About Us

Legal Services NYC was founded in 1968 as part of the War on Poverty. What started as a loose confederation of neighborhood-based legal services programs has grown into the nation’s largest civil legal services provider. Our citywide force of over 500 staff helps more than 110,000 low-income New Yorkers annually.

For low-income New Yorkers facing a life crisis, legal help is often the most effective tool in resolving it. The need for free legal services is tremendous. Roughly 1.7 million city residents are currently living below the poverty line—a mere $25,000 for a family of four. They are often made more vulnerable by discrimination, immigration status, age, or disabilities. Our work makes tangible improvements in the lives of hundreds of thousands of these New Yorkers in need.

For the last 50 years, our dedicated staff has challenged systemic injustices and ensured the well-being of communities across the city. This work includes preventing evictions and preserving housing; demanding access to high-quality education, health care, and economic security; ensuring safety and stability for survivors of domestic violence and immigrants; and fighting for the dignity and respect of all New Yorkers, including LGBTQ communities, New Yorkers with disabilities, and people of color.

With deep roots in communities in all five boroughs, Legal Services NYC has handled more than two million cases since our founding. We are proud of what we have accomplished and look forward to continuing to expand the scope of our work for the next 50 years and beyond. With the generous support of our partners, there is no end to what we can achieve. Thank you for standing with us to demand justice.

“Legal Services NYC took my case on like it was their own personal case. They put themselves in my shoes and made sure that things worked out the best way they could for me and my daughter. Thank you!”

— Danielle Best
CLIENT WHOSE AFFORDABLE HOUSING WAS PRESERVED

50 Years of Impact

1977: Duchesn v. Sugarman—held a parent’s interest in custody of child is a constitutionally protected liberty interest
1980: Dopico v. Goldschmidt—forced New York City to provide accessible public transportation to people with disabilities, including kneeling buses we see today
1988: New York City Coalition to End Lead Poisoning v. Koch—led to new lead paint laws and monumental reduction in lead poisoning in New York City

1983: created Disability Advocacy Project, which continues to help thousands of children and adults with disabilities get federal disability assistance

1970: Escalera v. NYCHA—held that NYCHA must have good cause to terminate tenancy of a public housing tenant
1979: Jose P. v. Mills—forced NYC Department of Education to provide appropriate and timely evaluations, placements, and services for all students with disabilities
Who We Serve

NEW YORKERS HELPED ACROSS ALL 5 BOROUGHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>20,698</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>22,389</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td>32,670</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
<td>6,306</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td>28,644</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$51,336,886 in cash benefits and savings to our clients

Over 4,000 hotline calls answered by staff fluent in 10 languages

66% OF OUR CLIENTS ARE WOMEN

- Men: 33%
- Women: 66%
- Did Not Identify: 1%

In 2018, **538** staff helped more than **110,000** low-income New Yorkers

Over **2,000** volunteers at 100 law firms and companies donated more than **70,000** pro bono hours, helping **5,200** New Yorkers

**$145,000,000** in NYC taxpayer savings

- **1989**: created one of the first HIV/AIDS Law Projects in the country
- **1989**: partnered with City and advocates to create eviction prevention programs, keeping hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers in their homes and laying the foundation for the Right to Counsel program
- **1991**: Gonzalez v. Dowling— instituted strict compliance requirements and monitoring for New York State to ensure timely provision of Medicaid benefits
- **1991**: founded one of the first foreclosure prevention projects in the country, now the largest
- **1992**: Williams v. NYCHA— requires landlords to provide notification to NYCHA of their intention to sue in cases involving Section 8 subsidies
- **1992**: aided in passage of New York State’s standby guardianship law, which allows parents with AIDS to legally plan for future care of their children
- **1995**: Varshavsky v. Perales— ensures homebound Medicaid and public assistance recipients are able to participate in administrative hearings, sometimes with home or telephone hearings
Our Work

Through offices in all five boroughs, Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) fights for the rights of the low-income members of our communities. We coordinate our services across practice areas to address legal problems faced by historically poor and persecuted populations including immigrants, veterans, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, people living with HIV/AIDS, and people with disabilities. Our multifaceted work includes:

Protecting Housing & Preventing Homelessness

LSNYC prevents thousands of evictions and foreclosures every year. We force landlords to repair unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions. Our advocacy preserves affordable housing and prevents the displacement of low-income families caused by gentrification.

Safeguarding Income & Fighting Consumer Fraud

We ensure access to benefits for people with disabilities, veterans, the elderly, and others. We put a stop to employers’ practices that deprive workers of compensation and fraudsters’ schemes that often target low-income minorities.

Helping Immigrants & Strengthening Families

Every year, we help thousands of immigrants and their families gain asylum and get on a path to citizenship. Our attorneys and social workers also secure safe and stable environments for victims of domestic violence and their children.

“My family was not safe. I was not safe. Thank you so much for Legal Services NYC. I was so happy because I know we’re all safe. God bless Legal Services!”

— Lamine Doukoure
IMMIGRANT WHO RECEIVED ASYLUM AND WAS REUNITED WITH HIS FAMILY IN THE U.S.

Securing Access to Education & Health Care

Our work to protect students’ rights includes stopping inappropriate school discipline and ensuring the accommodation of students with special needs. LSNYC helps uninsured New Yorkers access public health benefits and safeguards patients’ housing, finances, and health care coverage.

Helping Immigrants & Strengthening Families

Every year, we help thousands of immigrants and their families gain asylum and get on a path to citizenship. Our attorneys and social workers also secure safe and stable environments for victims of domestic violence and their children.

52,000 NEW YORKERS HELPED

32,500 NEW YORKERS HELPED

23,000 NEW YORKERS HELPED

1998: Gonzalez v. MTA—required New York City and State to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act in its administration of Access-A-Ride

2006: launched Language Access Project to represent low-income New Yorkers who have limited English proficiency

2009: Boureima v. Doar—challenged NYC Human Resource Administration’s failure to provide language services, which led to vast improvements for New Yorkers with limited English proficiency

2014: Campos v. Rhea—challenged NYCHA’s wrongful termination of Section 8 subsidies through computer error, averting over 5,000 erroneous terminations

1999: Salaman v. Turner—required NYC Human Resources Administration to create fair hearing process for those accessing HIV/AIDS benefits

2008: created a citywide immigration practice that has grown into one of LSNYC’s largest practice areas, serving over 14,000 immigrant New Yorkers annually

2011: Barkley v. United Homes—found that United Homes conspired with mortgage bankers, attorneys, and real estate professionals to target minorities for fraudulent sales of overpriced homes, leading to $1 million verdict

3,400 NEW YORKERS HELPED
Financials

**REVENUE**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Services Corporation &amp; Other Federal Contracts</td>
<td>$14,877,041</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest on Lawyer Accounts</td>
<td>6,380,661</td>
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<td>New York State Contracts</td>
<td>16,457,199</td>
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<td>New York City Contracts</td>
<td>32,953,938</td>
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<tr>
<td>Events and Individual Donations</td>
<td>2,106,076</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>4,889,342</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$77,664,257</strong></td>
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**DONATED PRO BONO SERVICES** | **$43,629,823**

**EXPENSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legal/Program Services</td>
<td>$64,969,978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management/General</td>
<td>$8,933,432</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising/Communications</td>
<td>$709,233</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$73,612,643</strong></td>
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Institutional Donors

$100,000 AND ABOVE

- Bernard F. & Alva B. Gimbel Foundation
- Center for New York City Neighborhoods
- H. van Ameringen Foundation
- The New York Community Trust
- Robin Hood

$50,000—$99,999

- Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
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**2014:** J.C. v. Rhea—required NYCHA to provide victims of domestic violence with more information about the status of their housing applications and improve the process for challenging wrongful denials

**2014:** Saint-Jean v. Emigrant—jury finds that Emigrant Savings Bank discriminated against eight minority homeowners by purposefully marketing subprime mortgages with predatory interest rates

**2015:** Doe v. City of New York—first decision in New York to hold that refusal to use a person’s chosen pronouns and legal name constitutes discrimination; led to improvements in City staffing, training, and treatment of transgender and gender non-conforming recipients of benefits

**2015:** established the Tenant Rights Coalition, a collaboration among tenant organizing groups that proactively fights displacement and builds tenant power in NYC neighborhoods facing gentrification

**2015:** T.H. v. Walcott—challenged NYC Department of Education’s discriminatory use of emergency medical services to respond to children having behavioral issues; led to new protocols by NYC Department of Education to avoid unnecessary emergency room visits

**2016:** released one of the first legal studies documenting civil legal challenges, discrimination, and violence faced by low-income LGBTQ New Yorkers
**Individual Donors**

**THE JUSTICE CIRCLE**
The Justice Circle is LSNYC’s society for leadership givers.

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- Steven L. Holley
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- John Brody
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- Helen and William J. Covington
- Peter Devine

THE JUSTICE CIRCLE
The Justice Circle is LSNYC’s society for leadership givers.

2017: **Huerta v. Zucker**—successfully challenged NYC Department of Health’s termination of Women, Infant and Children (WIC) benefits without notice or an opportunity to challenge the termination

2017: published a report on the failures of the New York Court system to provide language services to litigants seeking justice, leading to improvements in language access practices

2017: worked on the tenant-led Right to Counsel NYC Coalition to win nation’s first Right to Counsel Law for low-income tenants facing eviction

2016: orchestrated a massive pro bono immigration campaign that has helped thousands of low-income immigrants on matters ranging from naturalizations to U visas and asylum

2017: **Padilla Torres v. City of New York**—challenged NYPD’s refusal to provide language services for survivors of domestic violence, leading to improved language access practices

2017: joined other legal service providers to challenge ICE’s policy of arresting immigrants in New York State Courts to ensure access to justice for our clients
The men and women at Legal Services NYC serve our city’s most vulnerable citizens. Given recent changes at the federal level, it’s more important than ever to make sure that access to justice is provided for those citizens at the local level.”

—Linton Mann III
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Winston & Strawn LLP

2018: Lin v. Olyatoye—reached a settlement requiring NYCHA to vastly improve its language access plan by providing interpretation and translation services to all tenants with limited English proficiency

2018: New York State issued final determination that three Uber drivers and all similarly situated drivers in New York State were employees for purposes of unemployment benefits

2018: Prospect Union v. DeJesus—court reversed unjust decision evicting elderly disabled tenants for inability to clean apartment without assistance, setting precedent that disabled tenants may demand reasonable accommodation in housing cases

2018: began holding regular pro bono name-change clinics
to help transgender clients legally change their names

2018: Martinez v. Lexington Gardens—required landlord to provide a reasonable accommodation to a tenant with a disability, setting precedent in accessing accommodations for hundreds of other tenants

2018: opened new Tenant Rights Coalition office in Brooklyn, in addition to existing Bronx and Manhattan offices, to continue helping tenants fight evictions, address bad housing conditions, and combat tenant displacement
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