

# Civil Legal Aid in Family Law & Domestic Violence

Massachusetts  
Legal  
Assistance  
Corporation

Line item 0321-1600

## Civil legal aid helps families maintain their safety and independence by:

- Providing advice and representation and enforcing legal protections for survivors of domestic violence
- Securing favorable property settlements and preventing foreclosure and eviction
- Enforcing divorce and child support orders
- Securing services for children in schools
- Addressing denial of benefits
- Protecting the rights of children and other vulnerable individuals



**“Legal aid really saved our lives.”**

- Mindy, survivor of domestic violence represented by Community Legal Aid

Low-income people at or below 125% of the federal poverty level (\$32,188 per year for a family of four) qualify for civil legal aid.

## **2,330** Family Law Cases closed in FY18, including:

Divorce, Separation, & Annulment	815
Custody & Visitation	698
Domestic Abuse	279
Other Issues	165
Child & Spousal Support	155
Adult Guardianship & Conservatorship	115
Paternity	73
Adoption	12
Name Change	11
Parental Rights Termination	7

Unfortunately, lack of funding forces Massachusetts civil legal aid organizations to turn away:

**71%**  
of eligible residents who seek assistance with family law matters.

Legal aid produced an economic benefit of

**\$60.5 million**  
for the Commonwealth and its residents in FY18, including:

**\$2.8 million**  
in child support and spousal support for survivors of domestic violence and their children.

**For more information, contact:**

**Lynne Parker, MLAC**  
(617) 391-5640  
lparker@mlac.org

**Elaine O'Reilly, Governmental Strategies**  
(617) 447-5174  
eoreilly@governmentalstrategies.com

**Mary Ann Walsh, Governmental Strategies**  
(617) 447-3711  
mawalsh@governmentalstrategies.com