

Department: County Human Services

Program Contact: Peggy Samolinski

Program Offer Type: Existing

Program Offer Stage: Proposed

Related Programs:
Program Characteristics:
Executive Summary

Multnomah County is in a severe housing crisis and many low-income residents lack housing and/or economic stability. Having legal issues and not having financial resources to address them are roadblocks to overall stability. It can prevent access to housing, employment, education and community involvement. Black, Indigenous, Native and Communities of Color and people with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by debt and legal barriers because of systemic racism and discrimination. Legal services and supports help remove legal issues that may be barriers to opportunity and stability.

Program Description

ISSUE: Residents experiencing poverty, in particular Black, Indigenous and Communities of Color and people with disabilities often experience discrimination and more frequent contact with the criminal justice system. This systemic racism results in legal and financial barriers that prevent them from accessing housing, employment, education and other opportunities.

PROGRAM GOAL: Legal Services and Supports provide free legal services and advice to participants who need assistance with fines, fees and other legal issues. By reducing and/or eliminating the legal issues, it removes barriers to housing, employment, education, etc. and thus increases the potential for stability and opportunity

PROGRAM ACTIVITY: This program uses two strategies: Legal Service Days and Community Legal Clinics.

1) Legal Service Days: District Attorneys, Judges, Public Defenders and Social Services agencies collaborate to host legal clinics which help clients reduce or eliminate fees, fines and legal barriers. These legal clinics are located virtually, and when in-person, throughout the County, close to low-income residents and Communities of Color. This program has continued throughout the pandemic and there has been an increase in the number of community members served compared to pre-pandemic in-person events.

2) Community Legal Clinics: To increase trust and engagement, contracted legal services staff Attorneys work with culturally specific case managers and County program staff. and receive referrals to no cost barrier screening, representation and legal services. Participants are engaged in the Multnomah Stability Initiative (MSI), and the Family Reunification Program (FUP). Legal supports depend on the individual need and include expungement, eviction prevention, housing voucher hearings, reduction of fees and fines, drivers' license restoration, felony reduction, appeal of exclusions, gang designations and other legal barrier removal cases.

Performance Measures

Measure Type	Primary Measure	FY22 Actual	FY23 Budgeted	FY23 Estimate	FY24 Offer
Output	Number of participants engaged in services ¹	916	2,500	1,175	1175
Outcome	Percentage of participants receiving legal advice or services resulting in barrier reduction	100%	90%	90%	90%
Output	Amount of fees and fines waived or reduced	\$2,468,191	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

Performance Measures Descriptions

¹Output is a combined total of individuals engaged in legal services and group based legal service days. FY23 estimate is higher due to one-time-only funds; these are not expected to continue into FY24.

Legal / Contractual Obligation

Revenue/Expense Detail

	Adopted General Fund	Adopted Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
Program Expenses	2023	2023	2024	2024
Contractual Services	\$431,914	\$0	\$462,342	\$0
Total GF/non-GF	\$431,914	\$0	\$462,342	\$0
Program Total:	\$431,914		\$462,342	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Program Revenues				
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation of Revenues

Significant Program Changes

Last Year this program was: FY 2023: 25131 YFS - Legal Services & Supports