

Legal Services Funding in North Carolina



Legal Services programs work to:

- Help victims of domestic violence escape abuse;
- Fight predatory consumer practices and scams;
- Preserve homes and improve housing conditions;
- Protect and improve household income for families and seniors;
- Fight for access to medical care and coverage in federal programs;
- Recruit and train private lawyers to donate their time, money and services in order to increase access and to reduce the overall costs.

Legal Services programs do not:

- Provide representation in criminal matters;
- Provide representation in personal injury, medical malpractice or other tort cases;
- Get involved in partisan politics.

Total Funding Per Eligible Client

State	Amount	Rank
New Jersey	\$124.90	1st
Maryland	\$82.74	4th
Virginia	\$37.99	22nd
Florida	\$37.92	23rd
North Carolina	\$29.17	27th
Alabama	\$12.21	50th
National Average	\$38.16	

Legal Services programs restrict their services to clients in need. For example, approximately \$24,000 in gross annual income would be the maximum for a family of four to qualify for services. The median annual household income for legal services clients served is \$11,000.

More than 1.7 million people in North Carolina qualify for Legal Services help – approximately 20% of the population. **National studies show that 80% of civil legal needs of poor people are unmet.**

Legal Services programs resolve more than 70% of their cases outside of court. These programs effectively solve client problems while conserving state resources by not further burdening the court system.

Legal Services programs bring tens of thousands of dollars to North Carolina to ameliorate the ravages of poverty. Through their community education efforts and availability across the state, legal services programs assist low-income North Carolinians with concerns about federal benefits, such as Social Security, disability and housing. These efforts both help ensure access to justice for low-income North Carolinians and bring additional monies to the state.

Prepared by the Equal Justice Alliance

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