

ACBF Legal Aid Provider Grants
2024 Grant Cycle LOI Applications - Cover Sheet

Name of Organization	Grant Request Name	Type of Support	Summary of Request	Project Cost	Operating Budget
Achieva Family Trust	Income Spend Down Trust Program	Existing Program/Project Support	Achieva Family Trust (AFT) administers Income Spend Down Trusts that enable low-income individuals with disabilities and the elderly to receive services in the community and avoid institutional care. AFT is the only organization in PA providing this service. We provide this service based on our mission. The costs for administering the trusts far exceed the \$100 annual fee charged to the client.	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,417,624.00
Ansar of Pittsburgh	Legal Support for Ukrainian Immigrants in Western Pennsylvania	Existing Program/Project Support	To support Ukrainian immigrants who are submitting immigration applications, work authorizations, temporary protected status applications, and parole applications by covering USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) fees, printing costs, and postage.	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 695,385.00
Arise Immigration Services	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support high-quality, trauma-informed legal representation of asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and capacity expansion around the country through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model.	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 22,715.00
Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support Christian Legal Aid as we begin our 21st year of operation in serving low income civil litigants in Allegheny County at 250% of the federal poverty level.	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 48,054.00
Education Law Center-PA	Equitable Education Access for Multilingual Learners	Existing Program/Project Support	To support ELC's work to strengthen legal services and advocacy focused on ensuring multilingual learners in Allegheny County can access high-quality public education. We focus on removing language-related barriers to quality education by providing legal services, referrals, and advocacy tools to families; legal guidance and training to community partners who are part of immigrant and refugee communities; and support to pro bono attorneys.	\$ 104,000.00	\$ 2,892,733.00
Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services' pro bono, sliding scale, and community lawyering services for low and moderate income individuals, families, communities, and organizations in Allegheny County.	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 1,242,350.00
Hugh Lane Foundation	LGBTQ+ Legal Aid Justice Project	Existing Program/Project Support	We are requesting funding to support our legal aid program for LGBTQ+ and HIV community members. Hugh Lane has offered legal aid services to address core concerns of LGBTQ+ and HIV community members in Allegheny County since 2021. With unprecedented need and attacked on our community, our mission is more important than ever.	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 1,194,000.00

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North Hills Community Outreach	Ask the Attorney	Existing Program/Project Support	To offer free non-criminal legal advice to low-income individuals and families within the North Hills Community Outreach service area through the expertise of volunteer attorneys. Consultations cover a range of topics, including divorce, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant disputes, and more. These sessions are designed to provide guidance and direction on how to effectively address legal issues.	\$ 19,500.00	\$ 2,290,400.90
Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh	Providing Civil Legal Representation for Victims of Domestic Violence	Existing Program/Project Support	To support the WC&S Civil Law Project in its free legal representation for victims of intimate partner violence in divorce actions with alimony and/or property claims for victims of intimate partner violence. CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts and provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services.	\$ 1,309,170.00	\$ 8,167,519.00
Women's Law Project	General Operating Support	General Operating Support	To support our expanding operations as we fight for reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ equality, and bodily autonomy in Pennsylvania and beyond.	\$ 2,277,153.00	\$ 2,277,153.00



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization	Achieva Family Trust
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	23-2947828
Year Founded	1998
Mission Statement	Achieva advocates with, empowers, and supports people with disabilities and their families throughout their lives.
Executive Director	Mr. Steve Suroviec
Executive Director Email	ssuroviec@achieva.info
Preferred Pronouns	he/him/his
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Amy Strano, Esq.
Title	President, Achieva Family Trust
Email	adstrano@achieva.info
Organization Address	711 Bingham Street Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15203
Phone Number	(412) 995-5000
Fax	(412) 995-5001
Website	achievafamilytrust.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	3417624

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name Income Spend Down Trust Program

Summary of Request

Achieva Family Trust (AFT) administers Income Spend Down Trusts that enable low-income individuals with disabilities and the elderly to receive services in the community and avoid institutional care.

AFT is the only organization in PA providing this service. We provide this service based on our mission. The costs for administering the trusts far exceed the \$100 annual fee charged to the client.

Total Project Cost 10000

Type of Support

Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

AFT is working with the PA Department of Human Services, Legal Counsel to administer a type of Pooled Special Needs Trust called an "Income Spend Down Trust". This type of trust enables people who need Medicaid Waiver funding for home and community services to become eligible despite their income being slightly over the required income limit for waiver eligibility. The waiver funding enables the person to remain in their home instead of moving into long term institutional care. AFT currently administers 250 Income Spend Down Trusts. The AFT annual fee for this service is \$100. We chose to administer these trusts, as part of our "mission" since we believe that this type of trust enables elderly and disabled individuals to receive services that are vital to their well-being in their home and community, instead of being institutionalized.

Administering these trusts is very labor intensive, that involves working with referral sources, screening the referrals for eligibility, establishing the trusts, communicating with PA DHS and distributing funds on a monthly basis per beneficiary for their medical needs, in order to maintain their eligibility for Medicaid Waiver funding. A number of AFT legal and finance staff are involved in the administration of these trusts. Because of the increasing demand for these trusts, and the limited capacity of staff, we have had to put a pause on referrals for several months. Last year, we opened 76 trusts. This year we have opened 101 trusts, so far. For the majority of this program's existence (2019 -present), we were in pandemic protocols. With the end of Covid protocols, Medicaid is now terminating individuals who are not financially eligible for services, through a renewal process, that was restricted during the pandemic. We are seeing the renewal process result in an influx of people who are eligible for and needing the trusts to keep the in-home services that they have been receiving through the Waiver funding. This is in addition to the new applicants who need the trusts to become eligible. Without additional staff and funding, we will not be able to continue to offer these trusts. We continue to pursue all sources of sustainable funding for this important service.

Context/Background Information

AFT is a nonprofit organization that was established in 1998, as the first nonprofit in the state of PA, to offer the availability of Pooled Special Needs Trusts. We recently celebrated our 25th anniversary. AFT now administers four types of Special Needs Trusts, including Pooled, Payback, Third Party and Income Spend Down Trusts. We offer our trust services for a wide range of individuals and families, since we will establish a trust for as little as \$500. As a part of the Achieva family of organizations, our mission is to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and promote their full inclusion in the community. Because

of our mission, in addition to being a corporate trustee for four types of Special Needs Trusts, we have been involved in litigation, such as the Lewis Decision, and other public policy initiatives that impact people with disabilities, such as the establishment of ABLE accounts as a saving tool for people with disabilities. AFT is very active in PAELA and NAELA and their advocacy efforts on behalf of people with disabilities and the elderly. More recently, AFT is collaborating with several leading PA attorneys in elder law, as well as the PA Health Law Project, PA Disability Rights, and Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, to challenge the current Medicaid statutes and regulations that apply to eligibility for long term care funding in the Medicaid Waiver Program in PA. The goal of this effort is to expand the availability of Home and Community Medicaid Waiver services to individuals with disabilities and the elderly in PA, helping them to avoid institutional care. This is in keeping with AFT's history of pursuing changes to the law and public policy that can benefit the people we serve.

Project Goals

1. Continue to offer Income Spend Down Trusts to low-income people with disabilities and the elderly to assist them in avoiding unnecessary institutionalization.
2. Explore the feasibility of expanding AFT staff dedicated to this effort.
3. Continue efforts to advocate for changes to Medicaid statutes and regulations that pertain to eligibility for Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver, to make it easier to qualify for Waiver funding and divert additional individuals from nursing homes and institutional care, allowing them to receive services in their home and community.

Population to be served

Low Income Individuals with Disabilities and Elderly Requiring Long Term Care.

Services are available across the state of PA.

10-15 Referrals received per month for this type of trust.

Currently, AFT administers 250 Income Spend Down Trusts.

According to the PA Department of Aging, there are 3.4 million individuals in PA who are over 60 years old.

That is 17.% of the total PA population. Pa has the 5th oldest population of the 50 states.

As of 2023, the CDC also identifies 2.7 million adults over 18, in PA, having a disability.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



Achieva Family Trust 501 c 3... .pdf

IRS Form 990



Family Trust 2023 990.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



ACBF Legal Aid Grants - Prop... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



Achieva Budget 2024_2025.pdf

Audited Financial Statements



ACHIEVA Family Trust FS FIN... .pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Name

Amy Strano, Esq.

Title

President, Achieva Family Trust



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Ansar of Pittsburgh

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 81-4052305

Year Founded 2016

Mission Statement

Strengthening Pennsylvanian communities by empowering immigrants to set new roots, become active society members, and promote an understanding and tolerance of cultural differences.

Executive Director Dr. Wiam Younes

Executive Director Email younes@ansarpitt.org

Preferred Pronouns she/her/hers

Contact Person (if different from Executive Director) Saralinda Blanning

Title Grant Writer

Email sblanning@gmail.com

Organization Address 140 E. Main Street
Carnegie, PA, 15106

Phone Number (724) 624-3955

Website www.ansarpitt.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 695385

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name Legal Support for Ukrainian Immigrants in Western Pennsylvania

Summary of Request

To support Ukrainian immigrants who are submitting immigration applications, work authorizations,

temporary protected status applications, and parole applications by covering USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) fees, printing costs, and postage.

Total Project Cost 80000

Type of Support Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Tuesday, October 1, 2024

Project End Date Tuesday, September 30, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

Ansar of Pittsburgh (ANSAR) seeks \$10,000 in support from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation in order to continue to assist Ukrainian families who have recently immigrated to the United States. ANSAR has received federal funding to support Ukrainian families through September 30, 2024, but support is needed beyond that date. Recent Ukrainian immigrants have ongoing legal needs, and new immigrants from Ukraine continue to arrive in Western Pennsylvania, the region served by ANSAR.

ANSAR provides integrated language, immigration, social, education, and mental health services not only to refugees and immigrants from Ukraine, but also from countries including Afghanistan, Russia, Syria, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Iraq, Sudan, Egypt, Mauritania, Tunisia, Morocco, Venezuela, Haiti, Kurdistan, and Turkey who now reside in Western Pennsylvania.

Support from ACBF would specifically go to the legal services that ANSAR provides for immigrants from Ukraine. The total program cost for serving Ukrainian immigrants from October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025 is projected to be \$80,000 and covers one legal aid salary, office supplies, printing, mail, USCIS (United States Citizenship and Immigration Services) fees, and rent.

ANSAR's legal clinic assists Ukrainian families with immigration applications, work authorizations, temporary protected status, and parole. Since January 1, 2024, the legal clinic has served 237 Ukrainian individuals, and the social services program has served 157 families.

The legal aid hired by ANSAR for this program is from Ukraine and specializes in immigration law. She speaks Ukrainian which facilitates helping immigrants who are English Language Learners. She also brings vital cultural understanding to her interactions with clients.

While ANSAR serves many immigrant communities, only the portion of operational expenses (office supplies, printing, mail, and rent) that is used to serve people from Ukraine is included in the projected program cost.

USCIS fees are a critical part of the program expense as applications for USCIS services cannot be submitted without them. This is a cost that many people who are working hard to find jobs and establish new homes cannot afford.

A \$10,000 grant from ACBF would provide critical support by covering USCIS fees, office supplies for printing, and mailing.

Context/Background Information

ANSAR began in April 2016 when founder, Dr. Wiam Younes, reached out to help a single refugee family adjust to life in the United States. By December of 2016, ANSAR was assisting 55 refugee families, welcoming each family with a food basket and household items. The need for refugee and immigrant services, especially assistance provided by those who shared common backgrounds and experiences, was clear. So, in December of 2016, Dr. Younes formally established Ansar of Pittsburgh to help provide housing for refugees and immigrants, ESL and U.S. citizenship classes, legal services, translation services,

and community activities that build cross-cultural understanding. With an influx of refugees from Afghanistan in 2021, demand for the organization's services, always high, grew even more rapidly and necessitated hiring seven full-time and six part-time staff, and two contractors in addition to ANSAR's more than 50 committed volunteers. Need for services continues to grow with the arrival of refugees from Ukraine.

As a key refugee resettlement organization in the Western Pennsylvania region, ANSAR helps people adapt to new lives in the United States and develop the skills and networks needed to be productive citizens. ANSAR has a track record of successfully providing legal services, growing to serve new immigrant populations, and supporting clients in all phases of their immigration journeys.

In 2023, ANSAR's immigration clinic assisted over 550 clients with cases, including asylum claims, work authorizations, green card applications, family unifications, re-parole, and temporary protected visas. Additionally, its immigration lawyers filed several N-400 applications and conducted mock interviews for clients. The immigration clinic team filed a minimum of 50 N-400s and 45 N-600s in 2023.

Because of its existing services, ANSAR already has a strong organizational structure, experience providing services, and connections to community resources – including ongoing relationships with the law schools at Carnegie Mellon and The University of Pittsburgh. ANSAR's experience and expertise make it the ideal organization to serve current and incoming people from Ukraine.

From its inception, ANSAR has recognized the importance of understanding people's cultural backgrounds and experiences. When employees and volunteers can relate to new immigrants' perspectives, they are better able to provide the specific assistance that will help them. ANSAR is sensitive to these needs and has always worked to provide culturally respectful assistance. Additionally, many ANSAR employees and volunteers were previously clients. These people have first-hand knowledge of cultural contexts and recent experience navigating U.S. immigration and legalization processes.

Project Goals

The goals of this program are:

- 1) to provide ongoing legal services for newly arriving Ukrainian immigrants in Western Pennsylvania without or with a small fee.
- 2) to be able to grow program services as more people flee Ukraine and arrive in need of assistance.
- 3) to provide Ukrainian immigrants with an understanding of the immigration requirements to maintain residency in the United States.
- 4) to enhance the larger community's understanding of the legal status of Ukrainians in the United States and build strong bridges between new Ukrainian immigrants and the communities they live in.

The legal processes that Ukrainian families need assistance with include: immigration applications, work authorizations, temporary protected status, and parole.

Since January 1, 2024, ANSAR's legal clinic has served 237 Ukrainian individuals, and the social services program has served 157 families.

In order to meet the program goals of serving current and future clients from Ukraine, ANSAR will:

- Employ one legal aid with Ukrainian language skills and cultural knowledge.
- Use a portion of its operating budget to cover rent, office supplies, printing, and postage needed to process legal applications specifically for Ukrainian clients.
- Cover USCIS application fees for Ukrainian clients.

Population to be served

The specific population that will be served by this project is people who fled Ukraine following the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Having little warning of impending war, they immigrated to the United States with few resources. Often, only women and children immigrated, leaving men behind to fight and disrupting family support structures.

ANSAR serves Western Pennsylvania, focusing on the greater Pittsburgh area. Clients come from as far away as Erie for social services and some move from other states to Allegheny County to receive social and immigration services. The majority of clients reside in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, Washington and Westmorland counties in Western PA. However, ANSAR's immigration clinic serves clients residing in various states seeking free and, in some cases, low fee services.

While this project focuses on Ukrainian immigrants, it is important to understand their needs in the

context of the larger immigrant population that ANSAR serves in Western Pennsylvania as they have many shared characteristics.

3,416 people attained Lawful Permanent Resident Status just in Pittsburgh in fiscal year 2022 (DHS Office of Immigration Statistics). Since its inception in 2016, ANSAR has grown to serve approximately 15% of that population. As geopolitical circumstances (such as the war in Ukraine) have arisen, ANSAR has expanded its services to meet the needs of growing numbers of LPRs (Lawful Permanent Residents) in Western Pennsylvania. It will continue to grow as circumstances dictate.

Many of ANSAR's clients have fled persecution and war. Because their departures were often abrupt, they need everything from shelter and food to English language classes, citizenship instruction, and legal assistance. Ansar provides these services as well as community integration, community building, and mental health services.

Another characteristic of many of the LPRs served by ANSAR is that they have experienced traumas in their countries of origin, periods of uncertainty, struggles for basic resources, economic insecurity, loss of professional identities, changed family dynamics, language barriers, and loss of extended support networks. ANSAR is sensitive to these circumstances and, indeed, many of their employees and volunteers have experienced similar traumas.

LPRs are navigating many needs, and support from organizations like ACBF and ANSAR ensures that they have access to the services that they need to become U.S. citizens, thus providing a new source of stability in their lives and the opportunity to engage with their new country as constructive citizens.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



EIN_IRS_Letter.pdf

IRS Form 990



Tax990N-2018.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



ANSAR Ukrainian Legal Supp... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



ANSAR_OperatingBudgetFY2... .pdf

Audited Financial Statements



Ansar 2022 Review Report1_... .pdf



Ansar 2023 Review Report.pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

- The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
 3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Name

Saralinda Blanning

Title

Grant Writer



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION

The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Saturday, August 3, 2024

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Arise Immigration Services

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 88-4084447

Year Founded 2022

Mission Statement

We have a dual mission. First, we provide high-quality, pro bono legal services to immigrants in the Pittsburgh area, focusing on asylum. Second, we provide training and mentoring to advocates around the country so that they can learn how to serve immigrants in their own communities. In other words, we are building capacity around the country so that more people can get the personalized representation that they need to navigate an increasingly complex immigration legal system.

Executive Director Mrs. Jennifer White

Executive Director Email jen@ariseimmigration.org

Preferred Pronouns she/her/hers

Organization Address PO Box 79099
Pittsburgh, PA, 15216

Phone Number (412) 445-7604

Website ariseimmigration.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 22715

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name General Operating Support

Summary of Request

To support high-quality, trauma-informed legal representation of asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and capacity expansion around the country through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model.

Total Project Cost 40000

Type of Support

General Operating Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
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Project Start Date

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

We provide top-notch, free legal representation to asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh and simultaneously train new advocates through our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model. In other words, we serve Pittsburgh asylum-seekers in teams, pairing new advocates with seasoned advocates so that the newer folks can "learn while doing."

Our model is responsive to the shortage of affordable immigration legal advocates, which results in widespread injustice. Success on an asylum application—one of the most sought-after immigration benefits—often hinges on access to legal representation,* which is cost-prohibitive for many.** Our Solution (our innovative "mentorship through direct services" model) produces high-quality legal advocates across the nation. We believe that people "learn best by doing," which is why we work our cases in teams, pairing seasoned advocates with mentees so that knowledge and skills are transferred and shared. Our innovative model is needed because new advocates cannot access hands-on learning opportunities due to a variety of systemic barriers. Traditional pathways to legal advocacy, like law school, are exclusionary due to cost. The legal field is individualistic, and advocates usually work their own caseloads by themselves, which closes the door to non-lawyer advocates and stunts capacity expansion across the field. Most low-cost immigration legal services are available only in large metropolitan areas. We eliminate these barriers and address the "rural void" by providing our mentorship model remotely so that advocates can learn how to serve immigrants in their own, local communities after we show them the ropes. Unlike other fields—where a professional license follows a mentorship-style training program, like in the mental health and medical professions—many lawyers receive a license without practical experience because there is no requirement for such. We think there is a better way because there is no substitute for "learning while doing." The legal field is finally warming up to alternative models for practicing law*** and the D.O.J. is prioritizing accreditation of non-lawyer professionals authorized to practice immigration law through non-profits. This is to say that now is the right time to support our mission because the demand for our services, which focus on asylum representation, has never been higher.

* Asylum-seekers are five times more likely to win when represented.

<https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-u-s-asylum-process/>.

** "[M]ore than 93% of asylum-seeking respondents have not yet found a lawyer, the top challenge for which is legal fees." https://maketheroadny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Displaced-and-Disconnected_MRNY-Report.pdf.

*** <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-fellowship-immigrants-department-of-justice-accreditation-file-asylum-case-20230613-chew4f7qifec3jwxph46bxggom-story.html>.

Context/Background Information

Immigration laws and policies have become more complex and restrictive over time. All the while, there are record numbers of forcibly displaced people arriving in the U.S. in search of safety. This inverse correlation generates and normalizes injustice for immigrants. We must respond with affordable legal advocates to help immigrants navigate an exceptionally complex system. The demand for affordable legal

representation for asylum-seekers far exceeds the limited supply of pro bono providers.*

Arise Immigration Services' dual mission provides "micro" and "macro" solutions to the injustices that immigrants face. We provide high-quality, pro bono legal services to immigrants in Pittsburgh, an underserved area (micro). Through a recent needs assessment, we confirmed that we are the only organization in the region providing free representation to affirmative asylum-seekers. Yet our impact extends far beyond Pittsburgh because we mentor advocates around the country—while we work on our cases together—so that new advocates can learn how to serve immigrants in their own, local communities (macro).

Asylum cases—when compared to other immigration cases—are incredibly resource-draining, intense, and complex. In addition, affirmative asylum-seekers from Pittsburgh are required to travel to Arlington, VA for their interview, which creates additional burdens for advocates who must then coordinate travel, translators, schedules on short notice, etc. However, we are not deterred by these barriers and are determined to fight for due process for our clients, which is why we take on some of the most legally challenging asylum cases for our brave clients.

Our innovative, dual mission is needed and effective. Our immigrant clients benefit from our approach because our cases are prepared in teams, which means that multiple perspectives strengthen the case as we all sharpen each other. Additionally, our clients enjoy the support of a team of advocates cheering for them as they navigate a difficult, often lonely transition in a new country. Our organization fills a gap for new advocates (mentees), many of whom could not otherwise access hands-on learning opportunities due to geographical limitations; the individualistic nature of legal casework; and the reality that most immigration lawyers are too busy to pencil in time to mentor new advocates, let alone work a complicated case alongside them. Since we started taking cases in early 2023, we have enjoyed a 100% success rate for all of our adjudicated cases (32). We have also trained over 100 advocates nationwide.

*https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/19/us/migrants-lawyer-shortages.html?trk=feed_main-feed-card_feed-article-content

Project Goals

Programmatic Goals:

- Represent 8 asylum-seekers
- Train 75 mentees in immigration law

Organizational Goals:

- Continue Annual Fall Mental Health Training Seminar for Advocates
- Hire (at least) 1 part-time legal assistant/DOJ accredited representative
- Expand organizational partnerships so that other local organizations can begin taking on asylum-cases

Population to be served

We intend to represent at least 8 asylum-seekers in Pittsburgh in 2025. Our clients always live well below the federal poverty guidelines and come from Africa, Asia, Central America, and beyond.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



IRS Tax-Exempt Letter.pdf

IRS Form 990

Form 990-N **Electronic Notice (e-Postcard)** OMB No. 1545-2085
Department of the Treasury for Tax-Exempt Organization not Required to File Form 990 or 990-EZ 2023
Internal Revenue Service [Open to Public Inspection](#)

A For the 2023 calendar year, or tax year beginning 2023-01-01 and ending 2023-12-31

B Check if applicable:
 Terminated for business
 Gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less

C Name of Organization: **ARISE IMMIGRATION SERVICES**
PO Box 79099, Pittsburgh, PA, US, 15218

D Employee Identification Number: **98-4084447**

E Website: **ariseimmigration.org**

F Name of Principal Officer: **Jennifer White**
PO Box 79099, Pittsburgh, PA, US, 15218


Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice: We ask for the information on this form to carry out the Internal Revenue laws of the United States. You are required to give us the information. We need it to ensure that you are complying with these laws.

The organization is not required to provide information requested on a form that is subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act unless the form displays a valid OMB control number. Books or records relating to a form or its instructions must be retained as long as their contents may become material in the administration of any Internal Revenue law. The rules governing the confidentiality of the Form 990-N is covered in code section 6104.

The time needed to complete and file this form and related schedules will vary depending on the individual circumstances. The estimated average time is 15 minutes.

Note: This image is provided for your records only. Do not mail this page to the IRS. The IRS will not accept this filing via paper. You must file your Form 990-N (e-Postcard) electronically.

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)

 Proposed Budget 2025.docx

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget

 Board Resolution Approvingpdf

Audited Financial Statements

 48_Board Resolution Approvi... .pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Saturday, August 3, 2024

Name

Jennifer White

Title

Executive Director



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION

The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 71-0988357

Year Founded 2004

Mission Statement

To demonstrate Christ's love by promoting accessible justice through the provision of legal counsel, prayer, and education to our neighbors in need.

Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh provides access to justice for the poor and needy through the ministry of Christ's love enabled by the service of those who study law.

Executive Director Lauren Darbouze

Executive Director Email ldarbouze@clapittsburgh.org

Organization Address 801 Union Place
Pittsburgh, PA, 15212

Phone Number (412) 849-6831

Fax (814) 955-0077

Website www.clapittsburgh.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 48054

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name General Operating Support

Summary of Request

To support Christian Legal Aid as we begin our 21st year of operation in serving low income civil litigants in Allegheny County at 250% of the federal poverty level.

Total Project Cost 10000

Type of Support General Operating Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

CLA provides services to a unique subset of the population that cannot receive help at many other legal clinics. CLA is one of the very few organizations that serves people up to the 250% level of the federal poverty guidelines; most similar legal service providers assist clients only if they are at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines. More than a fourth of the clients CLA has served in the past year fall between 125% and 250% of the poverty guideline. Over the past decade of operation, CLA has expanded and developed new ways to aid the community and its need for general civil legal aid. This need for our service is ever-growing, and we need to expand to keep up with the demand. The grant funding will be used for, among other things, (1) better equipping our volunteers through training and providing additional resources to them, (2) improving efficiency through technology with a goal of operating a completely paperless clinic so as to be better stewards of our resources, and (3) recruiting additional volunteer attorneys and law students.

Context/Background Information

Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh, Inc. ("CLA") is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation formed September 9, 2003. CLA received its tax-exempt approval from the IRS in 2006. See Attachment A. CLA provides free legal help for those in need in the Pittsburgh community. We operate legal clinics at local churches where volunteers provide legal counsel, guidance and prayer regarding any civil legal matter to those whose income is at or below 250% of federal poverty guidelines. CLA is part of a national network through Christian Legal Society, which has opened almost 60 such legal clinics across the country to date. CLA opened our doors on January 29, 2004, under the leadership of Delia Bouwers Bianchin. We started with only four lawyers meeting once a month at a church in Oakland. Over the last twelve years, we have grown exponentially. In 2008, Janet Goode became the first Executive Director of CLA, a position she held until May of 2014. Currently, CLA is led by our second Executive Director, Lauren Darbouze. It is under her guidance that CLA will continue to grow and expand to meet the ever-growing needs of the poor and needy of Allegheny County. Volunteer attorneys and law students currently meet with clients Monday nights at Allegheny Center Alliance Church on the North Side of Pittsburgh. CLA is led and advised by a Board of Directors that consists of seven regular members as well as two law student members. CLA Board, comprised of lawyers from some of Pittsburgh's largest law firms, as well as a smaller boutique firm and a solo practitioner, and two law students, who bring diversity, skills, experience, time and funds to help CLA serve the needy in our community.

CLA could not function without our many volunteers who graciously donate their time and talent. CLA currently has over 40 attorney and law student volunteers, as well as paralegals and a number of other individuals who donate their time to ensure that the poor and needy of Allegheny County have the access to the civil legal help they need. CLA provides the opportunity for law students from both the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Duquesne University School of Law to partake in client intake and hone their client interview and issue-spotting skills. Student volunteers also have the opportunity to assist our attorney volunteers with client follow-up and legal research. If students so choose they may also become certified legal interns under Pa.B.A.R. 321 and 322 under the supervision of the Executive Director and handle client matters directly. In this way, CLA is able to give civil legal help, while helping to provide students with an opportunity to learn and grow.

Project Goals

Christian Legal Aid of Pittsburgh, Inc. ("CLA") seeks a grant

from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation in order to expand its' ability to effectively provide essential civil legal services to those who cannot otherwise afford representation in Allegheny County. CLA's vision is to provide access to justice for the poor and needy through the ministry of Christ's love enabled by the service of those who study and practice law. CLA also strives to promote accessible justice through the provision of legal counsel and education to neighbors in need with the understanding that those without the means to obtain legal counsel are often scared and confused when legal issues arise in their lives. CLA offers free general civil legal help and, when desired, spiritual guidance, to those who fall within 250% of the federal poverty limits.

Although CLA is a faith-based organization, it offers its services without regard to the religious beliefs, if any, of our clients.

In preparing and submitting this application, the Board Members of CLA have worked diligently to identify our strengths and opportunities for growth, as well as weaknesses and opportunities for improvement so that CLA may effectively respond to the constantly growing legal needs in our community. In order to maintain our strengths and improve upon areas in which we can grow, CLA has developed strategic goals upon which we would like to focus. Specifically, CLA would like to: (i) provide more of our neighbors in need with access to legal help, (ii) acquire technology to improve efficiency, and (iii) recruit additional attorney and law student volunteers.

Christian Legal Aid has exponentially grown in the past year. We now have three employees and serve more clients than ever during our clinic nights. Despite the growth, we have been able to maintain a modest budget. We actively recruit legal volunteers to assist our clients and operate our clinic from Allegheny Center Alliance Church. It is the goal of CLA to continue to grow and assist as many clients as we can.

Population to be served

CLA provides services to a unique subset of the population that cannot receive help at many other legal clinics. CLA is one of the very few organizations that serves people up to 250% of the federal poverty level. Most similar legal service providers assist clients only if they are at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines.

CLA operates legal clinics every Monday where volunteers provide legal counsel, guidance and prayer regarding any civil legal matter to those whose income is at or below 250% of federal poverty guidelines. We serve approximately 500 clients within our income guidelines in Allegheny County every year.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



501_c_3.pdf

IRS Form 990



CLA 2023 990N.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



CLA Treasurers Report throu... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



47_CLA Treasurers Report thr...pdf

Audited Financial Statements



48_CLA Treasurers Report thr...pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Monday, September 2, 2024

Name

Lauren Darbouze

Title

Executive Director



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Education Law Center-PA

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 232581102

Year Founded 1975

Mission Statement

Education Law Center-PA's (ELC) mission is to ensure access to a quality public education for all children in Pennsylvania.

Executive Director Ms. Deborah Gordon Klehr

Executive Director Email dklehr@elc-pa.org

Preferred Pronouns she/her/hers

Contact Person (if different from Executive Director) Ms. Hetal Dhagat

Title Senior Attorney

Email hdhagat@elc-pa.org

Organization Address 429 Fourth Ave, Suite 1910
Pittsburgh, PA, 15219

Phone Number (412) 258-2120

Website <https://www.elc-pa.org/>

Current Annual Operating Budget 2892733

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name Equitable Education Access for Multilingual Learners

Summary of Request

To support ELC's work to strengthen legal services and advocacy focused on ensuring multilingual learners in Allegheny County can access high-quality public education. We focus on removing language-

related barriers to quality education by providing legal services, referrals, and advocacy tools to families; legal guidance and training to community partners who are part of immigrant and refugee communities; and support to pro bono attorneys.

Total Project Cost 104000

Type of Support Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

ELC requests funding to deepen our work to ensure multilingual learners and immigrant/refugee students can access quality education. Through our Education Helpline, close relationships with partner agencies, and community engagement, we are attuned to the barriers impacting multilingual students. We will address these barriers, which include inadequate English Language Development programming, inappropriate special education evaluations, and failure to provide interpretation and translation for parents.

Students and families have a legal right to receive language services and accommodations from school that allow them to participate in their child's education and communicate in their preferred language, regardless of English proficiency. ELC will provide translated fact sheets, advocacy tools, and information/advice to support families in advocating for their rights. Our Back-To-School Guide, updated in September 2024, includes fact sheets in multiple languages on the rights of multilingual learners to participate in educational programs and the rights of parents and caregivers to receive translation and interpretation for communications with schools.

Families who call our Helpline for free legal services may receive legal consultation and direct representation to further advocate for students, often at the intersection of multiple underserved identities. We have represented numerous multilingual students who were not evaluated appropriately for special education services and whose parents cannot fully participate in their education due to language barriers.

We will support pro bono attorneys with information, resources, and assistance to provide legal services to multilingual students with disabilities. We will train attorneys on the responsibilities of serving as a trustee for compensatory education trusts for children with disabilities who were denied a quality education. We also welcome working with attorneys who speak the same non-English language as our clients since this fosters trust and connection.

ELC will provide training and technical assistance to our partners to build community capacity to improve education outcomes for multilingual students. We will inform and support the work of organizations like Latino Community Center, Casa San Jose, Jewish Family and Community Services Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh Local Task Force on the Right to Education (LTF). We will conduct trainings for families, advocates, and child-serving professionals as part of networks like Immigrant Services and Connections (ISAC), which brings together Allegheny County organizations to help immigrants connect with resources in their native language, and the Global Switchboard, which stewards a diverse network of people and

organizations to promote human rights and social justice in the Pittsburgh region. Trainings will provide rights-based information focusing on discipline, special education, and other education topics of interest to parents and students.

Context/Background Information

Our experience relevant to this project includes:

- **Rights-based Information:** ELC provides rights-based information to linguistically and culturally diverse families through resources and trainings. In 2024, we conducted know-your-rights trainings focusing on discipline and special education of multilingual learners through the Global Switchboard. In two trainings, our Spanish-speaking staff member helped communicate with families, and in one training, we had a live translator for the Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh. In the past year, we trained over 175 parents, youth, and advocates in Allegheny County on the rights of multilingual learners. In 2023, we conducted an interactive “know your rights” presentation focusing on discipline for families who are new to the U.S. education system through an event hosted by the All for All Coalition. Content was translated into Pashto, Swahili, and Dari.
- **Direct Legal Services:** As an example, we represented a multilingual student who was not evaluated appropriately for special education. The Allegheny County school district conducted the evaluation in English without regard for cultural competency, even though the student primarily speaks Swahili and had limited formal education. Even the school psychologist included disclaimers in her evaluation because she did not believe the evaluation accurately represented the student’s abilities. At the parent’s request, ELC advocated for a re-evaluation using best practices we have identified for multilingual students with limited formal education. We also worked with the multi-disciplinary team to draft a 504 Plan to include modifications to address the student’s PTSD diagnosis. The District also re-evaluated the student’s ESL levels.
- **Informing and Supporting Partners:** ELC provided legal consultation to the South Hills Interfaith Movement (SHIM) to assist with the enrollment of multiple students from an immigrant family. The school district was delaying and denying their enrollment because they did not have immunization documents readily available. ELC advised SHIM on immunization grace periods for students who transfer schools and drafted sample language with federal guidance citations that SHIM resource officers could use with the new school district and requirements for the old school district to transfer records. The students were successfully enrolled a few days later.
- **Individual and Systemic Advocacy:** Through our individual and systemic advocacy, we have enforced the rights of multilingual learners attending public schools in the area, including their rights to access special education and appropriate school discipline protections with appropriate translation and interpretation services for parents. We often work directly with school districts to ensure that they are aware of best practices for communicating with families who are new to communicating in English.

Project Goals

Goals & Objectives:

The primary goal of this project is to ensure access and equity in the education of multilingual learners. We will support the community’s capacity to advocate for students and hold education agencies accountable.

With funding from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation, ELC will:

- Offer rights-based resources and training in preferred languages to families, advocates, and child-serving professionals.
- Respond to requests from families who contact our Helpline for assistance with public education matters and provide them with information, advice, and resources on student and parent/caregiver rights, using translation services as appropriate.
- Provide legal consultation and further advocacy through direct representation to address rights-based violations.
- Provide technical assistance and legal guidance to help our partners address individual and systemic education barriers impacting families.
- Train and support pro bono attorneys so they are equipped to provide legal services to multilingual students with disabilities on public education issues, including how to access special education and compensatory education to make up for educational deprivations.

Outcomes:

ELC expects to achieve the following outcomes in Allegheny County through this project:

- Increased knowledge, particularly among immigrant and refugee communities, of the education rights of students, parents, and caregivers to help prevent educational barriers.
- Greater capacity to address education rights violations experienced by multilingual students and their parents/caregivers through legal services and advocacy.
- Comprehensive remedies for multilingual students who have been denied access to quality education due to schools' failures to provide translation and interpretation services to them and their families.
- Inclusive and affirming school spaces where all students can learn, thrive, and grow.

Population to be served

The outcomes of our work will benefit multilingual learners who attend public schools in Allegheny County and their families. In the case of immigrant and refugee families, language access is a barrier to accessing many public systems, including all the supports and services they have a right to in education. This is a major cause of inequity.

Allegheny County's immigrant and refugee population has grown over the past few years. More than 7% of people in the county speak a language other than English at home. According to state data, four school districts in Allegheny County saw significant growth in English language learners between the 2018-19 and 2022-23 school years, including Pittsburgh Public, which saw a jump of 169 students for a total of 1,197 in 2022-23; Baldwin-Whitehall, which grew by 113 ESL students in that time for a total of 428; Chartiers Valley, which saw 116 more students for a total of 256; and Moon Area, which grew by 119 students for a total of 213 in 2022-23. We are also receiving calls from recently arrived immigrant families in the county who enrolled in school districts that have never had many multilingual learners; this often means that districts must create more robust ESL and newcomer programming.

When schools fail to provide appropriate language support services to families, these students cannot access a quality education. They may experience delays in special education screenings and evaluations or not graduate on time due to lack of information and disengagement. They may be wrongly excluded from the classroom without understanding their rights or resources for parents to self-advocate. This can result in significant, long-term repercussions on students' academic progress and overall well-being.

Immigrant and refugee students also experience barriers to enrollment when schools ask for a birth certificate or Social Security number, even though public schools in PA are prohibited from requesting these items as a condition of enrollment. These students also face high rates of bullying and harassment based on race, language, and national origin.

Through the proposed work, we will build the community's capacity to address barriers preventing multilingual learners from equitable education access. We will increase communal understanding through fact sheets, self-advocacy tools, and training on accessing translation/interpretation services, graduation requirements, students' right to be free from bullying/harassment, and more. We will increase our capacity to address violations of multilingual students' rights by training and supporting pro bono attorneys and providing legal guidance/technical assistance to our partners.

Through our Helpline, we will provide information, advice, referral, legal consultation, and/or direct representation to families in Allegheny County. We expect to assist ~30 multilingual families and advocates. Our work will help ensure all students can learn and thrive in supportive classrooms.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



ELC-PA IRS 501c3.pdf

IRS Form 990



ELC-PA 2022-23 990.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



ELC-PA_ACBF Budget FY25.pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



ELC-PA FY24 Organizationalpdf

Audited Financial Statements



ELC-PA 2023 Audit Report.pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Name

Deborah Gordon Klehr

Title

Executive Director



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 462642901

Year Founded 2013

Mission Statement

Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit law firm that brings decision-making and conflict resolution tools to people in place. Our mission is threefold:

- 1. FOSTER EQUAL ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
Fair Shake works towards this goal by promoting the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, national origin, sexual or gender identity, or income in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies; by providing legal representation to allow equal access to the environmental decision-making process; and by promoting for all communities the health, preservation, and restoration of the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment.
- 2. PROVIDE TRAINING FOR PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW PRACTICE
Fair Shake advances this objective by educating young attorneys in legal services entrepreneurship to incubate start-up legal services organizations to serve the environmental legal needs of underserved low-to-moderate income clients and by providing high-quality internships to law and pre-law students.
- 3. SUPPORT COMMUNITY ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL EMPOWERMENT
Fair Shake implements this aspect of its mission through community visioning, education, consulting, and coaching throughout the Appalachian region with specific emphasis on providing environmental legal services and counseling to allow the underserved to actively engage in local decisions about practical and innovative solutions to complex environmental challenges across the region.

Executive Director Mr. Michael Parker, Esq.

Executive Director Email mparker@fairshake-els.org

Preferred Pronouns he/him/his

Contact Person (if different from Executive Director) Ms. Corinne Ogradnik, PhD

Title Development Director

Email	cogrodnik@fairshake-els.org
Organization Address	6425 Living Place , Suite 200 Pittsburgh, PA, 15206
Phone Number	(412) 664-5546
Website	https://www.fairshake-els.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	1242350

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name General Operating Support

Summary of Request

To support Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services' pro bono, sliding scale, and community lawyering services for low and moderate income individuals, families, communities, and organizations in Allegheny County.

Total Project Cost 10000

Type of Support

General Operating Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Friday, November 1, 2024

Project End Date Friday, October 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

Fair Shake serves low-to-moderate income individuals, families, and organizations in the environmental legal services gap. We represent traditionally underserved clients who are affected by environmental harms and empower them to take legal action despite their economic means. Fair Shake's proposal is for general operating support for our Legal Services Program, which provides traditional legal services through four representation models:

- **PRO BONO** - We provide free legal services to individuals and families whose income is within 300% of the federal poverty level.
- **SLIDING SCALE** – Our services for modest means clients and nonprofit organizations are priced according to household income or an organization's annual budget, resulting in discounts ranging from 10% to 90%.
- **PUBLIC INTEREST** – Our public interest litigation support is for organizational clients that seek to accomplish outcomes for the public and environmental greater good.
- **COMMUNITY LAWYERING** – We provide technical and legal assistance to community-based coalitions seeking to implement policy and process change in their localities.

Since our inception in 2013, Fair Shake has represented individuals, families, and organizations in 541 matters for their environmental needs. In those matters, Fair Shake has delivered more than 68,000 hours of free-to-reduced rate services to our clients, representing a value of over \$20,000,000 at conservative market legal rates. Of our docket, our pro bono program accounts for 18%; our sliding scale services account for 44%; our public interest litigation accounts for 24%; and the remaining percentage accounts for fixed fee and other forms of representation.

In addition to the Legal Services Program, Fair Shake also has a Community Democracy Program, through which we provide community lawyering services to community organizations working towards environmental justice outcomes in their locality. Since initiation of this program in January 2022, Fair Shake has engaged with nine communities – all of which meet federal Environmental Justice Index Standards for pollution, socioeconomic indicators, health disparities, and climate change impact risks. This program's goal is to empower citizens to effectively advocate for positive local policy and process change. General operating support provided to our Legal Services will also support the legal component of the Community Democracy Program.

In our Legal Training & Education Program, Fair Shake works with Equal Justice Works to train and support newly licensed attorneys who join our organization to focus on environmental justice matters over the course of a two-year term. Additionally, we provide a rigorous Internship program through which we annually train dozens of law and pre-law students on work in the public interest environmental law field. General support for our Legal Services Program will also indirectly aid our legal training and education mission in Allegheny County.

Context/Background Information

Fair Shake seeks to provide equal access to environmental justice so that we're leveling the playing field when it comes to preventing or fighting environmental harms. Our Legal Services Program is designed to give a voice to those who would otherwise be excluded from environmental decision making. We provide the full range of legal services to traditionally underserved clients, including litigating civil and administrative matters, negotiating conflict resolutions, and counseling on how to influence decision-making processes for environmental justice outcomes. Our services also help communities prepare for upcoming projects and facilitate municipal or regional policy change.

Some of our key pro bono and sliding scale cases in Allegheny County include:

Land Conservation & Community Green Space Protection:

- We represented a community association in dispute with their municipality for dumping fill from a landslide into a community park, thereby limiting access to the park and degrading stream quality. On behalf of our client, we ultimately negotiated stream rehabilitation and restored trail and park access.
- We represented a community organization in negotiations with their Borough to identify better solutions for stormwater management that is causing massive erosion in a community park.
- We represented a community development organization in their efforts to consolidate multiple vacant lots into a community garden in Allegheny County.
- We counseled and negotiated for a land trust organization in a construction contract dispute regarding a regional trail system.

Clean Air Protection:

- We represented a community association in their efforts to mitigate air pollution from a recycling plant. Services included drafting contracts for testing equipment, as well as reviewing and commenting on air quality permits. We also negotiated with the plant owners and the Allegheny County Health Department for increased testing and monitoring.
- We represented a single mother in successful negotiations with an industrial facility whose air pollution was causing her and her two young children chronic respiratory illness and stress. The resulting settlement provided critical relocation costs for the family.

Watershed Protection:

- We represented a community association on options development for opposition to expansion of a salt storage facility.
- We represented two community organizations in reviewing a consent decree requiring numerous

improvements to a sewer system in Allegheny County and produced an easy-to-understand document on the decree.

Community Benefits:

- We are providing technical support to two environmental justice communities in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh Metro Area) on Community Benefits Agreements to address local development occurring in their neighborhoods.

Project Goals

Through our primary programming, Fair Shake works to support the following goals:

1. Continue providing high-quality legal representation for low-to-moderate income clients and community associations in Allegheny County on land use, community green space protection, air quality, watershed protection, and community benefits agreements.

Fair Shake is seeking general operating support for our Legal Services Program to maintain the provision of high-quality legal service representation through our pro bono, sliding scale, and public interest litigation programs for underserved populations in Allegheny County.

2. Expand our community lawyering efforts to empower Allegheny County environmental justice communities to realize their environmental and community goals.

Building on the work initiated throughout the region, Fair Shake is seeking general operating support for our Community Democracy Program to expand our community lawyering services throughout Allegheny County environmental justice communities. Fair Shake's specific goals for this Program include:

- Continuing to provide technical assistance to community leaders for developing Community Benefits processes and Agreement frameworks for implementation at the municipal level.
- Provide support to community leaders in negotiations with local municipal leaders and developers to implement key provisions of Community Benefits Agreements.
- Strengthen relationships with Allegheny County partners working on environmental justice issues, identifying opportunities to provide community lawyering in support of fostering local process and policy change.

3. Continue providing free legal clinics to underserved communities in Allegheny County to assist community members in understanding complex issues facing their communities.

Additionally, we are seeking general operating support to implement at least one free legal clinic to Allegheny County environmental justice communities in need. Our free legal clinics are designed to assist community members and organizations in understanding complex legal issues facing their communities, such as the legal landscape facing residents impacted by major industrial operators, and to advise on matters that enhance individual and community opportunity and well-being.

Population to be served

Clairton, PA

Population: 6,574

Poverty rate: 21.1%

Median income: \$36,830

Race & Ethnicity: 54.8% White, 42% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 3.2% Multiracial

McKee's Rocks, PA

Population: 5,892

Poverty rate: 30.4%

Median income: \$31,130

Race & Ethnicity: 51.3% White, 31.2% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 4.77% Hispanic, 2.77% Multiracial, 2.29% Asian, Other 7.67%

Greater Hill District/Uptown, PA

Population: 5,882

Median income: \$23,603

Race & Ethnicity: 61% White, 32% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 5% Hispanic, 2% Asian

North Braddock, PA

Population: 4,372

Poverty rate: 26.4%

Median income: \$39,311

Race & Ethnicity: 45% White, 44% Black or African American (Non-Hispanic), 6% Multiracial, 5% Other

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



501(c)(3) determination lette... .pdf

IRS Form 990



2022 990.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



FAIR SHAKE ENVIRONMENT... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



FSELS 2024 Operating Budge... .pdf

Audited Financial Statements



Fair Shake Financial Stateme... .pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Name

Corinne Ogrodnik

Title

Development Director



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Hugh Lane Foundation

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 821940719

Year Founded 2017

Mission Statement

Hugh Lane works to address health disparities experienced by the LGBTQ+ and HIV communities through direct services, resource distribution and systems change through our Center of Excellence.

Executive Director Mx Sarah Rosso

Executive Director Email sarah@hughlane.org

Preferred Pronouns they/them/theirs

Organization Address 925 Brighton Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA, 15233

Phone Number (412) 973-5053

Website www.hughlane.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 1194000.00

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name LGBTQ+ Legal Aid Justice Project

Summary of Request

We are requesting funding to support our legal aid program for LGBTQ+ and HIV community members. Hugh Lane has offered legal aid services to address core concerns of LGBTQ+ and HIV community members in Allegheny County since 2021. With unprecedented need and attacked on our community, our mission is more important than ever.

Total Project Cost 100000

Type of Support Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Monday, June 30, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

Hugh Lane Foundation is committed to addressing the legal needs of LGBTQ+ and HIV community members, many of whom face significant barriers in accessing the legal system, securing justice and assuring their civil rights. As the landscape shifts and we continue to see a rise in attacks on LGBTQ+ communities, Hugh Lane will continue to offer its legal services to meet these increasing and evolving challenges with our communities.

Despite improvements in legal literacy, many community members remain unaware of resources that are available to them, both at Hugh Lane and with our referral partners. Many of our first-time clients have faced complex legal issues in the last year but have struggled to find the necessary support. Hugh Lane aims to bridge this gap by providing legal education and representation for these historically underserved populations.

A key focus area will be to continue to offer identity documentation for transgender and gender diverse individuals. In partnership with Advocates for Trans Equality's (A4TE) Name Change Project, Hugh Lane will offer identity document assistance, including direct legal representation, pro se support, and community clinics. By helping clients update their name and gender markers on critical documents, we will be better able to connect clients to essential services, housing, healthcare and employment opportunities.

In addition, Hugh Lane will collaborate and provide referrals to local partners to address critical issues such as housing insecurity, discrimination, and access to public benefits. By working closely with legal partners, medical providers, social services, and advocacy organizations, we will create a network of support that meets the broader needs of our community. Our Legal Aid team will provide education through legal clinics, and our Training team can assist with general SOGIE and education programming to equip partners with the tools to better serve LGBTQ+ and HIV clients.

The challenges faced by LGBTQ+ and HIV individuals in Allegheny County are urgent and complex, but Hugh Lane is committed to being a resource they can trust. By strengthening our legal services and expanding our partnerships, Hugh Lane will provide an accessible response that upholds the dignity and rights of all our clients.

Context/Background Information

Hugh Lane was proud to receive support from ACBF last year, and hope we can continue to work together to assure life-saving resources are made available to LGBTQ+ and HIV communities to address core needs.

HLF works to improve health outcomes with LGBTQ+ and HIV communities through direct services, provision of resources and systems change through professional education and advocacy. Our services are designed to enhance health outcomes and legal case results by reducing isolation, strengthening social supports, and meeting essential needs like food, housing and healthcare.

Our services include:

Community Services: Non-medical case management, resource distribution, including a food pantry, housing assistance, legal services, psychosocial support groups, and chosen family initiatives to combat isolation.

Youth & Family Services: Supporting youth through mentorship programs, Out of School Time activities, social events, and family services tailored for Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) Departments.

Training Services: Offering SOGIE (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Expression) training for professionals in human services, healthcare, and corporate settings.

Our legal aid program is a core part of this holistic approach. They are integrated with mental health, social, and basic needs support, creating an environment where clients are more empowered to participate in their legal cases, leading to better outcomes. When immediate needs like housing, food, and healthcare are met, clients are better able to engage with their legal issues.

In today's legal climate, LGBTQ+ individuals face heightened threats as political figures and government systems increasingly target the community. These attacks create a chilling effect, resulting in increased fear, isolation, and pressure for LGBTQ+ individuals to conform to binary gender norms. The legal services we offer provide a critical safety net by helping clients update their identity documents, ensuring their legal name and gender markers match their true identity. This not only reduces the risks of discrimination in public but also supports access to housing, healthcare, and public benefits for those who face systemic barriers.

Hugh Lane's multifaceted services are essential in addressing the complex and interconnected challenges that LGBTQ+ and HIV+ individuals face today, positioning us as a vital resource for those in need.

Project Goals

The project's name change and identity documentation assistance will be a critical tool for trans and gender-nonconforming individuals. Hugh Lane will work with the Name Change Project and other partners to develop easy-to-follow resources to make the complex process of updating identity documents more manageable. These resources will be shared through workshops and clinics, where community members can meet with attorneys for guidance on navigating these systems. For those with complicated cases, direct legal representation will be provided. Clients able to handle the process themselves will be given pro se tools, including legal forms and detailed instructions, empowering them to complete the process on their own. To extend the project's reach, Hugh Lane will collaborate with law firms, the Allegheny County Bar Association (ACBA), and the Allegheny County Bar Foundation (ACBF) to increase pro bono participation, ensuring more community members have access to free legal support.

Addressing systemic barriers to housing and public benefits is another key focus. Many LGBTQ+ and HIV+ individuals face discrimination in accessing these basic needs. Through clinics and workshops, this project will educate clients on their rights and the legal avenues available for challenging housing discrimination and evictions as well as denial of public benefits. These clinics will help clients identify next steps, including self-advocacy in cases where it's feasible, referrals to other legal service providers, or direct legal representation for more complex situations. By equipping clients with the knowledge and tools to assert their rights, the project aims to empower individuals to address these challenges head-on.

Population to be served

Hugh Lane will provide support to LGBTQ+ and HIV community members in Allegheny County. We directly serve an average of 15 individuals each month, for a total of 90 individuals served. We will reach another 200 individuals that we will provide support through referrals as part of our internal triage process. Finally, we provide 6 educational sessions during the period of this grant. All individuals served will meet established income thresholds utilizing status neutral care models and federal HRSA standards. Additionally, all individuals will complete demographic intake data to assure they are part of our core

service area and population to assure alignment with our mission.

31% of clients were unemployed, 33% were employed full-time, 20.5% were under-employed (part-time, self-employed, contract), 11% were students, and 4.5% were under employment age or retired.

68% of clients were white, 15% were Black/African American, 6% were Latinx/Hispanic, 5% were Other/Mixed descent, 4% were Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), 1% were Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and 1% were Native American/Indigenous.

74% of clients identify under the trans umbrella. 41% of clients identify as women/girls, 33% as men/boys, and 26% as gender non-conforming (nonbinary, genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, intersex, or Two Spirit).

40% of clients identify as bisexual or pansexual, 16% as gay, 12% as queer, 12% as lesbian, 7% as straight, 5% as asexual, 2% as N/A (Child), 2% as other orientation(s) not listed here, 2% as undisclosed, 1% as Two Spirit, and 1% as Omnisexual.

The legal issues clients faced included name/gender marker changes, housing/eviction assistance, public benefits assistance, discrimination complaints, and expungement/record sealing requests.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



IRS.pdf



IRS_5301.pdf

IRS Form 990



2021.2022.990-1.pdf



990_Tax_Return_for_The_Hu... .pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



ACBF Budget 24-25 Legal Aid... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



HLWF Budgets - HLF 24-25.pdf

Audited Financial Statements



Signed Financial Statements.pdf



Signed Financial Statements... .pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature

Date

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Name

Sarah Rosso

Title

executive director



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization North Hills Community Outreach

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 25-1553057

Year Founded 1987

Mission Statement

North Hills Community Outreach is a interfaith organization addressing the needs of people in crisis, hardship, and poverty.

Executive Director Scott Shaffer

Executive Director Email sshaffer@nhco.org

Preferred Pronouns

Contact Person (if different from Executive Director) Jacqlyn Boggs

Title Sr. Director of Program and Services

Email jmboggs@nhco.org

Organization Address 1975 Ferguson Road
Allison Park , PA, 15101

Phone Number (412) 487-6316

Fax (412) 676-7418

Website www.nhco.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 2290400.90

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name Ask the Attorney

Summary of Request

To offer free non-criminal legal advice to low-income individuals and families within the North Hills Community Outreach service area through the expertise of volunteer attorneys. Consultations cover a range of topics, including divorce, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant disputes, and more. These sessions are designed to provide guidance and direction on how to effectively address legal issues.

Total Project Cost 19500

Type of Support

Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Monday, December 30, 2024

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

The purpose of the grant is to provide direct legal assistance to low-income families and older adults who could not afford to pay for legal assistance in our communities through coordinating the Ask the Attorney program. Through Ask the Attorney program, volunteer attorneys provide free 30-minute legal consultations for non-criminal matters such as landlord/tenant, custody, divorce, property tax questions, bankruptcy and more. These legal consultations are meant to provide advice and direction on how to proceed with a legal matter.

Context/Background Information

The NHCO Ask the Attorney program, established in 1994, has a long history of providing pro bono legal consultations to the families we serve. This initiative has consistently offered vital legal support and continues to address the needs of our community. Over the years, NHCO has received several grants from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation, underscoring the program's significant impact and the continued support from our partners.

Project Goals

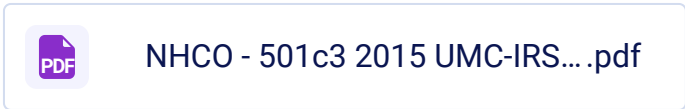
Our goal is to provide legal resources to over 100 low-income families and individuals living at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines within the communities served by NHCO. We aim to support our families by helping them understand their rights, prevent additional costs when possible, and ensure access to justice. We will continue to offer free legal assistance through our Ask the Attorney Program and LegalShield Memberships. Additionally, we will refer clients to further legal support services, including the Pittsburgh Pro Bono Center, Neighborhood Legal Services, Pitt Law Clinic, and other relevant organizations.

Population to be served

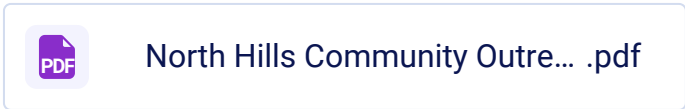
Low income individuals, families, and older adults regardless of race, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability living at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines within the communities and neighborhoods that NHCO serves including but not limited to Bakerstown, Curtisville, Gibsonia, Warrendale, Glenshaw, Ingomar, Ross, Valencia, Brackenridge, Cheswick, Creighton, Harwick, Indianola, Natrona Heights, Rural Ridge, Russelton, Tarentum, Springdale, Millvale, Etna, Sharpsburg, Blawnox, Baden, Leetdale, Sewickley, Bellevue, West View, Avalon, and Ben Avon.

Attachments

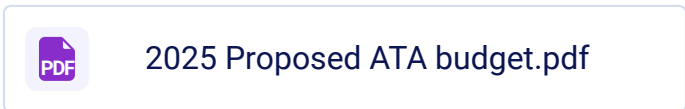
IRS Determination Letter



IRS Form 990

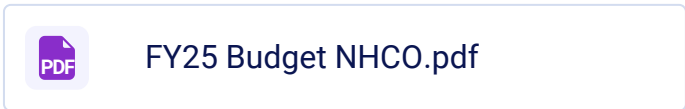


Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



Audited Financial Statements



Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature

Date

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Name

Jacquelyn Boggs

Title

Sr. Director of Programs and Services



Tuesday, September 10, 2024

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh

Employer Identification Number (EIN) 25-1264376

Year Founded 1974

Mission Statement

Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) was founded in 1974 as one of the first six (6) domestic violence shelters in the United States. WC&S works to fulfill its mission to strengthen our ability to meet the individual and evolving needs of those affected by domestic violence by investing in the growth of our people, deepening community engagement, and amplifying the voices of all survivors. Over the past 50 years, WC&S has created and implemented effective programs for intervention and prevention of domestic violence, including its Civil Law Project (CLP).

CLP is an incorporated law firm within WC&S and CLP has a primary purpose of providing civil legal representation to victims of intimate partner violence (IPV). CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts who provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services to help victims obtain justice, autonomy, restoration, and safety. The primary legal matters handled by CLP involve Family Law cases as well as Immigration legal advice. All clients of CLP are referred to the full range of WC&S's DV program free services that include: 24-Hour Hotline with a text/chat option; an Emergency Shelter for adults and children in immediate danger; a Children's Advocacy Program for children healing from trauma; an Empowerment Center which offers support groups and other counseling, therapy, and outreach to non-resident clients; Medical Advocacy for patients admitted to local hospitals; non-attorney Legal Advocates to provide safety planning and court accompaniment as victims access protective relief from the justice system; and a Refugee/Immigrant/Limited English Proficient Team of multilingual staff.

In the most recently completed fiscal year, from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, WC&S provided services to almost 7,500 individuals, almost 7,000 of whom are adult and child survivors of domestic violence and CLP provided legal representation for 431 new clients in 730 legal matters involving IPV.

Executive Director Nicole Molinaro

Executive Director Email nicolem@wcspittsburgh.org

Preferred Pronouns she/her/hers

Contact Person (if different from Executive Director) Catherine Schnur

Title Grants Specialist

Email catherines@wcpittsburgh.org

Organization Address 9024 P.O. Box
Pittsburgh, PA, 16224

Phone Number (412) 894-4564

Website wcpittsburgh.org

Current Annual Operating Budget 8167519

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name Providing Civil Legal Representation for Victims of Domestic Violence

Summary of Request

To support the WC&S Civil Law Project in its free legal representation for victims of intimate partner violence in divorce actions with alimony and/or property claims for victims of intimate partner violence. CLP attorneys are domestic violence legal experts and provide trauma-informed and culturally and linguistically competent legal services.

Total Project Cost 1309170

Type of Support

Existing Program/Project Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) seeks funding for its Civil Law Project (CLP) to support the salary of a specialized domestic violence/family law attorney to provide free, legal representation in divorce cases of intimate partner violence (IPV). Priority will be given to those IPV victims who need to file or respond to a divorce action to maintain a residence, spousal support, and/or financial assets.

The requested funding would assist a CLP attorney to provide specialized divorce representation for IPV victims who have suffered abuse as defined in the Protection from Abuse (PFA) statute and whose incomes are at or below 187.5% of the federal poverty guidelines. Ten such victims would receive free legal representation in divorce actions that include alimony and/or property claims. Legal services to be provided would include the filing of appropriate divorce pleadings along with any needed alimony or equitable distribution claims, filing of required inventories/forms/agreements, and attendance at any motions, conciliations and/or hearings. WC&S requests \$10,000 for CLP to provide legal representation in ten complex divorce cases. WC&S has received funding from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation since 2009 and has found this funding for CLP is helping to meet a significant ongoing client need. For example, CLP is representing a Wife whose Husband abused her over the course of their 13-year marriage, including

assaulting her while she was pregnant, attempting to smother her with a pillow, and, finally, dragging her outside in front of the children which led to injuries and the neighbors calling the police, Husband's arrest, and Wife filing for a PFA. At Husband's preliminary hearing, he tried to get Wife to sign an affidavit that she had lied about the assault in exchange for a \$2,000 divorce settlement. He was then charged with intimidating a witness in addition to Simple Assault. CLP represents Wife in the Divorce case and assisted her in filing a Petition Raising Economic Claims, raising claims for equitable distribution and alimony, as there is a small marital estate consisting of a house with equity, Husband's small pension which was accumulated during marriage, and \$19,000 from an insurance settlement. CLP attorney recently sent Husband interrogatories and will work to ensure that Wife obtains the best possible economic settlement, so that she can move forward with financial independence and in safety.

All IPV victims represented by CLP will be referred for the full range of free services available at WC&S, including crisis intervention, counseling, children's programming, emergency shelter, housing advocacy, and 24-hour hotline services. CLP clients will also receive the support of an Immediate Needs Coordinator (WC&S INC) who provides funding for safety and extensive community resources. WC&S' Refugee, Immigrant, and Limited English team of multilingual advocates, will also supplement the work of the CLP Attorney.

Context/Background Information

WC&S, founded in 1974 and one of the leading domestic violence programs in the nation, developed a Civil Law Project (CLP) in 2001 with funding from the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV). Since then, CLP has grown to be a respected provider of free, legal services in Allegheny County with a statewide reputation for high-quality legal work on behalf of IPV victims. Current funding for CLP includes continuing support from PCADV as well as grants from the PA Supreme Court's IOLTA Board and the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. CLP, however, is not fully funded by such grants and the current volume of requests for legal services by victims of IPV exceeds CLP's capacity to provide requested legal representation.

When CLP was established, WC&S organized a formal advisory committee to assess legal needs. Committee members included Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS), the Allegheny County Bar Association, Family Court, the County Law Department, and DV program representatives. The committee assisted CLP with developing case priorities to target gaps in county legal services and prevent duplication. CLP continues to work with these partners (on task forces, committees, joint grants, fundraising, pro bono efforts, etc.) to maximize local legal resources and ensure that DV victims' emerging legal needs are addressed. In 2008, local providers of legal services met with the Bar Association's Pro Bono leadership to identify gaps in existing services for women. In response, CLP began to handle more divorce defense which was identified as a gap area. CLP has continued meeting with the Bar Association's Pro Bono leadership and NLS, including through a formal Victims of Crime Act collaborative project, to adjust case priorities in accordance with changing attorney resources and client need. CLP uses QR codes in closing letters emailed to clients which, when scanned, lead to an online survey in order to obtain feedback on how CLP can best meet client needs.

CLP currently operates with five full-time attorneys (including Legal Director Brittany Conkle, Chief Legal Officer Lorraine Bittner, and three staff attorneys), two paralegals, and a legal administrative assistant. The law project is housed off-site from the main WC&S facility, in an office suite in downtown Pittsburgh. As a law firm within WC&S, CLP has its own confidentiality and policies/procedures such that no other WC&S department can have access to its client information. CLP attorneys are longstanding members of PCADV's Civil Legal Representation network of providers of civil legal assistance for domestic violence victims in Pennsylvania and they receive training and support from PCADV as well as annual monitoring. Additionally, CLP is regularly monitored by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and PCADV and receives oversight from the PA IOLTA Board's grant managers.

Project Goals

Continuing support from the Allegheny County Bar Foundation is requested to enable a WC&S Civil Law Project (CLP) attorney to provide specialized divorce representation for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) whose incomes are at or below 187.5% of the federal poverty guidelines. Ten (10) such victims would receive free legal representation by a CLP attorney in divorce actions that include alimony and/or property claims. As set forth in the proposed budget for this project, the CLP attorney would handle ten (10) divorce cases for 24.27 hours each (project total hours of 190.75) at a rate of \$41.21. This should enable the CLP attorney to achieve favorable legal outcomes for the ten (10) IPV victims. Legal services would include the filing of divorce pleadings with any needed alimony or equitable distribution claims, the filing of required inventories/forms/agreements, and attendance at any motions, conciliations and/or

hearings.

Anticipated legal outcomes would be similar to those obtained by CLP under current and past ACBF funding, for example: ensuring a Wife maintains her residence and minimizes the claim that Husband has on the house; representing a client in divorce whose Husband has been criminally charged for abusing her and their children and who remains in jail on a psychiatric hold; and drafting divorce documents for a young mother whose husband has abandoned the marital residence and moved to North Carolina while the residence slips into foreclosure.

CLP's service delivery plan would include the CLP attorney's first meeting with an IPV victim taking place, based on the victim's choice, at the safe and secure main WC&S facility; at a safe location offsite; or via a virtual meeting on Teams. After initial interviews and legal advice, cases would be accepted for extended representation if it is demonstrated that: client is a victim of IPV; client has suffered abuse as defined in PA's PFA Act; client meets the income guidelines; and the divorce action is related to the client's IPV situation. Priority would be given where the safety of client is at high risk, client is in a DV shelter, or client is faced with loss of housing, income, or limited assets. For all cases, the CLP attorney will connect the clients with the full range of free DV program services offered by WC&S, which include 24-hour hotline assistance for safety planning and emotional support, shelter and housing assistance (including financial relocation assistance), immediate needs coordination, counseling for victims and their children, children's programming, and more.

Population to be served

The population to be served by the proposed project are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. According to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, IPV victims are reaching out for help in large numbers in Allegheny County. Every day, there are an average of eighty-six (86) calls to 911 for domestic violence. Every month, the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police administer approximately 100 Lethality Assessment Screens when responding to IPV, and more than 70% of the victims in these cases are found to be at high risk for being killed by their intimate partner and are referred to the Women's Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh (WC&S) for safety planning and assistance.

Annually, WC&S serves over 7,600 victims of domestic violence in Allegheny County. In 2023, there were more than 3,500 Emergency PFAs filed in the Minor Judiciary and 3,700 PFA Petitions filed in Family Court. In Allegheny County, there are over 3,500 arrests and new criminal filings each year for domestic violence, and it is well known that intimate partner violence is underreported. Over the past several years, the National Crime Victimization Survey has estimated that between 50 – 60% of victimizations of intimate partner violence were not reported to police.

From this population of domestic violence cases, IPV victims are referred to the WC&S Civil Law Project (CLP) for legal representation. In the most recently completed fiscal year of July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, CLP opened cases for 431 new clients and provided legal assistance in 730 legal cases involving IPV. The new clients included 43 victims who were refugees/immigrants and 32 with limited English proficiency, whose primary languages were reported as: Arabic (9); Spanish (6); Portuguese (3); Nepali (3); Uzbek (3); American Sign Language (2); Ukrainian (1); Swahili (1); Kinyarwanda (1); French (1); and Pashto (1). As confirmed by a recent PA IOLTA Board analysis, the demographic make-up of CLP clients demonstrates that CLP is delivering its services throughout the various racial and ethnic communities of Allegheny County, including traditionally underserved and marginalized communities. In fiscal year 2023-2024, CLP closed 508 cases and the racial/ethnic breakdown for these clients was as follows: 204 (40%) African American; 22 (4%) Asian/Pacific Islander; 19 (4%) Hispanic/Latino; 6 (1%) Middle Eastern; 242 (48%) White (non-Hispanic); and 15 (3%) multiracial/other.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



501 (C)(3) Determination Ltr (...pdf

IRS Form 990



WC&S 990PD FINAL 2023_E... .pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



2025 Allegheny County Bar A... .pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



WCS 2024-2025 Budget withpdf

Audited Financial Statements



WCS FS FINAL 2023.pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

Name

Nicole Molinaro

Title

President/ CEO



ALLEGHENY COUNTY
BAR FOUNDATION
The Heart of Pittsburgh's Legal Community

Allegheny County Bar Foundation - Legal Aid Provider Grant

Letter of Inquiry (LOI) - 2024-25 Cycle

Background Information

Name of Organization	Women's Law Project
Employer Identification Number (EIN)	23-7354667
Year Founded	1974
Mission Statement	WLP leverages the power of the law to eliminate gender bias and discrimination.
Executive Director	Ms. Susan Frietsche, Esq.
Executive Director Email	sfrietsche@womenslawproject.org
Preferred Pronouns	she/her/hers
Contact Person (if different from Executive Director)	Ms. Brittany Green
Title	Director of Development
Email	bgreen@womenslawproject.org
Organization Address	239 Fourth Avenue, Suite 2108 Pittsburgh, PA, 15222
Phone Number	(412) 281-2787
Website	www.womenslawproject.org
Current Annual Operating Budget	2277153

Proposal Information

Grant Request Name General Operating Support

Summary of Request

To support our expanding operations as we fight for reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ equality, and bodily autonomy in Pennsylvania and beyond.

Total Project Cost

2277153

Type of Support

General Operating Support

Definitions:

- *General Operating Support: unrestricted funding that can be used flexibly to support any of an organization's costs to fulfill its mission (rather than supporting a specific project or program).*
- *Existing Program/Project Support: funding to support all or part of an already established or ongoing program or project.*
- *New Program/Project Support: funding to support or enable the establishment of a new program or project.*

Project Start Date

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

Project End Date

Wednesday, December 31, 2025

Narrative Information

Overview of Grant Request

WLP envisions a society in which justice and equality are not limited by sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, economic status, disability, race, or intersecting identities. We use litigation, policy advocacy and community education to bend law toward an arc of justice. Bodily autonomy is a keystone issue, and much of our work is multi-pronged. We advance equal opportunities and equitable treatment in health care, education, athletics, employment, public benefits, insurance, and family law, and seek justice for survivors of gender-based violence.

We represent PA's freestanding abortion providers, as well as clinic escorts and volunteers. We provide strategic legal defense for doctors, patients, and clinic volunteers from violent extremists. We represent minors seeking court orders from Allegheny County Family Court allowing them to consent on their own to abortion care. In our #MeTooPA program, we represent students and low-wage workers in sexual harassment cases. In our Legal Navigator program, which we have expanded to western PA, we provide free legal counsel and representation to low-wage workers and students in pregnancy discrimination and pregnancy/lactation accommodations cases.

With the loss of federal abortion rights in 2022 and the reinvigoration of our state Equal Rights Amendment earlier this year, our reproductive rights work is exploding. We are excited to be expanding our LGBTQ+ docket, with several high-impact cases in the areas of employment, education, and health care.

Context/Background Information

On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* obliterated nearly 50 years of precedent to strip abortion rights out of the federal Constitution. This campaign to take away reproductive autonomy has broadened beyond abortion to contraception, sexuality education, trans health care, and fertility treatment. Legislation attacking trans youth is proliferating. Crisis Pregnancy Centers are developing more sophisticated tactics for deceiving and tracking minors. And in a few chilling cases that illustrate how hostile the climate has become, pregnant people, disproportionately women of color and poor women, have been criminally charged with everything from child endangerment to aggravated assault of a fetus to murder for having a miscarriage.

We are the de facto legal arm of the gender justice movement in PA, acting as a resource to allied organizations who need a lawyer's eye on policy statements or proposed legislation. In this role, we work closely with abortion providers and with local, state, and national organizations. For example, we worked with national repro organizations on expanding judicial bypass access for minors by jointly training new volunteer attorneys for these cases. Public education is an important part of what we do. We have a vigorous public education program including original-content continuing legal education courses, webinars and speaking engagements, earned media, content-rich social media, and publications.

Project Goals

We will strategically employ impact litigation and individual representation to protect and expand gender justice in Pennsylvania. Earlier this year, on January 29, 2024, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued a long-awaited ruling in our landmark case, Allegheny Reproductive Health Center v. PA Department of Human Services. The high court ruled that the state ban on Medicaid coverage for abortion is a form of sex discrimination and presumptively unconstitutional under the Equal Rights Amendment. We are back before Commonwealth Court to apply this new legal standard to the coverage ban, and we are optimistic that the ban will soon be lifted. We plan to use the Allegheny Repro ruling to challenge other discriminatory laws and policies.

WLP will develop legal strategies for ensuring that doctors and patients are safe and secure and that anti-abortion states are not able to enforce their bans outside their borders.

WLP will meet the increasing need for judicial bypass representation in Allegheny County. We expect to cover more judicial bypass hearings for patients from Ohio, West Virginia, and other states.

This year, WLP's litigation docket has included three high impact LGBTQ rights cases. These cases involve workplace discrimination against an LGBTQ+ employee, a major health system's refusal to provide trans patients gender-affirming care, and the efforts of a group of parents to veto education on trans issues at a local public school. These cases center our LGBTQ advocacy, and we expect to expand this area of practice.

With the passage of the Pregnant Workers' Fairness Act and PUMP Act, more Pennsylvanians have rights to pregnancy and lactation accommodations. Our goal is to publicize these rights to low-wage workers and ensure that employees in western PA have access to legal information and advice related to these laws.

Population to be served

WLP represents all freestanding abortion clinics in Pennsylvania, as well as volunteer clinic escorts. We represent low wage workers and students in sex and pregnancy discrimination cases. We obtain "judicial bypass" court orders permitting minors to get confidential abortion care. We represent women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people who are not receiving equitable treatment in schools, workplaces, public accommodations, and prisons. We offer client-centered legal services prioritizing the needs of people who have no other source of legal services and who are suffering because of gender oppression and sex- and race-based stereotypes. We currently have 8 active cases in which charges have been filed in sexual harassment, pregnancy discrimination, or sex discrimination cases, and have had approximately 190 pre-litigation cases since 2017 in these areas. We have represented young people in 324 judicial bypass cases since 2018. Nearly all of these have been in Allegheny County.

Attachments

IRS Determination Letter



IRS 501c3 letter WLP 2012.pdf

IRS Form 990



WLP Form 990 FY23.pdf

Program/Project Budget (see below for template)



FY25 Organizational Budget.pdf

[Sample Program/Project Budget Template](#)

Current Operating Budget



47_FY25 Organizational Budg...pdf

Audited Financial Statements



WLP FY23 Audited FS FYE 6... .pdf

Certification & Submission

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that:

1. The tax-exempt status of this Organization is still in effect,
2. This Organization does not support or engage in any terrorist activity, and
3. If a grant is awarded to this Organization, the proceeds of that grant will not be distributed or used to benefit any organization or individual supporting or engaged in terrorism, or used for any other unlawful purpose.

Signature



Date

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Name

Brittany Green

Title

Director of Development