

Maryland Legal Services Corporation Report Finds Civil Legal Aid Yields Nearly 13-to-1 Return on Investment

Baltimore, MD (March 1, 2025)- A new economic impact study reveals that for every dollar invested in civil legal aid services in Maryland, the state sees a return of \$12.92 in immediate and long-term financial benefits. The study, conducted by Community Services Analysis, LLC, underscores the critical role of civil legal services in generating significant socio-economic benefits while reducing the burden on government agencies and social services.

Funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC), legal aid providers across the state delivered 75,968 legal services in 2023, with a total economic impact of \$505.4 million. The study found that these services provide substantial financial savings and economic benefits by securing rightful income and benefits for residents, preventing homelessness, protecting domestic violence survivors, and improving overall economic stability for Maryland communities.

Key Findings:

- Immediate Gross Direct Value of Services: \$133.1 million – representing the fair market cost of legal aid services plus financial settlements and court awards secured for clients.
- Long-Term Economic Impact: \$424.6 million – reflecting cost savings in areas such as reduced homelessness, improved healthcare outcomes, and lower law enforcement costs.
- Total Gross Economic Impact: \$557.7 million.
- Total Net Economic Impact: \$505.4 million, after adjusting for unrealized values.
- Total MLSC Funding in 2023: \$39.1 million.

The study highlights the far-reaching benefits of civil legal aid in Maryland, including:

- Securing millions in Social Security, disability, and unemployment benefits for residents.
- Preventing evictions and foreclosures, reducing homelessness and associated government costs.
- Protecting victims of domestic violence by obtaining protective orders and securing child support.
- Saving taxpayers money through reduced healthcare, law enforcement, and social services costs.

"This study confirms what we've long known—investing in civil legal aid is not just the right thing to do, it is a smart economic investment that strengthens Maryland's communities," said Michelle Siri, Executive Director and CEO of MLSC. "At a time when the state is facing a significant budget deficit, we

simply cannot afford not to fund civil legal aid. Cutting funding would cost Maryland far more in emergency services, homelessness prevention, and public benefits than we save. With a 1,292% return on investment, every dollar we put into legal aid services delivers nearly \$13 in benefits to Maryland families and taxpayers."

As state policymakers and stakeholders look for ways to improve public services and reduce costs, this study provides clear evidence that expanding civil legal aid funding is a cost-effective solution with far-reaching economic and social benefits.

To access the full report, visit <https://tinyurl.com/bdrby9c4>

[About the Maryland Legal Services Corporation](#)

The Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) is dedicated to ensuring equal access to justice for low-income Marylanders by funding civil legal aid providers across the state. Since its founding, MLSC has helped millions of Maryland residents secure the legal representation they need to achieve justice and economic security.

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