

Talking to your legislator about civil legal aid funding

Talking to Your Legislator

- Introduce yourself as a constituent and a supporter of civil legal aid.
- State that civil legal aid is important to you and thank your legislator for his or her past support
- Tell your legislator that civil legal aid is in crisis and strongly urge him or her to request \$23 million in funding for the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC) in FY18
- Ask your legislator to make this funding request one of his or her top three budget priorities.

Supporting Facts & Information

- Access to legal advice and representation in civil cases provides safety and stability to low-income individuals and families, offering critical support in cases related to housing, employment, family law and domestic violence, protection of elders, health care, education, and more.
- Civil legal aid remains out of reach for the majority of low-income people in Massachusetts who need and are eligible for it. Due to lack of funding, civil legal aid programs are forced to turn away 64% of eligible residents who seek help.
- Without civil legal aid, vulnerable residents, including families with young children, elders, and domestic violence survivors, are forced to face the complex legal system alone, with often devastating consequences on the health and welfare of individuals and communities.
- Civil legal aid is a smart investment. For every dollar the state spends on legal aid, \$2-\$5 is returned to the state and its residents through added federal benefits and savings on costs for services such as emergency shelter, health care, and law enforcement.
- Civil legal aid helps ensure a fair and efficient justice system for all people.



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