

Civil Legal Aid in Housing & Foreclosure

Legal aid is an essential service for people at risk of eviction and facing housing insecurity, especially during the COVID-19 crisis.

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

- Helping obtain rental assistance during the pandemic
- 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 (\$34,688 per year for a family of four) qualify for civil legal aid.



Jean, a single father of two sons, was laid off from his job during the pandemic and struggled to pay rent. MetroWest Legal Services helped him apply for rental assistance and negotiate an agreement with his landlord.

7,144 housing cases closed in FY21, including:

| | |
|---|-------|
| Private Landlord/Tenant | 3,153 |
| Federally Subsidized Housing | 2,093 |
| Public Housing | 713 |
| Unsafe Conditions, Tenant Disputes, Other Cases | 697 |
| Housing Discrimination | 310 |
| Foreclosures/Predatory Lending Practices | 87 |
| Homeownership/Real Property | 70 |
| Mobile Homes | 21 |

Last year, legal aid provided
\$103 million
in economic benefits to the Commonwealth and its residents, including
\$10.4 million
in shelter savings for families and individuals