

**On any given day,
at any given moment,
Legal Aid
matters
to someone somewhere.**

**2022
Annual
Report**



LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI has improved the lives of those in need through quality legal assistance since 1964. Legal Aid provides free civil (non-criminal) legal assistance to people who need it most and can afford it least. With offices in Kansas City, Joplin, St. Joseph, and Warrensburg, Legal Aid serves a 40-county area where more than 300,000 people live in poverty.

Throughout our report we use pseudonyms and stock photos to protect client confidentiality.

LAWMO.ORG



Legal Aid is fair play & equity.

Legal Aid is essential for promoting equity and fair play in a legal system that is often stacked against people with low incomes. Wealth should not determine who has access to justice. Our free legal services work to combat economic, racial, and social injustices by advocating for our neighbors experiencing poverty or in legal crisis.





Legal Aid is equal access to justice.

Every day, Missourians are denied access to the fundamental rights to which they are entitled under the law simply because they can't afford an attorney. Equal access to justice doesn't just make some of the difference for people in need. It makes all the difference.





Legal Aid is more than just lawsuits.

Legal Aid is fighting for benefits to ensure that seniors, those with disabilities, and folks who lost their jobs receive the income they need to survive. It's removing barriers to health care access. It's putting survivors of domestic violence on a path to safety and self-sufficiency. It's helping families facing eviction stay in their homes.





Legal Aid is reducing poverty.

Unresolved legal problems often lead to homelessness, job loss, health problems, and more. By addressing the root causes of these legal issues before they escalate, we can significantly reduce poverty and help thousands of struggling individuals and families live safe, healthy, and stable lives.





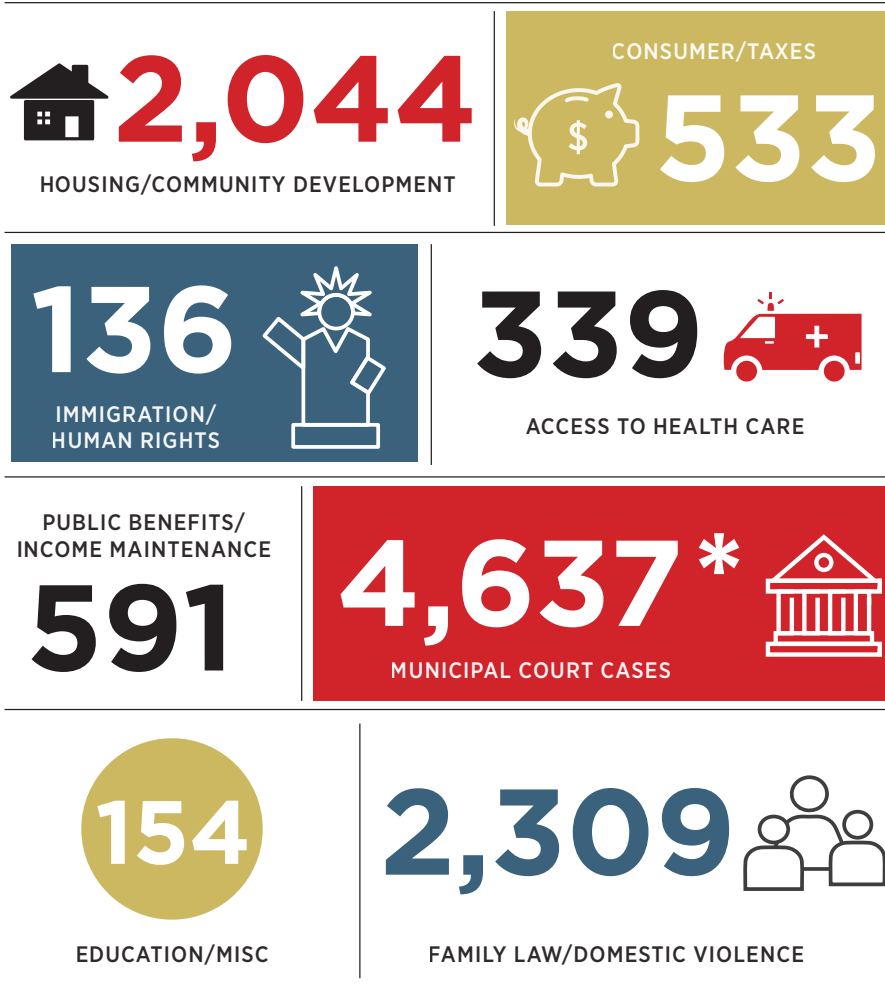
Legal Aid is respecting human dignity.

Legal Aid addresses the most fundamental issues of any society — and the most basic human needs. No one should lose their home, health care, or safety just because they can't afford an attorney. And thanks to you, in 2022, we provided free civil legal services to 13,996 children and adults in our community.

YOUR 2022 IMPACT

Last year, Legal Aid staff provided free civil legal services to 13,996 children and adults in our community. We fought for benefits to ensure that seniors, those with disabilities, and folks who lost their jobs got the income they needed to survive. We put domestic violence survivors on a path to safety and self-sufficiency. We removed legal barriers to health care access. We fought to maintain housing so families could stay in their communities and thrive. And we lifted the burden of debt for consumers defrauded by unscrupulous businesses and individuals.

2022 CLOSED CASES

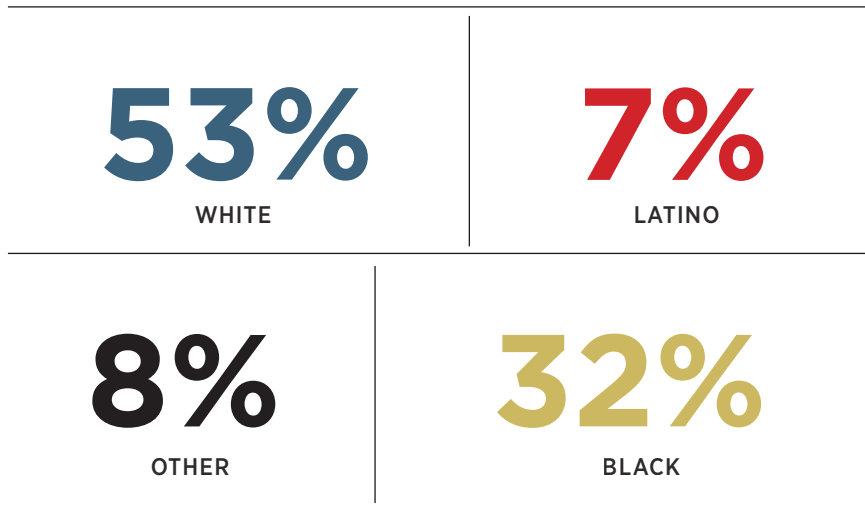


*Municipal cases may have multiple charges.

2022 CIVIL CASES CLOSED BY OFFICE

JOPLIN	653
KANSAS CITY - CENTRAL OFFICE	4,182
KANSAS CITY - WEST OFFICE	199
ST. JOSEPH	560
WARRENSBURG	512
TOTAL CIVIL CASES CLOSED	6,106
TOTAL KCMO MUNICIPAL COURT CASES	4,637
TOTAL 2022 CLOSED CASES	10,743

2022 CLIENT DIVERSITY



Behind each of these numbers is one of your neighbors — a neighbor with a story of hardship, a will to persevere, and a Legal Aid advocate who helped them get justice.



Meet Cassie

Cassie lives alone on a fixed income. One day, she got a phone call from someone claiming to be a debt collector who threatened her with arrest and foreclosure if she didn't pay a debt from the early 2000s—a debt she had no knowledge of.

The collector tricked Cassie into paying \$2,800 on her credit card with a promise to send in payments of \$50 a month until she paid off the debt. Cassie could not keep up with payments and eventually stopped paying altogether.

Cassie told her neighbor what had happened. The neighbor realized the caller had taken advantage of Cassie. He did a bit of research and discovered that the company name was fake, and Cassie never had any unpaid debt. He encouraged her to reach out to Legal Aid for help.

Cassie's Legal Aid attorney filed a lawsuit against the collection agency under the Fair Debt Collection Act. Through further research, her attorney discovered the identity of the debt collector and the names of their false corporations. The attorney amended the complaint to include fraud and illegal credit report claims, as the debt collector pulled Cassie's credit report illegally and used a false identity.

Thanks to her Legal Aid attorney — and a concerned neighbor, Cassie ultimately received a fair settlement.



WITH THE HELP OF HER LEGAL AID ATTORNEY, CASSIE FOUGHT BACK AGAINST UNSCRUPULOUS INDIVIDUALS POSING AS DEBT COLLECTORS.



Meet Jeff

Jeff was referred to Legal Aid by a community partner. His Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments had been suspended for an unknown reason. While his Legal Aid attorney was investigating his SSI benefits, she learned he also had an issue with his subsidized housing.

One of Legal Aid's housing team attorneys accepted the housing case. Due to Jeff's SSI payment suspension, he missed a few months' rent, and the Housing Authority threatened to evict him if he did not pay all he owed, plus late fees.

While Jeff's first Legal Aid attorney worked to get his SSI reinstated, his housing team attorney worked with the Housing Authority to complete a new budget that showed Jeff had no income. Jeff's attorney then negotiated to allow him to pay the back-due rent without losing his home.

Both attorneys were successful. Jeff now receives SSI and is living in his apartment, clear of any debt to the Housing Authority.



ATTORNEYS FROM TWO DIFFERENT TEAMS WORKED TOGETHER AND OBTAINED GREAT RESULTS SO JEFF CAN MAINTAIN HIS INDEPENDENCE.



Meet Kristi

For years Kristi's husband, Daniel, beat her severely. He sexually assaulted her, ripped out her hair, and during the last beating, he gagged their young child. That night, the neighbors called 911. When the police arrived, Daniel told Kristi to pretend she was asleep and threatened to kill her if she opened the door. Despite his threats, the police entered the home and arrested Daniel.

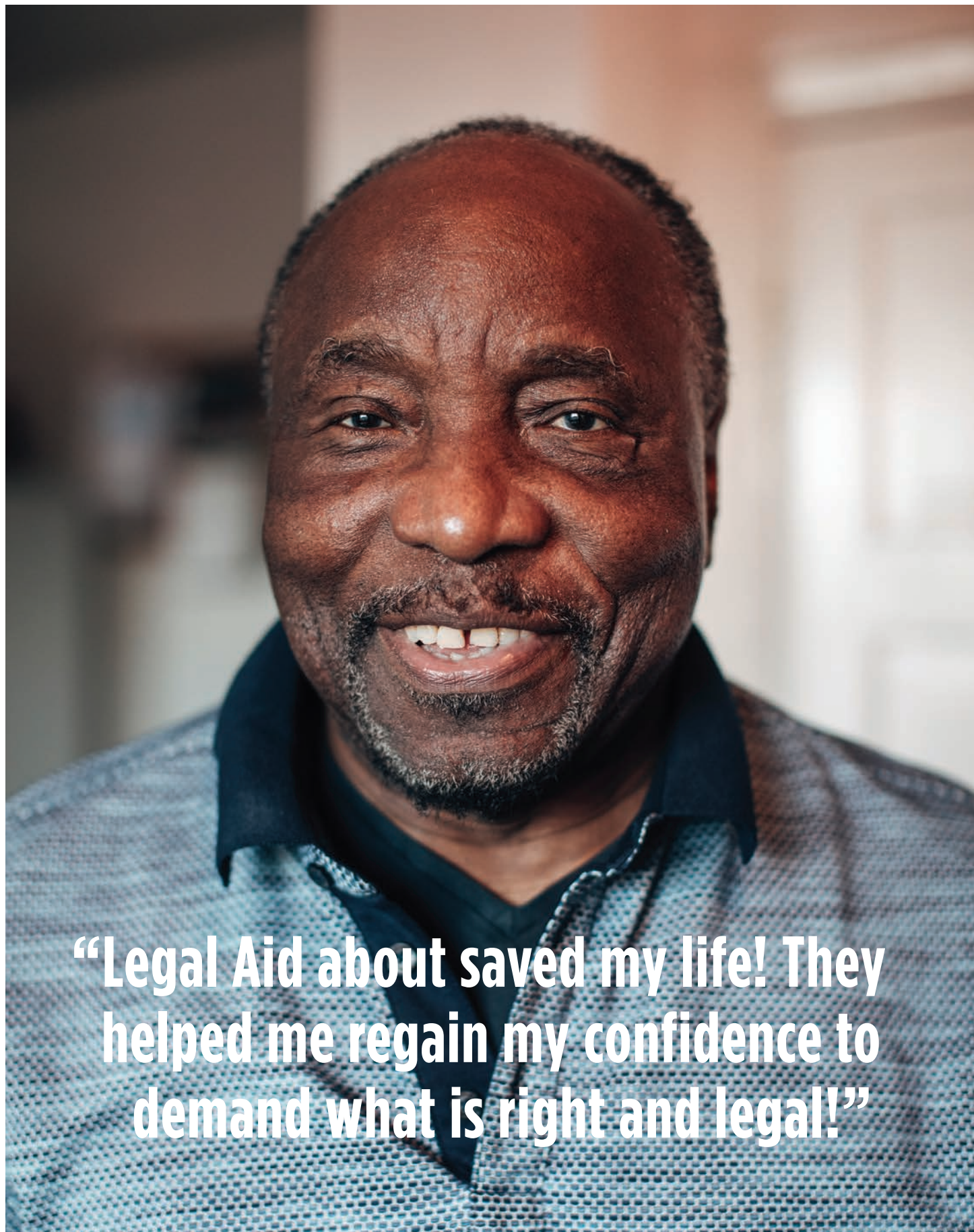
With her child's safety in jeopardy, Kristi contacted Legal Aid for help. The Legal Aid attorney and paralegal filed for an Order of Protection and divorce on Kristi's behalf. They also encouraged her to apply for food stamps and Medicaid to help stretch her income.

Daniel was convicted on criminal charges for the assault and sentenced to five years in prison. Kristi received sole custody of her son in her divorce, and Daniel was denied visitation rights.

Legal Aid's representation and supportive services gave Kristi the fresh start she desperately needed but could not otherwise afford. Today, Kristi is in a healthy, supportive relationship, and she and her child live free from abuse.



KRISTI AND HER SON ARE REBUILDING THEIR LIVES AWAY FROM THEIR ABUSER. THEY HAD LEGAL AID ON THEIR SIDE.



“Legal Aid about saved my life! They helped me regain my confidence to demand what is right and legal!”

A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Imagine that you are a young woman who has made the decision to leave your abuser. You approach an intimidating courthouse, and you go through metal detectors with law enforcement officers standing by. You see serious men and women in suits carrying stacks of files and bustling through the halls. You are unsure and think everyone is watching you, wondering why you are here. You walk into court alone, and there, at the counsel's table, is your abuser with not one, not two, but three attorneys. You feel utterly alone.

Now, imagine that your lawyer walks into the room. She's a young woman around your same age who seems self-assured, and she greets you warmly. Suddenly, you are okay. You are still scared, still intimidated, but now you have someone there who is on your side.

The court hearing is terrifying; you must take the stand and testify about what happened. It is embarrassing, and you feel so vulnerable. But you also are prepared because your lawyer has talked you through this process. Even when opposing counsel questions you and your stomach is churning, you can get through it because you see your lawyer sitting there calmly, taking notes.

The hearing is over, and now you wait with your lawyer in the courtroom. The judge has said he will take the Order of Protection under advisement and will be out shortly with a decision. On the opposite side of the courtroom, the three attorneys and your abuser are laughing loudly, and they keep looking over at you. But you feel your lawyer sitting next to you, and she gently speaks with you, asking about your family and checking in on how your job is going.

The judge comes out of his chambers and announces his decision: you will receive your protection order. You start to cry and hug your attorney. As you leave the courthouse, you start thinking about rebuilding your life.

This is not a fictional story; this is real. The Legal Aid lawyer was a fresh-out-of-law-school attorney. Yes, the opposing party, in this case, hired three attorneys to defend him.

Imagine how different this story would have been if the young woman didn't have a lawyer.

Legal Aid Matters.

Our justice system was designed with the principle in mind that both parties would have access to an able, intelligent advocate. Because without this, the justice system becomes fundamentally broken and ultimately unjust. And who are the individuals least likely to be able to afford an attorney? They are our most vulnerable, the ones without a powerful voice; they are the ones who most need help.

Any level of comfort with the concept of only having an attorney on one side of a case will ultimately chip away at the very foundation of our justice system.

Thankfully, there are so many people dedicated to the idea of a fair and equitable system.

I want to thank the legal community we work with, who support us financially and volunteer their time. I want to thank our board members; they are engaged and care deeply about our mission. I want to thank the staff members that work here at Legal Aid. You will never find a more passionate, creative group of people who care deeply about the communities around them. Finally, I want to thank our clients. We are humbled by your resiliency, your appreciation; and your ability to wake up every morning and work for a better life for yourselves and your families.



Alicia M. Johnson

LEGAL AID OFFICES

Joplin:

The Joplin office provides services to six counties along Missouri's southwest border. The staff consists of six attorneys, three paralegals, one social worker, and one legal secretary. The cases handled by the Joplin office involve survivors of domestic abuse seeking orders of protection, marriage dissolution, paternity, custody, visitation, and child support orders. In addition, the staff handles cases involving consumer law, landlord/tenant law, guardianship cases, social security cases, and public benefits.

Many clients have problems beyond the immediate legal issues that brought them to a Legal Aid office. Staff members are active in various organizations that focus on specific issues affecting clients, including domestic violence, homelessness, and financial stability. Close partnerships with community agencies enable Legal Aid to help clients address these issues.

Kansas City - Central Office:

The staff includes 42 attorneys, 22 paralegals, 17 administrative staff, two intake specialists, 6 administrative assistants, one social worker and four Volunteer Attorney Project staff members. The Central office houses the administrative offices, including the executive office, fiscal, human resources, our Volunteer Attorney Project, IT, and development. Our **Municipal Court Defense Unit** is funded by a contract with the City of Kansas City Missouri. Attorneys represent clients charged with jailable offenses in the City's municipal courts.

Kansas City - West Office:

The West Office provides counsel and representation on issues ranging from housing to economic and community development to over 40 of Kansas City's historic neighborhoods. These services are provided by Legal Aid's bilingual staff located in the office on Southwest Boulevard. The staff includes four attorneys, four paralegals, and several volunteers. This dedicated team has provided these unique services for 44 years.

St. Joseph:

St. Joseph's staff includes four attorneys, three paralegals, and one administrative assistant serving an 18-county area in northwest Missouri. The office represents a mix of both rural and urban clients. Many of the cases involve family law, including marriage dissolution, custody, guardianships, and orders of protection. In addition, staff handle cases involving consumer issues, landlord/tenant law, unemployment benefits denials, utility shut offs, and other civil matters.

Warrensburg:

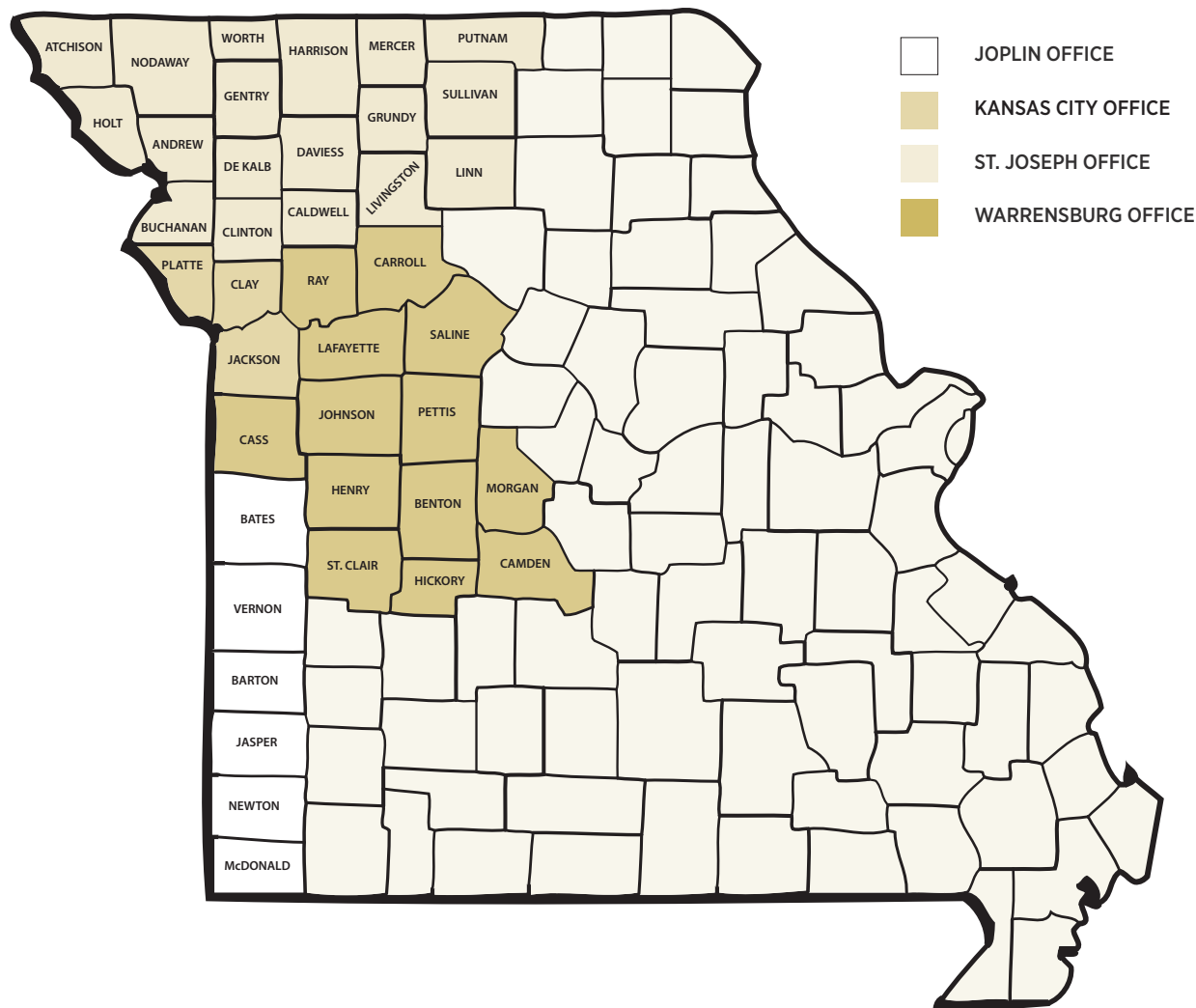
This office serves thirteen rural counties in west-central Missouri. The staff consists of four attorneys, four paralegals, and one administrative assistant. The Warrensburg staff handle cases involving consumer law, housing, domestic violence, landlord/tenant matters, and public benefits issues. The staff maintains a strong presence in the community and works directly with local agencies in several counties.



**Guess
what!**

We serve 40 counties in Missouri where more than 300,000 people live in poverty — most of whom you will never meet. But they are your neighbors. They live in the communities you call home.

OUR 40-COUNTY SERVICE AREA



KANSAS CITY CENTRAL OFFICE
4001 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BLVD.
SUITE 300
KANSAS CITY, MO 64130
816-474-6750

KANSAS CITY WEST OFFICE
920 SOUTHWEST BLVD.
KANSAS CITY, MO 64108
816-474-9868

JOPLIN
1027 S. MAIN
SUITE LL7
JOPLIN, MO 64801
417-782-1650/800-492-7095

ST. JOSEPH
706 FELIX STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MO 64501
816-364-2325/800-892-2101

WARRENSBURG
305 NORTH HOLDEN
WARRENSBURG, MO 64093
660-747-7101/800-892-2943

CORE PRACTICE AREAS



Consumer Protection:

Legal Aid helps clients, particularly seniors on fixed incomes, with consumer issues such as personal property taxes, auto fraud, debt collection practices, and other issues. We work with home loan servicers to prevent foreclosure and can stop foreclosure sales through bankruptcy or litigation. The Low Income Taxpayer Clinic assists taxpayers in resolving issues with the IRS and Missouri Department of Revenue.



Rental Housing Assistance:

Housing advocates assist those in public housing, federally subsidized housing, and private housing. We provide advice or representation to help clients avoid unlawful evictions, coordinate rental assistance, penalize illegal conduct by landlords, and recover wrongfully withheld security deposits. We also help residents when there is a widespread problem in a housing development to correct the problem for all the tenants, not just one individual or family.



Family Law/Domestic Violence Protection:

Legal Aid's Family Law advocates help survivors of domestic violence secure safety and stability by offering legal representation for orders of protection, divorce, paternity, custody, and child support. Attorneys focus on cases involving domestic violence and prioritize those with at-risk children.

Our representation, combined with community resource referrals, enables survivors to escape abuse and achieve physical and financial security.

CORE PRACTICE AREAS (CONTINUED)



Public Benefits:

Legal Aid helps people with issues related to state and federal public assistance programs, including MO Health-Net, SNAP, childcare, unemployment benefits, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicare. We provide representation and advice at hearings, negotiations, and appeals. We also do outreach to educate the community and improve access to healthcare, food and income support programs.



Economic Development:

Legal Aid's Economic Development Unit represents nonprofit community organizations in neighborhood improvement activities, including creating and preserving affordable housing in Kansas City.

Legal services include property acquisition, financing, title clearance, real estate closing and syndication, tax abatement, zoning, applications for tax exemption, non-profit formation, and contracts with service providers.



Human Rights Protection Team:

The Team consists of the Immigration Project and the Migrant Farmworkers Project. We provide quality, trauma-informed representation for refugees, asylees, permanent residents, and survivors of violent crimes, trafficking, and domestic violence.

The Immigration Project handles naturalization, visa processing, and Violence Against Women Act applications. The Migrant Farmworkers Project addresses wage theft, labor trafficking, housing, immigration, and safety concerns for low-income farmworkers throughout Missouri.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN RURAL SERVICE AREAS (ST. JOSEPH, WARRENSBURG & JOPLIN)

ADVOCATES FOR FAMILY HEALTH

JUSTICE IN THE SCHOOLS (KCPS, CENTER, GUADALUPE CENTERS CHARTER SCHOOLS,
HOGAN PREP, AND HICKMAN MILLS)

LEGAL AID IN THE LIBRARY

LOW INCOME TAXPAYER CLINIC

MEDICAL LEGAL PARTNERSHIP WITH KANSAS CITY CARE CLINIC

MENTAL HEALTHCARE ACCESS PROJECT

MIGRANT FARMWORKERS PROJECT

PROTECTING IMMIGRANT FAMILIES PROJECT (PROTECTIVE ORDERS)

RIGHT TO COUNSEL

URBAN HOMESTEADING PROJECT

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PROJECT SPECIAL PROGRAMS:

- ADOPT-A-NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT
- PRO BONO PROGRAM FOR BANKRUPTCY LITIGATION
- PRO SE DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE CLINICS
- SECOND SEASON AT LAW
- TRANSACTIONAL LAW PROJECT
- UMKC-LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI SELF-HELP LAW CLINIC
- WARRANT RELIEF PROJECT

SPECIALTY COURT PROGRAMS WITH KANSAS CITY MUNICIPAL COURT:

- DRUG COURT
- MENTAL HEALTH COURT
- REINSTATEMENT COURT
- VETERANS' TREATMENT COURT



Our neighbors with low incomes experience 1-3 civil legal problems each year. And these problems create huge barriers to life's necessities — necessities like housing, health care, food, and freedom from violence.

LEGAL AID STAFF*

CENTRAL OFFICE-KC

MICHELLE ALBANO
LANNA ALLEN
CARLY ARDUSSI
BRANDI ASHBY
ERIN BARTLING
JAMES BOYCE
STACEY BRAKE
KAITEE BROWN
KRISTIN BRUMM
AMELIA BUSHEK
TAMA BYRNES
SHANNON CARNEY
AMBER CASTRO
REBECCA CHAMBERS
GARRETT CHRISTENSEN
CHRISTOPHER CHUNG
LISA CLARK
ANNIE COLWELL
GENEVA COPELAND
KAREN CUTLIFF
CRISSY DEL PERCIO
KAYLA DELOACH
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KYLE RICHARDSON
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CODY RUSSELL
EDWIN SAGASTUME
LATRICIA SCOTT ADAMS
SILYA SHAW
JIM SMITH
WAYNE SMITH
GWEN SOWDER
CONNER SWANTON
RIVER TEMPELIN
ADRIEN TOWNSEND
MAURA WEBER
CANISHA WILLIAMS
YALANDA WILLIAMS

JOPLIN OFFICE

PAMELA ROYCHAUDHURY BHEND
JAMIE BLOOD
JOHN BOYER
SARAH CANADA
SHELLEY COX
AUTUMN DEER
SHANNON MCKINNEY
JEFFINER THOMPSON
MATTHEW WILLIAMS
CHRISTINA WILSON

ST. JOSEPH OFFICE

JESSICA CLARK
REBECCA COURTNEY
JOSHUA EMBERTON
JORDAN GREER
WILLIAM KARIKER
TIFFANY SADLER
JEREMY SWENSON

WARRENSBURG OFFICE

KIMBERLY BASINGER
AUDRIANA CALDWELL
ARTHUR DUNCAN, JR.
SUSAN HANRAHAN
RUSSELL JACKSON
CYNTHIA LOWRY
COURTNEY NOLL
KATELYN PERALES

WEST OFFICE-KC

JOCELYN COBOS
KAYLA HOGAN
EMILY JOYCE
ERIN KELLY
BRANDON MASON
KATIA RIVERA-COBIAN
DREW ROGERS
BAILEY WADDELL

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* As of March 2023



“I just want you to know what it means to have legal help and how you save peoples' lives by being there.”

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PROJECT

The Volunteer Attorney Project (VAP) places eligible clients with private attorneys who agree to provide free legal representation to those who otherwise could not afford it. The private attorneys who volunteer their time through VAP believe in the principle of equal access to the legal system, of making “justice for all” more than just a promise. They donate their time and considerable talents to make that ideal a reality.

2022 SNAPSHOT

 <p>5,926 HOURS OF LEGAL REPRESENTATION</p>	 <p>923 CLOSED CASES</p>	 <p>\$1,185,200 DONATED LEGAL SERVICES</p>
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The following attorneys accepted new VAP cases in 2022.

KANSAS CITY

ROBERT ABERNATHY
JASON AMERINE
CONRAD AMIROF
TERESA ANDERSON
TAYLOR ARRI
JENNIFER ARTMAN
KIMBERLY ATHIE
JOSEPH M BACKER
AMANDA BASRI
JACOB BAYER JR.
JOVANNA BEARDEN
KYLE BELEW
BRYCE BELL
DAVID BELL
JAMES BERGER
GRANT BERNING
VALERIE BLEVINS
POLLY BLOMQUIST
MATT BOCK
LESLIE BOE
JAMES BOYCE
DOUG BREYFOGLE
CATHERYN BROOKS
ARA BAILEY BROWN
DANIEL BROWN
LEE BRUMITT

BRETT BURMEISTER
KRISTI BURMEISTER
MICHELLE BUSCHART
JASON BUSH
SEAN COLLIGAN
MATT COOK
MATTHEW DAMERON
JOSEPH DANDURAND
JAMES DANIELS
ERIN DARK
GARDINER DAVIS
ROBERT DAVIS
MARGARET DEAN
TIMOTHY DENKER
CYNTHIA M DODGE
BRIAN DOHERTY
PRESTON DROBECK
COLEMAN ELLIS
JAMES ENSZ
ARTHUR FEDERMAN
ANDREW FELKER
RYAN FOLEY
MICHAEL FOSTER
SHEENA FOYE
MARSHA FRIEDMAN
KEHL FRIESEN
KEVIN GARRISON

LISA GARZA
BARBARA GLESNER FINES
SHANNON GORDON
CHARLES GOTSCHALL
L. ANNETTE GRIGGS
ANGELA HABEBULLAH
JONAH HALL
AHSLEY HARRISON
JOHN P. HASTINGS
MOLLY HASTINGS
KIM HATCH
JENNIFER HATCHER
JOHN HAYOB
DARCY HENNESSY
CHELSEA HERRING
RONALD HOLLIGER
WILLIAM HUBBARD
JUSTIN HUNT
TERESA HURLA
CHRISTOPHER ILIFF
ALICE JACKS
KRISTIN JACOBS ALEXANDER
STACEY JANSSEN
JEFF JARRETT
JANELLE JENNINGS-DRUM-
MOND
CARSTON JOHANNSEN

SARA JUAREZ
SETH KEENE
DANIEL KENNEDY
SUSAN KEPHART
KURT KING
D. BRYANT KING III
RYAN KNIPP
STEPHEN KROGMEIER
SEAN LAJAUNIE
LAURI LAUGHLAND
LESLIE LAWSON
STEVEN LONG
HEATHER LOTTMANN
LISA MACHICAO
KAY MADDEN
MIGUEL MADRIGAL
JEAN MANEKE
LINDSAY MATHEWS
JENNIFER MCELDERRY
RYAN MCELDERRY
CHRISTOPHER MCKINNEY
MARSHA MITCHEM
KELISEN MOLLOY
EMILY MONROE
RAYMOND MOORE
TERRY MOSTELLER
CLARE MURPHY SHAW

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PROJECT (CONTINUED)

ROGER NAIL
JOSEPH NASTASI
LINDA NEAL
DEWANNA NEWMAN
HEIDI NOTWOTNY
EJ ODIGWE
KEVIN ODROWSKI
JOSEPH F. O'HARA
BROOKE OLEARY
JOANNA B. ORSCHELN
DANA OUTLAW
KATHLEEN OVERTON
SCOTT OWENS
IAN PAGE
RYAN PATTON
EMILY PEDERSEN
JIM PETRIE
MEGAN PIERRE
JOHN R. PINK
ANNE-LINTON POND HEN-
DRICKSON
STACI PRATT
WILLIAM PRUGH
JENNIFER REAGAN
ROBERT RICHARDS
ASHLEY RICKET
ANDREA RIDLEN
TRACY L. ROBINSON
TODD RUSKAMP
JOHN P RYAN, JR.
NEIL SADER
SAMANTHA SADER
MICHAEL S. SANTSCHI
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SCOTT SEITTER
EMILY SELLERS
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MICHAELA SHELTON
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GARRETT SOLOMON
RIAHUYIAUH SORRELL
MICHAEL SPIEGEL
TRACY BARNES SPRADLIN
NADER JACK STANFORD
VANESSA STARKE
DANA STRUEBY
MEGAN STUMPH-TURNER
AUSTIN TAPURO
ANDREW TAYLOR
ADAM TEEL
LUCY HAWLEY TERRY
KRISTEN THURMOND
BRANDI TOTTA
CHRIS TROPPITO
ANGELA TRUESDALE
D. PAUL TYSON
DENNIS WAITS
PAIGE WAITS
ANNETTE WALLACE
DANIELLE WALLACE
VICTOR WEBER
BERNARD WEINAND
THOMAS WEST
B. JEROME WHEELER
FRED WICKHAM
DANA WILDERS
EDWARD WILLIAMS
STEVE WOLCOTT
LARRY WRIGHT
LOUIE WRIGHT
WILLIAM YOCUM
DANIEL YOZA
RACHEL ZENDER
ERIC ZIEGENHORN

ADOPT-A-NEIGHBORHOOD

JOHN AISENBREY
BRAD ANDERSON
NICOLETTE ARMSTRONG
BRIAN BAGGOTT
ANNA BERMAN
NICK BERTRON
MEGAN CARROLL
TIM CONGROVE

RICH COOK
DAN CRANSHAW
ASHLEY CRUSAFILLI
SUNNY DHAROD
MARK ELLISON
LOGAN FANCHER
KYLE FERDEN
PAUL FLUCKE
DAN FLANIGAN
DYLAN FOTIADIS
BEN GAMBLE
KAREN GARRETT
RACHEL GROVES
ROBERT HAMMEKE
ANNE HANNAH
WILL HENDERSON
KYLE HERTEL
JACKSON HOBBS
TEDRICK HOUSH
NIKKI HUTSON
JORDAN IFLAND
ERIC JOHNSON
TAYLOR KARA
TODD LASALA
LISA MARTIN
MICHAEL MCGEE
LUCI MCMURRAY
CALEB MICKY
NEIL MILLER
R.B. MILLER
ALEXIA NORRIS
DEVAN O'BRYAN
KRISTEN PAGE
REILEY PANKRATZ
RAJ PATEL
EMILY PEDERSEN
ROBIN PERKINS
RACHEL PETERSON
WESLEY PLUVIOSE-PHILIP
AMANDA RAPP
REX REDLINGSHAFFER
MARTY RICE
JULIAN SANSANO
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If you would like to join or learn more about the Volunteer Attorney Project, visit lawmo.org and click the Volunteer tab.

VAP CASES OPENED IN 2022

VEHICLE TITLE/ REGISTRATION  5%	 6% PROBATE	CONSUMER  11%	 3% IMMIGRATION	HOUSING  25%
2% SMALL CLAIMS	6% BANKRUPTCY	6% ADULT/MINOR GUARDIANSHIP	30% FAMILY LAW	6% OTHER

MEET IRENE

Sadly, there are individuals in our society who exploit the elderly for financial gain, underestimating their ability to seek justice. Even when legal options are available, it requires a compassionate and skilled lawyer to champion the victims' rights in a manner that empowers them.

Irene, living only on Social Security, took her car to a repair shop because the sensor lights kept coming on and the car would shudder when she drove it. Due to her limited resources, she asked the repair shop to call her with an estimate before making any repairs. According to Irene, the agreement was to pay \$100 to check the car and wait for her approval to repair the vehicle.

Irene didn't hear back from the repair shop for two days, so she contacted them. They informed her the repairs were completed. She had not been given the opportunity to have an estimate or consent to the repairs as requested. The repair shop demanded payment of \$621.89 to release the vehicle. With the financial assistance of family members, Irene was able to retrieve her car.

Irene immediately noticed her car still had the same issues, and a different auto repair shop confirmed that the original shop did nothing to address them. Irene returned to the first repair shop, but the owner would not talk to her. The mechanic said he "just repaired what the owner told him to do." She couldn't get any other answers from the shop and had no money to repair her vehicle.

Irene contacted Legal Aid, and they assigned her case to the Volunteer Attorney Project. A volunteer attorney agreed to take her case and sent a demand letter to the repair shop, and he received no response. He then filed a suit for negligence, negligent misrepresentation, negligent misrepresentation by omission, and violation of the Missouri Merchandising Practices Act. Ultimately, the VAP attorney obtained a full refund for Irene.



“I was unable to take care of this on my own and didn’t have the money to hire an attorney.”

2022 DONATIONS & 2020-22 PLEDGES

Your support helps ensure fair & equal access to justice for our neighbors in crisis or experiencing poverty.



Defenders of Justice are the law firms that donated at the \$325 per attorney level each year of our 2020-2022 Justice for All Bar Campaign.

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Continued on page 33

* Individual Donations \$50 and above

**Designated to the Legal Aid of Western Missouri Endowment

Meet Teresa

TERESA DIDN'T HAVE TO NAVIGATE THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION BUREAUCRACY ALONE.

After her MO HealthNet (Medicaid) was canceled, Teresa, a veteran widow, reached out to Legal Aid for assistance. The legal issue arose when Teresa terminated her husband's VA pension and opted to receive his Social Security benefit.

The Veterans Administration delayed processing her termination request and continued to issue checks. This caused Teresa problems with her Medicaid eligibility and created a VA overpayment problem.

Teresa attempted to resolve the problem on her own. She even asked for assistance from her legislative representative, but the problem persisted. Teresa's case handler referred Teresa to Legal Aid. A Legal Aid attorney was able to help Teresa notify the appropriate VA entity. The payments stopped, and Teresa reached an agreement with the VA regarding the overpayments.

With the VA issue resolved, Teresa was able to reapply for the much-needed medical coverage.



**Guess
what!**

Because of a lack of funding, we are forced to turn away nearly half of the applicants who qualify for our free legal services. This is the hardest part of our job...not being able to assist everyone who needs our help.

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The Generous Associates Drive is a month-long competition run by associates to see which firm can raise the most money to benefit Legal Aid. The 2022 Drive raised \$9,000. **We hope to involve more firms in our 2023 Drive. To learn how your firm can get involved, contact Karen Cutliff at kcutliff@lawmo.org.**

2022 Participating Firms: Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner - \$1,725, Husch Blackwell LLP - \$2,175, Lathrop GPM - \$1,125, Polsinelli PC - \$3,300, and Spencer Fane - \$775.

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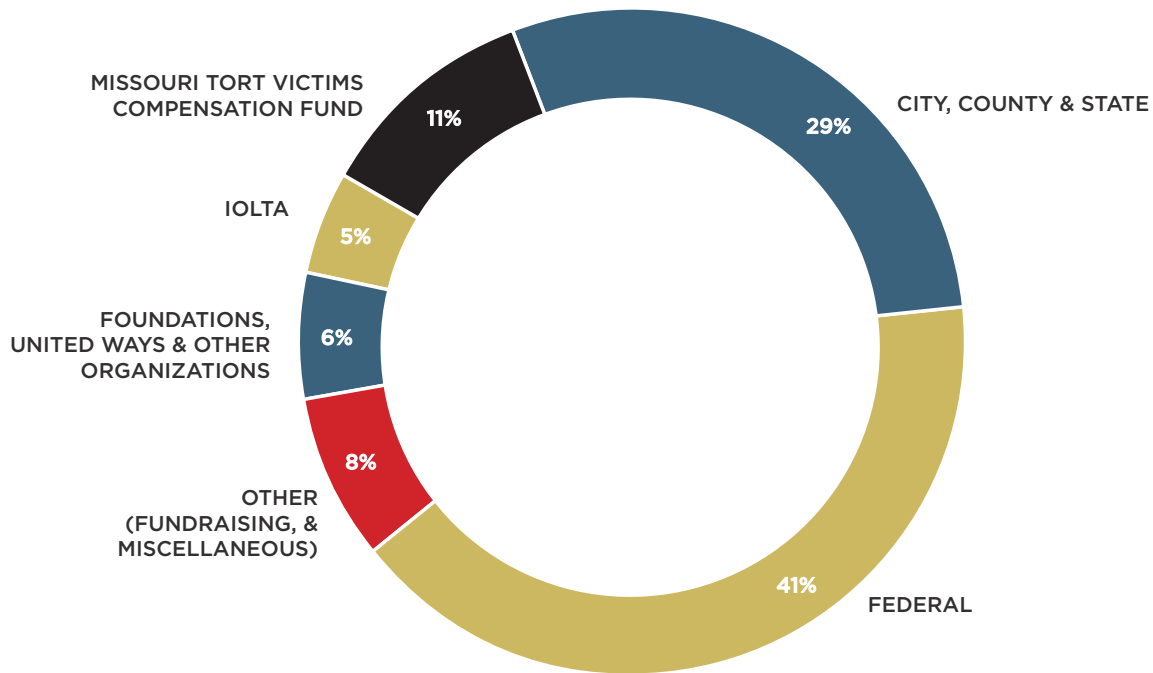
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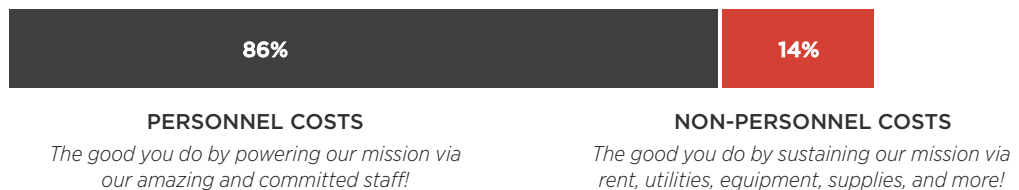
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2022 REVENUE



2022 TOTAL REVENUE = \$11,382,881*

2022 EXPENSES



2022 TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS = \$9,797,356

2022 TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL COSTS = \$1,585,525

2022 TOTAL EXPENSES = \$11,382,881

* The graphic above represents categories of revenue applied to expenses incurred this year. We received a significant allocation from the Missouri Tort Victims' Compensation fund of \$41,156,983 in June of 2022. Surplus revenue from this source has been transferred to reserves. The over-arching vision of this reserve fund is to sustain our mission through the pragmatic balance of short-term and long-term needs.



2022 Annual Report

LEGAL AID OF WESTERN MISSOURI
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