Civil Legal Aid in Housing & Foreclosure

During the COVID-19 crisis, legal aid is an essential service for people facing housing insecurity. In FY21, legal aid organizations expect to address a 42% increase in housing discrimination cases compared to FY20.

Legal Aid lawyers help protect and secure safe and affordable housing by:

- Enforcing health, safety, and accessibility standards
- Advocating for access to affordable housing
- Defending clients from unlawful eviction and combatting housing discrimination
- Protecting tenants at risk of losing housing subsidies
- Helping place vulnerable families in emergency shelters

Low-income people at or below 125% of the federal poverty level ($33,125 per year for a family of four) qualify for civil legal aid.

Community Legal Aid helped Mr. D, a veteran with disabilities, protect his rights and remain housed after his landlord illegally locked him out of his residence, turned off the hot water, and harassed him during the COVID crisis.

8,411 Housing Cases closed in FY20, including:

- Private Landlord/Tenant: 3,355
- Federally Subsidized Housing: 2,868
- Other Housing: 739
- Public Housing: 994
- Foreclosures/Predatory Lending Practices: 163
- Housing Discrimination: 204
- Homeownership/Real Property: 76
- Mobile Homes: 12

Last year legal aid provided $115 million in economic benefits to the Commonwealth and its residents, including $13.8 million in shelter savings for families and individuals.