

2022 IMPACT REPORT



We are working together to build a better and more just tomorrow.

Thank you to those who have been supporting our work since the beginning and to those who have joined us since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. It is encouraging to see so many continuing to champion the importance of civil legal services in advancing social justice, especially as so many of the protections put in place to help families are allowed to expire. Thanks to all of you, we can keep serving our community's evolving needs. We continue to see a demand for accessible legal services in the volume of calls we receive.

You are making sure that we can be there for children and their families, seniors, and disabled individuals.

This year, our teams are resuming the community outreach events that help spread awareness of the services we offer. With your partnership, we are steadfast in our advocacy to fix the complicated systems that leave people without the services created to help them. Because of you we keep families housed, make sure children get the education they need, help seniors access health care, and more. Together, we can continue to strengthen local families and make the safety net system more accessible.

Thank you.

M. Stacey Hawver
Executive Director



Find us online!



CLIENT STORIES

Education

Jesse is an incoming kindergartner at a school new to him. His family only recently moved to the district and enrolled him in a summer program at the school. Unfortunately, Jesse's teacher had very little experience with younger children and found some of his behavior difficult. In her frustration, the teacher threatened that he would be suspended from the program. Jesse's mother was referred to the Director of the Legal Aid SMC's Peninsula Family Advocacy Program (FAP), who met with the special education director. The director initiated a complete assessment to understand Jesse's challenging behavior. Jesse's mother also received an apology from the teacher for threatening Jesse with suspension. Your ongoing support means that FAP is there for families when they don't know where else to go.

Housing

Vanessa lived in an apartment in Redwood City, made affordable by her Section 8 voucher. She came to Legal Aid SMC because the property owner threatened her with eviction. The property owner claimed she'd breached their lease agreement and wanted her out of the unit. Vanessa knew she hadn't done anything wrong and discovered that the allegations involved incidents with neighbors who had caused her issues in the past. And because the pandemic impacted her finances, Vanessa didn't have the means to move out and find a new place to live.

Your support made sure that she could get help from an attorney at Legal Aid SMC. It was critical to stop the eviction because it would put Vanessa at risk of losing her Section 8 housing voucher. With the help of her new housing attorney, Vanessa gained a better understanding of her options. They settled with the property owner, allowing Vanessa more time to find a new home and keep her Section 8 housing voucher. Her attorney also negotiated to have nearly a year of unpaid rent forgiven because of her pandemic-related hardship.

Health

Sharon came to Legal Aid SMC because she needed help with her CalFresh (food stamps) benefits. These benefits, along with Social Security Disability Insurance payments, were important to cover Sharon's basic needs. Because of the pandemic, she'd been unable to get a specific piece of verification before it was due for an annual review. She called the Human Services Agency, and a representative assured her that she could submit the paperwork after the April due date without disruption to her benefits.

She submitted the documentation shortly after the due date but her CalFresh benefits were discontinued anyway. She called to ask why and was told it was due to her late submission. But your generosity connected Sharon with a lawyer, who helped her appeal the decision. Her renewal was reviewed and approved. And Sharon received the benefits that she'd been denied since the mistake.

▶▶ Special thanks to our Pro Bono Partners, who volunteered over 4,700 hours to help low-income families



1,213 Cases Opened



Serving clients in **more than 10 languages**



Over 4,100 tenants educated about their housing rights



Provided legal aid to **277 clients with a disability**



180 outreach events to connect families to information



606 Households with children supported



Over 161 evictions stopped to keep families housed



45 Pediatric Residents trained to recognize legal issues affecting their patients' health



\$351,345 Recovered for clients
\$216,407 Saved for clients

\$148,000

San Mateo County
Median Income

\$24,000

Our Clients'
Median Income

These numbers represent cases opened between July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

THANK YOU

With the help of our incredible donors, Legal Aid SMC opened 1,213 cases over the last year. That's over a thousand people who had somewhere to turn to when it counted most. Too many people struggle to break through the red tape of complex applications and rigid procedures. And it is only made more difficult by barriers in language and technology. But compassionate people like you ensure we can offer guidance and access to the legal tools that can make a difference.

See a list of our generous supporters at legalaidsmc.org/supporters22

Thank you to our Pro Bono Partners!

At the 25th Annual 'And Justice For All' Awards Luncheon, we honored **Jones Day** with the **Guardian of Justice Award**. Jones Day reached out to Stephanie Bilinski, Pro Bono Program Director, to become more involved in Legal Aid SMC's Domestic Violence Collaborative during the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic. Legal Aid SMC trained 34 Jones Day attorneys and professional staff on representing domestic violence survivors at their permanent restraining order hearings. In 2021, the firm took on five of Legal Aid's most challenging domestic violence cases, most of which included time-consuming evidentiary hearings.

Stephanie Bilinski also honored **Joel Silver, Senior Associate General Counsel at Gilead Sciences, Inc** with the **Dorothy M. Wolfe Award**. Joel serves as Chair of Gilead's Pro Bono program, which is focused on helping survivors of domestic violence obtain protective orders as well as providing vital legal services for juvenile immigration cases. Joel has supported Legal Aid SMC's Domestic Violence Collaborative pro bono project for the past eight years. He has received the Wiley Manuel Award every year and was also honored by the State Bar of California. Read more about the 'And Justice For All' Awards Luncheon at legalaidsmc.org/lunch22

The **Wiley W. Manuel Certificate for Pro Bono Legal Services** was created by the California State Bar in 1989. Named for the first Black Justice of the California Supreme Court, the award recognizes pro bono attorneys who have generously donated over fifty hours to assist low-income communities. See the full list of pro bono attorneys who were honored for their work at Legal Aid SMC at legalaidsmc.org/wileymanuel22

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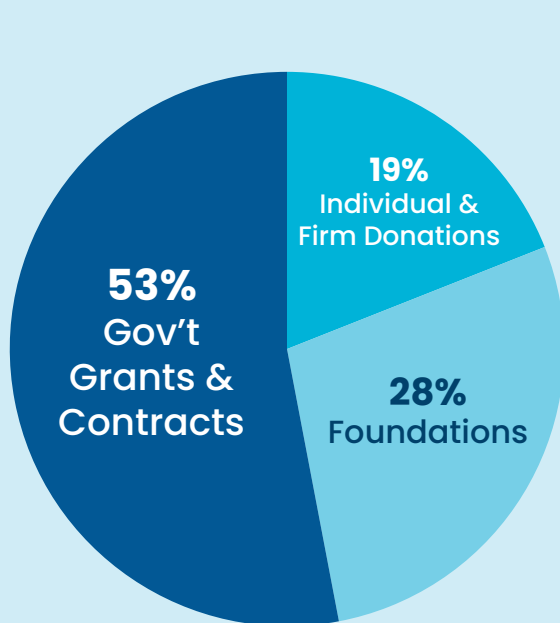
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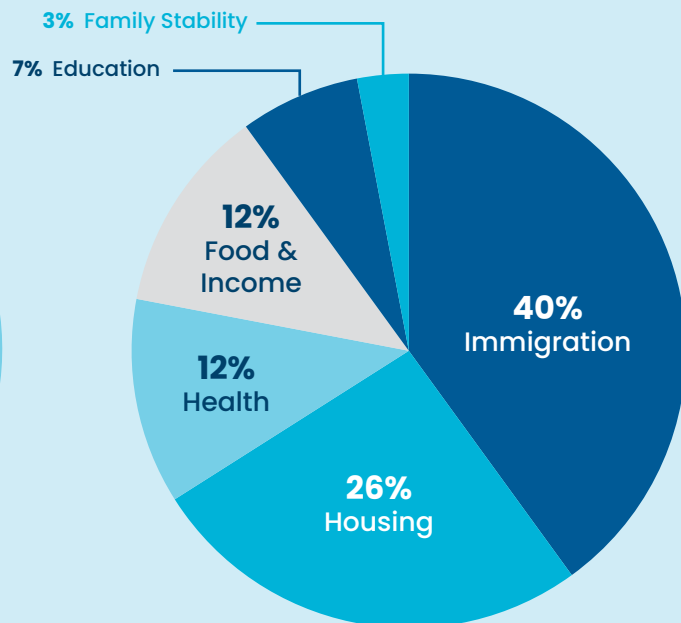
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Revenue



Expenses

Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County
The Natalie Lanam Justice Center
Sobrato Center for Nonprofits - Redwood Shores
330 Twin Dolphin Drive, Suite 123
Redwood City, CA 94065
(650) 558-0915
www.legalaidsmc.org

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