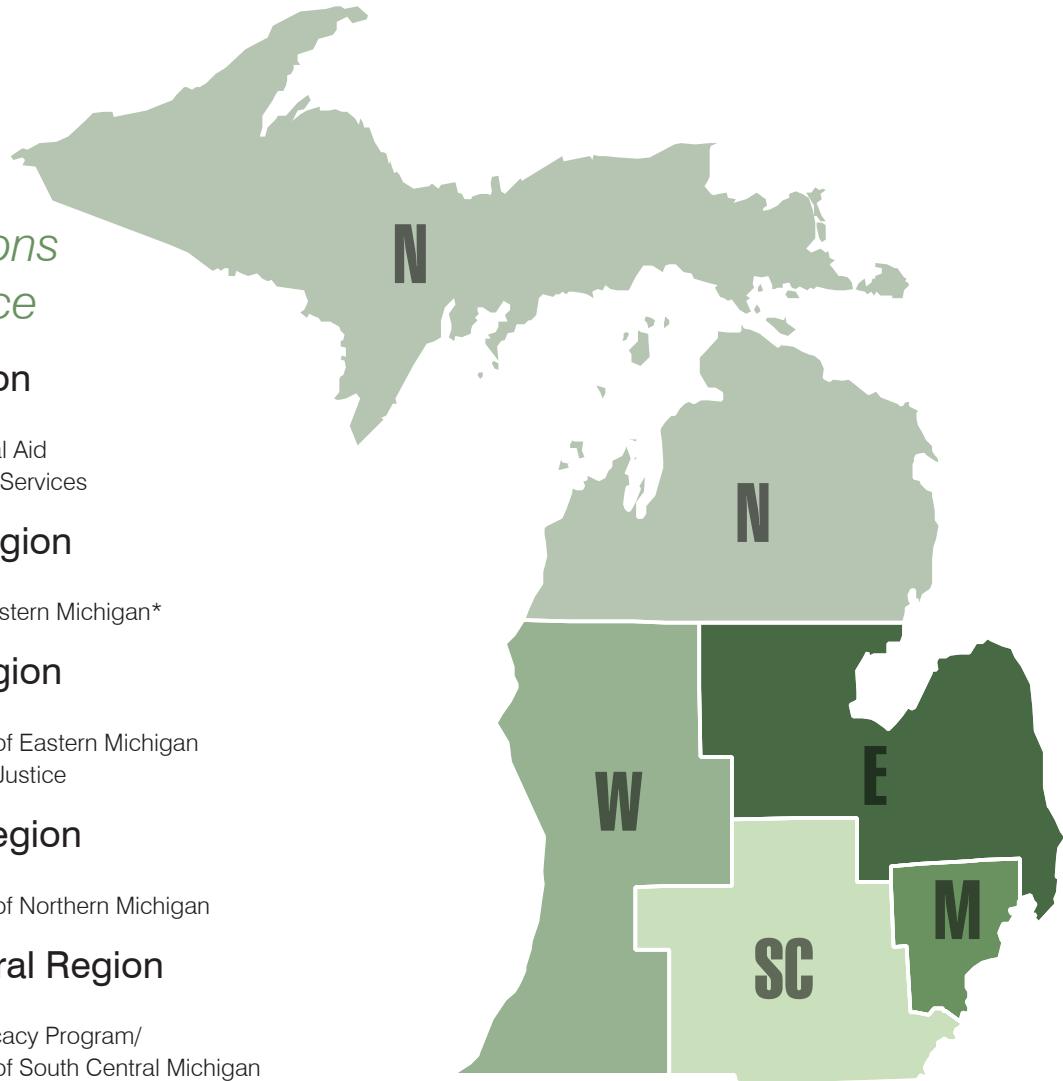
(8.07% poverty)

- Legal Services of Northern Michigan

South Central Region

(15.57% poverty)

- Michigan Advocacy Program/
Legal Services of South Central Michigan



* Although a participant in the ATJ Campaign, LAWM has decided not to be included in the ATJ Campaign's centralized fundraising effort at this time and the only ATJ Campaign donations it will receive are those that are designated to LAWM.

Statewide Programs

Eight statewide programs provide civil legal services to specific vulnerable populations.

- **Counsel and Advocacy Law Line** (CALL) is a statewide hotline and able to provide immediate access to legal advice for eligible callers. CALL is an integral part of building Michigan's comprehensive, integrated statewide intake and triage system, providing access to lawyers to people living in poverty regardless of geography. *In 2019, CALL served approximately 21,500 clients and transferred approximately 30% of the cases to the regional legal aid programs for further assistance.* CALL is also able to resolve some legal issues through brief assistance and provides guidance to self-represented litigants. CALL serves low income individuals and older adults. CALL joined the centralized effort in January 2020 after Elder Law of Michigan (ELM) discontinued hotline services. ELM no longer participates in the ATJ Campaign.
- **Community Legal Resources** Michigan Community Resources (home of Community Legal Resources) provides legal programs that strengthen nonprofit organizations serving low-income individuals and communities throughout the state. Through legal pro bono referrals, direct legal services, legal clinics, workshops, and educational tools, attorneys support nonprofits and community-based organizations in improving operations, increasing efficiency, and reducing risk—allowing organizations to focus on their core missions. *In 2019, MCR served over 200 small nonprofits and community groups throughout Michigan, including placing 87 legal matters with pro bono attorneys. Among these was Friends of Parkside, a nonprofit that serves the residents of the Villages of Parkside, an affordable housing community.*
- **Farmworkers Legal Services** (FLS) provides free legal assistance to migrant and seasonal farmworkers across Michigan with a focus on workers' rights, housing, access to public benefits and education, and civil rights. *In 2019, FLS was significantly involved in bringing recommendations before the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. After presenting the challenges and barriers faced by farmworkers, five motions were unanimously passed to improve the support and protections for seasonal farm workers living in Michigan.*

Protected Family

A client came to legal aid for help when her child and nephew were diagnosed with lead poisoning after being exposed in their home. The client could not afford to fix the home herself, and to qualify for assistance from the Lead Safe Homes Program through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), she needed to demonstrate ownership of the home. The home had been in her family for generations, but she did not have a deed in her name. Legal aid was able to demonstrate her interest and ownership of the home, and helped the client provide the relevant documentation to qualify for the program. With legal aid's help, her home is now lead free and a safe environment for her child and nephew.





Preserved Home Ownership

An older adult contacted legal aid because she was behind on her mortgage payments due to unexpected bills and health expenses. The lender had denied her request for a loan modification. A legal aid attorney verified that a sheriff's sale had not been scheduled, advised her of her legal rights, and assisted her in demonstrating eligibility for financial assistance to catch up on the missed payments. She was relieved and incredibly grateful for legal aid's assistance in saving her home.

- **Michigan Elder Justice Initiative** (MEJI) seeks to empower, educate, and protect low-income older adults and people with disabilities through administrative and policy advocacy, educational efforts, and collaboration with multi-disciplinary partners on the local, state, and national level. *In 2019, MEJI provided multiple trainings including elder abuse prevention in nursing facilities and training on guardianship and probate court proceedings to promote better support of vulnerable older adults.*
- **Michigan Immigrant Rights Center** (MIRC) is a statewide legal resource center for Michigan's immigrant communities. MIRC provides direct representation, systemic advocacy, technical assistance, and community education for Michigan's immigrant communities. *In addition to numerous collaborative efforts with statewide groups, in 2019 MIRC successfully negotiated a settlement involving a migrant labor camp with substandard housing and working conditions. Their efforts positively affected the homes and jobs of 76 workers and their families.*
- **Michigan Indian Legal Services** (MILS) provides legal services statewide to income-eligible individuals and Tribes, advocates for the rights of individuals, which advances systems of justice, and works to preserve Indian families through state and tribal courts. MILS works collaboratively with tribes, tribal staff members, and the tribal courts on a regular basis. *In 2019, MILS collaborated on a successful effort to amend the Court rules concerning direct appeals for violations of the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Michigan Indian Family Preservation Act.*
- **Michigan Legal Help Program** (MLHP) works with judges, courts, lawyers, bar associations, nonprofits, self-help center, libraries, and many others to promote coordinated and quality assistance for people representing themselves in civil legal matters in Michigan. *The Michigan Legal Help website (michiganlegalhelp.org, available in Spanish at AyudaLegaldeMichigan.org), had an average of 43,872 visits per week in 2019.* In addition to reliable legal information and forms for self-represented litigants, the website also includes a triage and referral function that provides information and referrals tailored to each individual's needs.
- **Michigan Poverty Law Program** (MPLP) provides training, case consultation and referral services to civil legal aid attorneys and other legal advocates in the areas of family law, elder law, consumer law, housing law, and public benefits. MPLP also engages in systemic advocacy to help alleviate barriers faced by low-income individuals. *In 2019, MPLP worked with regional civil legal aid service providers to support race equity work through training, including implicit bias, external racial equity advocacy and internal organizational alignment.*

Access to Justice Campaign Results

The Campaign's long-term goal is to raise significant funds from the legal community for the 15 supported programs, and to bridge the gap between the need for civil legal aid and the resources available.

In 2019, the ATJ Campaign experienced a 32% increase in donations from the Michigan legal community and distributed more funds to the supported programs than ever before. 45 firms reached the Leadership giving level, up from 40 in 2018, and nearly 4,000 Michigan lawyers contributed to the Campaign.

The legal community's support of legal aid is an increasingly critical source of funding. Funding for civil legal aid in our state comes from a few different sources, including IOLTA accounts, federal dollars, filing fees, local grants and the money raised from the legal community. Michigan's giving rate is currently \$29 per attorney. The national average is \$75 per attorney and states with centralized campaigns raise \$126 per attorney.

Increased participation in the ATJ Campaign from the Michigan legal community will make a meaningful impact on civil legal aid's ability to represent and counsel those living in poverty.

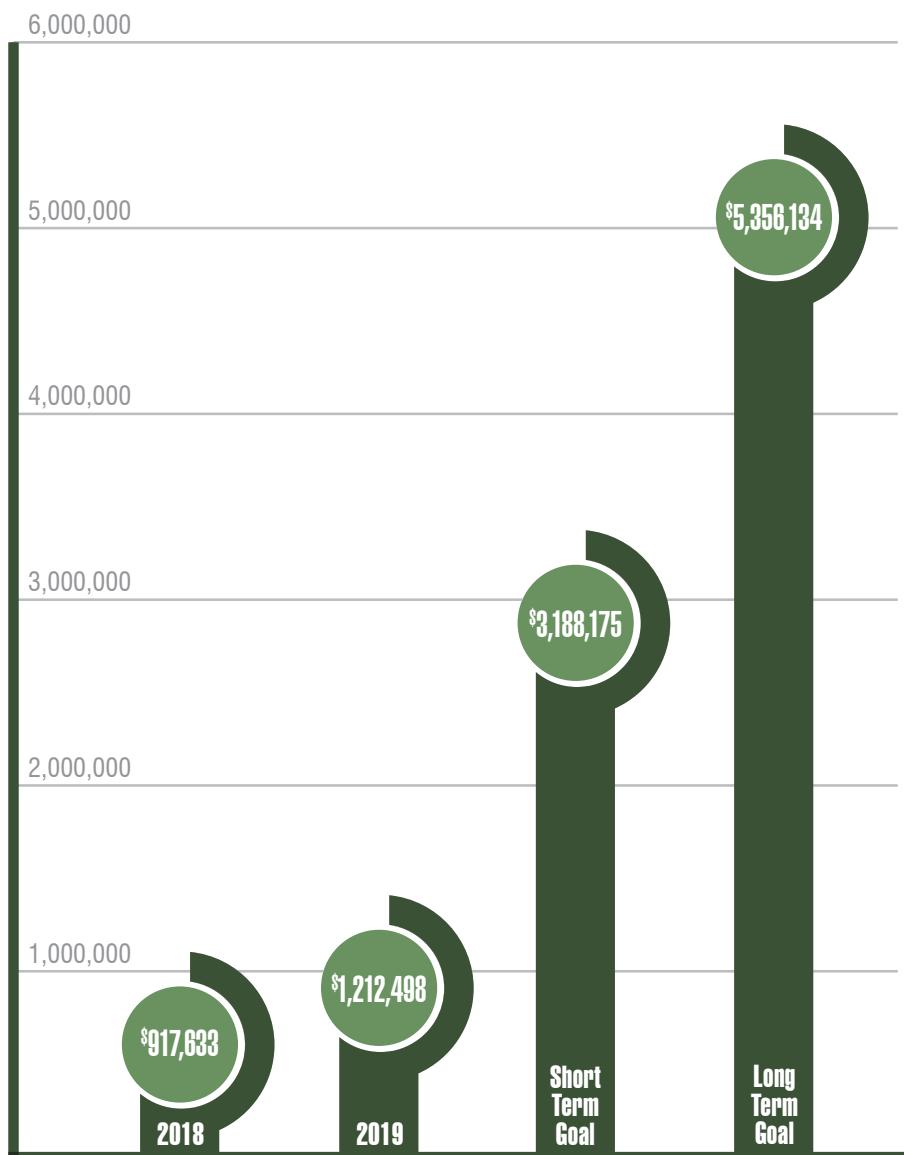
Let's Grow the Campaign:

\$917,633
(2018 giving in Michigan)

\$1,212,498
(2019 giving in Michigan)

\$3,188,175
(short term goal based
on national average)

\$5,356,134
(long term goal based
on national average
of states with a
statewide campaign)



2019 ATJ Campaign Leadership Firms

Thank you to the following 45 Leadership Firms. The tiers reflect the per attorney amount given to the ATJ Campaign by the firms in 2019. We commend the leadership role these firms have taken by investing in civil legal aid and supporting access to justice for Michigan's most vulnerable people.

\$1,000 and above per attorney

Soble Rowe & Krichbaum LLP

\$750-\$999 per attorney

Crippen, Urquhart & Weber LLP

Mantese Honigman, PC

\$500-\$749 per attorney

Altior Law, P.C.

Barr Anhut & Associates

Bos & Glazier

Conlin, McKenney & Philbrick, PC

Curtis Curtis & Brelinski, P.C.

Glenn A. Saltsman, PLC

Goethel Engelhardt, PLLC

Gruel Mills Nims & Pylman PLLC

Hooper Hathaway, PC

Johnsen Wikander PC

McGarry Bair PC

McShane & Bowie PLC

Pear Sperling Eggan & Daniels, PC

Rhoades McKee PC

Schmick Law Offices, PC

Verspoor, Waalkes, Lalley, Slotsema & Talen, PC

\$300-\$499 per attorney

Barris, Sott, Denn & Driker

Bodman PLC

Bogas & Koncious PC

Dykema

Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC

Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.

Fraser Trebilcock

Garris, Garris, Garris & Garris, P.C.

Honigman LLP

Howard & Howard

Jones Day

Kitchen Sharkey PLLC

Miller Canfield

Miller Johnson

Parmenter Law

Pinsky, Smith, Fayette & Kennedy, LLP

Plunkett Cooney

Price Heneveld LLP

Riley & Hurley PC

Sinas, Dramis, Larkin, Graves & Waldman, P.C.

Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge

The Connable Office

Thrun Law Firm, PC

Varnum LLP

Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

Willingham & Coté, PC

2019 ATJ Campaign Firm, Corporate Counsel and SBM Sections

\$100,000-\$199,999

Honigman LLP

\$50,000-\$99,999

Dykema

Miller Canfield

Varnum LLP

Warner Norcross & Judd LLP

\$25,000-\$49,999

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Dickinson Wright

Ford Motor Company

Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C.

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Plunkett Cooney

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\$10,000-\$24,999

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McShane & Bowie PLC

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\$5,000-\$9,999

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Thrun Law Firm, PC

Verspoor, Waalkes, Lalley, Slotsema & Talen, PC

\$2,500-\$4,999

American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers

Barnes & Thornburg LLP

Brooks Kushman

Butzel Long

Clark Hill

Foley & Lardner LLP

McGarry Bair PC

Parmenter Law

Willingham & Coté, PC

\$1,000-\$2,499

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