

Colorado Legal Services celebrates the vital work of pro bono attorneys in Colorado's equal justice ecosystem

CLS opens over 1,000 cases to help low-income Coloradans in September

Oct. 25, 2023 (DENVER) – Colorado Legal Services, Colorado's statewide legal aid nonprofit, is celebrating the work of pro bono attorneys during the 2023 National Celebration of Pro Bono. Each October, legal organizations across the U.S. take time to recognize the important contributions of attorneys who dedicate their time to helping others.

"Being able to refer a client to a pro bono attorney to prepare a simple will, settle a real property dispute, or protect a client's rights as an employee allows us to fill gaps in our services and provide a broader range of civil legal aid to our clients," said Lindsay Marshall, managing attorney of the Colorado Legal Services Durango office. "This is especially important in a rural area where the availability of private attorneys is so limited."

At Colorado Legal Services, hundreds of pro bono attorneys provide their expertise and resources to handle cases and to answer questions from vulnerable client community members, freeing CLS attorneys to focus on longer, more complex cases for low-income Coloradans.

Jonathan Greschler, a retired attorney who works pro bono for Colorado Legal Services and specializes in unemployment matters, said he enjoys the flexibility and work.

"Colorado Legal Services' clients are uniformly grateful that someone with knowledge and ability took the time to help," Greschler said. "I represent folks who have no other good options. I set my own appropriate level of time commitment and area of practice, which keeps me as engaged as I choose and does not impede my life."

Pro bono attorneys also volunteer to provide legal advice at call-in events and engage in other community education events.

For example, the monthly Call4All call-an-attorney events, a collaboration between Colorado Legal Services and the law firm of Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, serve residents of 39 rural and frontier counties in Colorado. Since its start in 2016, roughly 80 Call4All monthly call-in clinics have served more than 525 senior and rural low-income clients. Because not all Coloradans have easy access to a library or other location where legal advice events might otherwise be held, the opportunity to call and speak with an attorney is vital for ensuring that these Coloradans access to legal advice.

Attorneys statewide also volunteer their time to make know-your-rights basic presentations on topics such as divorce, custody, wills, or tenant rights, which educate clients and community members about these issues and raise awareness about Colorado Legal Services as a resource.

"Our longtime work with pro bono attorneys is more than just a partnership and collaborative effort; it is a vital part of our program and service model for clients," said Matt Baca, executive director of Colorado Legal Services. "We are grateful daily for the commitment our attorneys demonstrate to serving

Coloradans who otherwise may go unrepresented or face complex legal questions alone.”

Colorado Legal Services also enlists the help of private attorneys who work for a reduced rate when more clients need representation than the organization can provide, due to limited resources.

In September 2023, Colorado Legal Services opened 1,058 cases to provide legal help to low-income Coloradans, according to [its monthly report released today](#). The top concerns from Coloradans in September were housing (489), family and safety (233), and consumer (117) matters. Housing matters could include defending against evictions; negotiating rent agreements with landlords to help people stay in their homes; helping tenants learn their rights regarding security deposits and conditions impacting the habitability of their homes; and directing clients to rental assistance and community resources. Family and safety matters include representation of domestic violence survivors in divorce, custody, and protection order matters.

About us

Colorado Legal Services is Colorado’s statewide nonprofit legal aid program providing civil legal assistance—which does not include criminal or traffic matters—to low-income individuals and older Coloradans throughout the state. Its 13 offices provide free legal assistance in a broad variety of legal areas, including eviction defense, consumer protection, services to survivors of serious crime and human trafficking, representation for domestic violence survivors, and many others.

Almost 1.4 million Coloradans qualify financially for CLS’s services. CLS’s current staff of 85 attorneys and 48 paralegals is supplemented by a robust private attorney involvement program. Learn more at www.coloradolegalservices.org.

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