

Serving Veterans Webinar Series

Best Practices for Service Delivery

September 24, 2019

Can't hear us? Click
the grey phone button
to connect to audio



Today's Presenters

Casey Chiappetta

Senior Program Associate, Legal Services
National Legal Aid & Defender Association
c.chiappetta@nlada.org

Radhika Singh

Chief, Civil Legal Services
National Legal Aid & Defender Association
r.singh@nlada.org

Can't hear us? Click
the grey phone button
to connect to audio



Jen Trott

Senior Research Scientist
National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership
jtrott@gwu.edu

Patrice Paldino

Executive Director
Coast to Coast Legal Aid
patricepaldino@legalaid.org



Agenda

1. Other webinars in this series
2. Delivery Models - MLP
 - An overview of MLPs
 - Helpful resources
3. National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership
 - VA MLP Readiness Guide
4. Coast to Coast Legal Aid & SSVF
5. Q & A

Can't hear us? Click
the grey phone button
to connect to audio



Previous Webinar: Research & Funding

- Webinar [linked here](#)¹
- What does the research say?
 - In the [VA's CHALENG](#) survey of homeless veterans, four of the highest unmet needs were related to legal assistance.² These issues were related to child support, eviction and foreclosure, restoring a driver's license, and outstanding warrants and fines
- What funding is available?
 - SSVF, VETS, Grant Per Diem, and HUD-VASH

1. <http://www.nlada.org/node/26791>

2. <https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/CHALENG-2018-factsheet-508.pdf>

Upcoming Webinar: Screening & Technology

- October 1, 2019 at 3pm ET
- Why screen? [Knowing about a military background](#) can help identify resources and benefits.¹ But military background is not always spontaneously shared
- **Hear from the VA** on why screening is important
- **Hear from Pine Tree Legal Assistance (Stateside Legal)** and learning about other legal technologies that can help veterans
- Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/vetweb2>

1. <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders/screening.asp>

What is an MLP?

- MLPs embed lawyers in health care settings
 - When a health care team learns of a patient's impending eviction or a mold and rat-infested living situation, staff can refer patients directly for legal services
- MLPs address the social determinants of health: In the U.S. and across the world, [health is strongly correlated](#) with where we live, how much money we make, and our educational background¹
- Lawyers who work in MLPs typically focus in areas of housing and landlord-tenant issues, income maintenance, and domestic violence

Read a research brief on how legal aid helps veterans and improves health here:
<https://www.american.edu/spa/jpo/toolkit/module-1.cfm>



1. https://www.who.int/social_determinants/sdh_definition/en/

What can MLPs do?

- Improve veteran's mental health
 - “A major finding of this study was that veterans who received medical-legal partnership services showed significant improvements in mental health within the first three months and continued to show these improvements at twelve months, at which time they also showed increases in income and days housed as their legal issues were resolved” ([p. 2202](#))¹
- A [report](#) finds MLPs recover benefits and increase income:²
 - The Inner City Law Center partnered with the VA West Los Angeles Medical Center. They recovered \$948,005 in benefits and increased income per veteran by \$7,583;
 - The Connecticut Veterans Legal Center reduced the debt of veterans by \$700,000, stabilized housing for 82 veterans and returned \$66,207 in housing costs; and
 - LegalHealth in New York City helped veterans receive \$468,294 in one-time benefits, \$16,863 in monthly benefits for a total of \$670,650 in benefits.

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29200329>

2. <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-Invisible-Battlefield.pdf>

What can MLPs do? (continued)

- Patients receiving legal services at an MLP reported reduced stress levels and improved health¹
- When civil legal needs were addressed in an MLP, inpatient and emergency department use of high-utilizing patients dropped 50 percent and health care costs decreased 45 percent²
- When parents have access to legal services in a pediatric healthcare setting, children's health and access to food improved³



Resources to learn more about MLPs

- Learn how MLPs can be funded [here](#)¹
- Read about the [social determinants of health](#) that shape the need for MLPs²
- Policymakers agree that MLPs are an essential partner in supporting veterans. Read more [here](#)³
- Read about how [MLPs impact clients' lives](#)⁴
- The VA has [a list of free legal clinics in VA facilities](#).⁵ It identifies those that are VA Medical-Legal Partnerships

1. <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/mlp-resources/financing/> 2. <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/need/>
3. <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/response/> 4. <https://medical-legalpartnership.org/impact/>
5. <https://www.va.gov/ogc/docs/legalservices.pdf>

The VA Medical-Legal Partnership Model

Jennifer Trott, MPH
Senior Research Scientist
jtrott@email.gwu.edu

National Center for Medical  Legal Partnership

AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

VA Support for Legal Services

- **Directive 2011-034:**
 - VA issued directive that advises VA Medical Centers on how to refer homeless/at-risk Veterans for legal services, and provide space to legal services organizations.
- **Wrap-around supportive services:**
 - Housing vouchers through HUD's Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program.
 - Linkage to supportive services for justice-involved Veterans through the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) program.
- **Internal VA MLP Task Force:**
 - Assists VAMCs with the development of new VA MLPs.
- **Goal of 100% VA Health Care Facilities having access to a VA MLP – Acting VA Deputy Secretary and General Counsel**

VA Legal Services by the Numbers

- **31** VA-based MLPs (up from 1 in 2009)
- **80** Veteran-specific law school clinics
- **140** free legal clinics at VA Medical Centers

OPINION

Improving Veterans' lives through partnerships that make a difference

by Sec. Robert Wilkie | August 29, 2019 12:00 AM



But at the local level, law schools and law firms are donating their time by sending people to volunteer at VA hospitals to help those veterans who might be struggling with legal problems.

Bob Woodruff Foundation VA MLP Convening – May 2019



New Resources:

- MLPs Serving Veterans: History, Growth & Progress (NCMLP)
- VA MLP Readiness Guide (NCMLP)
- Policy Scan (NLADA)

VA MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP READINESS GUIDE

Building and Strengthening
Medical-Legal Partnerships for Veterans

June 2019



TABLE OF CONTENTS

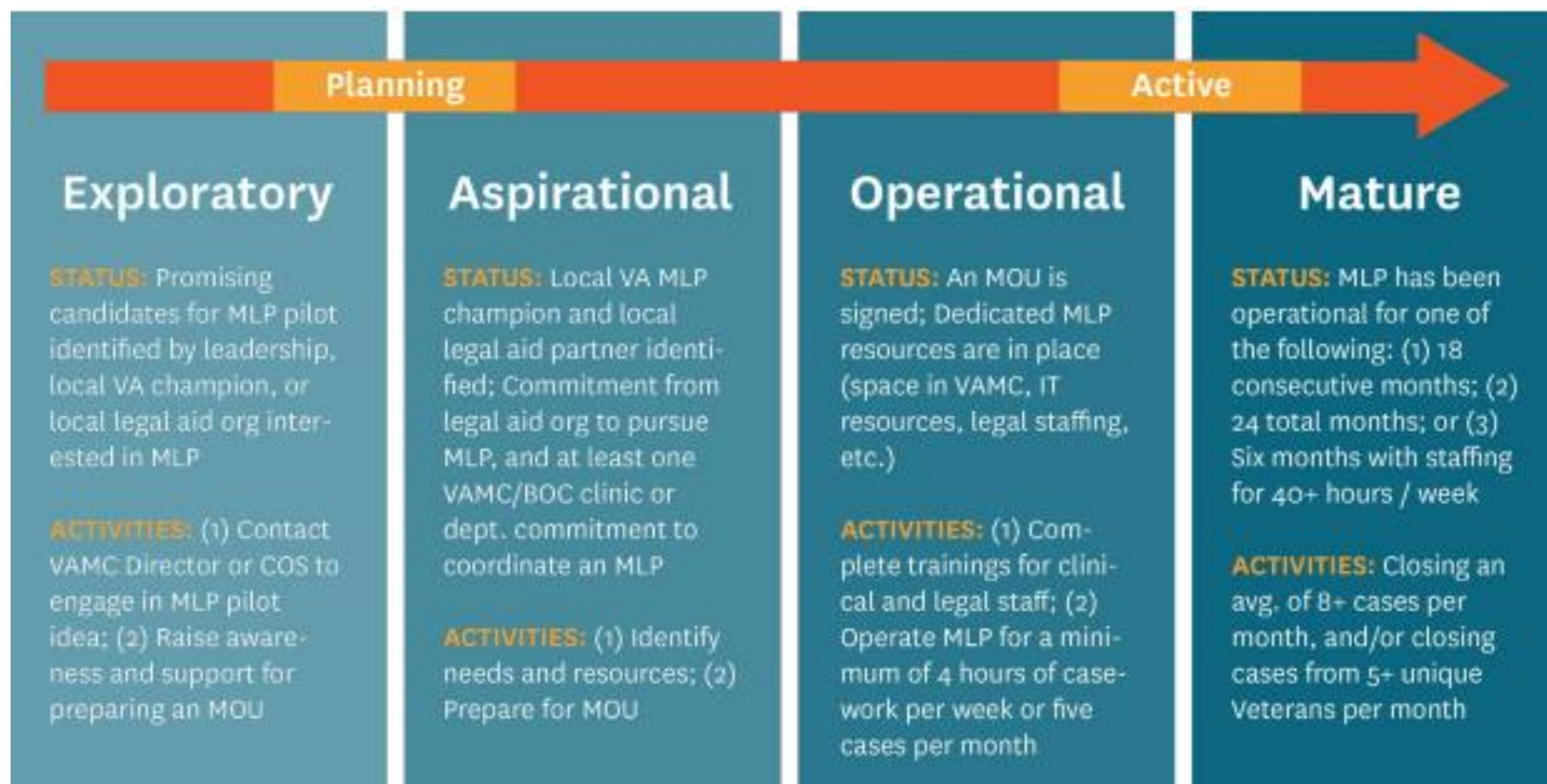
Before You Begin: What You Need to Know about VA Medical-Legal Partnerships	1
Part I: Laying the Foundation for a Medical-Legal Partnership	3
Step 1: Defining your Target Population	4
Step 2: Identifying a Legal Partner	10
Step 3: Funding the Medical-Legal Partnership	18
Step 4: Developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Understanding Information Sharing and Consent	23
Step 5: Making the MLP Visible and Accessible	28
Part II: Screening Veterans for Legal Needs	33
Part III: Training Clinical and Other Staff on Meeting Veterans' Legal Needs	38
Part IV: Keys to VA MLP Success	42
Appendices	46

- **Drawn from interviews** with VA MLPs across the country.
- **Reviewed by Expert panel** of VA clinicians and social workers, and VA MLP lawyers.
- **Step by step guide to building an MLP** with stories, tools and examples.






Top 10 Things to Know About Building a VA MLP

1. MLPs are highly flexible in that the legal services they provide can be tailored to your VAMC's clinical priorities, a specific clinic, or population.
2. MLPs can be paired with other existing programs (e.g. social work, Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams, behavioral health) to achieve better outcomes for Veterans who might be facing social issues with legal underpinnings.
3. In MLPs, legal staff provide direct legal services to Veterans, but also often engage in activities such as training VAMC staff on legal issues impacting Veterans, conducting topic-specific legal clinics with Veterans, and more. VAMC staff may also provide training or guidance to MLP lawyers about how to best serve Veterans, such as using trauma-informed language when discussing legal issues with Veterans.
4. Under VHA Directive 2011-34, VAMCs are encouraged to make space available for legal services providers to assist Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. In addition to the MLP, VAMCs must also make Veterans aware of other local legal resources available to them.
5. Co-location of an MLP lawyer(s) at the VAMC site for meetings with Veterans and clinical team member consultations is often said to be key to the visibility and use of legal services, though other models (e.g. telelegal services) may be explored. VA Form 10-611 (a revocable license) must be completed for a legal partner to use VA space.
6. Building a VA MLP team is strongly advised. Participants of this team should include VAMC staff who can help guide the implementation and growth of the MLP and provide support to the MLP lawyer(s). This multidisciplinary group may include a clinical champion, a social worker, behavioral health specialist, administrator, frontline staff, and/or a Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) specialist.
7. The VA Office of General Counsel and VAMC Facility Director must approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the VAMC and legal services partner prior to launching a VA MLP.
8. Currently, the VA cannot provide any financial support for legal services unless explicitly included in regulatory statutes (e.g., see Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program).
9. MLP lawyers must become VA-accredited prior to providing legal assistance related to VA benefits.
10. There is a VA MLP Internal Taskforce that can assist VAMCs with the development of new VA MLPs.

The VA MLP Pipeline



How Legal Services Help Address the SDOH of Veterans

Common Social Determinant of Health	How Legal Services Can Help Veterans	Impact of Legal Services on Health / Health Care
<p>INCOME Resources to meet daily basic needs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal benefits denials, e.g. food stamps, social security, and disability benefits • Address consumer issues (debt, bankruptcy, student loans, credit history) • Resolve benefits overpayment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing a Veteran's income means s/he makes fewer trade-offs between affording basic needs, such as food or housing, and health care, including medications. 2. Financial stability ensures that Veterans have a place to live and can focus on their health.
<p>HOUSING & UTILITIES A healthy physical environment</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure housing subsidies • Improve substandard conditions • Prevent evictions or foreclosures • Protect against utility shut-off 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A stable, decent, affordable home helps Veterans avoid costly emergency room visits related to homelessness. 2. Consistent housing, heat and electricity help Veterans follow their medical treatment plans.
<p>EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT Quality educational and job opportunities</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent and remedy employment discrimination • Enforce workplace rights • Secure service-connected education benefits • Secure unemployment compensation or unpaid wages 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A quality education is one of the single greatest predictors of a person's adult health. 2. Consistent employment helps provide money for food and safe housing, which also helps avoid costly emergency health care services.
<p>LEGAL STATUS Access to jobs and VA benefits</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure discharge status upgrades and record corrections for eligible Veterans • Secure VA benefits for eligible Veterans • Secure proper identification • Clear driving record problems 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helping a Veteran change their discharge status or correct their records helps make access to VA benefits possible, including health care and other benefits. 2. Securing proper identification and records is essential to helping Veterans secure stable employment.
<p>PERSONAL & FAMILY STABILITY Safe homes and social support</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address family issues, e.g. divorce, child custody, guardianship, and visitation • Help modify child support agreements to be consistent with income and resources • Assist with advance planning, e.g. wills and power of attorney 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stable family relationships significantly reduce stress and allow for better decision-making, including decisions related to health care. 2. A modified child support agreement stabilizes a Veteran's income and prevents arrests from unpaid child support, which reduces criminal convictions, incarcerations, and criminal records.

Overview of Legal Partners

	NONPROFIT LEGAL SERVICES ORGS	LAW SCHOOL CLINICS	PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES
National leaders	Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA)	Association of American Law Schools (AALS)	American Bar Association (ABA)
Scope	133 LSC-funded organizations; 800+ non-LSC-funded organizations	170+ law schools offering clinics	900+ pro bono programs
Funding	\$374 million in LSC grants and \$600 million additional (est.)	\$75 million (est.)	\$180 million (est.)
Case priorities	Focus on basic needs: housing, income, safety. Non-LSC funded organizations may have a greater focus on policy matters.	Vary widely	Vary widely

Funding for VA MLPs

- Federal Funding
- VA Funding Streams
- Legal Services Corporation
- State Administered Funds
- Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts
- Fellowships
- Private Funders

Keys to VA MLP Success

1. **Gaining buy-in and forging valuable relationships** is critical to the partnership.
2. **MLP presence at the VAMC** is everything.
3. **Funding the MLP** is essential, but it also hard work.
4. **Start** off on the right foot.
5. Don't be afraid to **ask for help**.

VA MLP NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Early on in their MLP implementation, the VA Maine Healthcare System Togus VAMC and Pine Tree Legal Assistance developed an all staff survey to gather information on staff perceptions and awareness of Veterans' legal needs. The results of the survey were used to inform the MLP on how to target its resources in terms of serving Veterans, as well as how to focus its training of VAMC staff in legal concepts that they reported less familiarity with. The assessment generated initial awareness for the MLP, and received a healthy response rate due to the Medical Director agreeing to personally distribute the survey along with a message about the importance of the assessment to staff (To view the survey instrument, see Appendix A1: MLP Needs Assessment for VA Maine Healthcare System).

Medical-Legal Partnership Needs Assessment for VA Maine Healthcare System

Medical-Legal Partnership Needs Assessment

Purpose. Pine Tree Legal Assistance's medical-legal partnership seeks to provide legal care for unmet health-harming civil legal needs affecting low-income veterans receiving healthcare at a VA Maine Healthcare System location. This partnership will focus primarily on veterans receiving healthcare at a **Primary Care clinic** or a **Mental Health clinic** within the VA Maine Healthcare System.

We're asking for your input to better understand the legal needs of veterans in Maine. The information you provide will help us develop our program to best meet the unmet legal needs of veterans receiving healthcare at a VA Maine Healthcare System location. Working collaboratively with you will help us identify and remedy various health-harming legal needs. This will lead to improved overall well-being and health for veterans in Maine. We appreciate your time.

This survey will take 15 minutes to complete. We will not ask for your name or other personally identifying information. This survey is **voluntary** and **anonymous**. We would appreciate if you answer each question and base your answers on your current understanding or level of knowledge.

1. What is your current position? *

- Executive/Top Level Manager (Executive Director, CEO, Commander)
- Administrative/Mid-Level Manager (Program Coordinator, Program Supervisor)
- Clinician (Social Worker, Nurse, Outreach Worker, Doctor)
- Other - Write In (Required) *

2. What is your primary department location? *

- Primary Care
- Primary Care Women's Health
- Mental Health
- Other - Write In (Required) *

BUILDING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR MLP

Intentionally written into the VA Maine Healthcare System Togus VA Medical Center- Pine Tree Legal Assistance MLP memorandum of understanding was an advisory council to collaboratively guide the work of the MLP. The advisory council is made up of a diverse and representative group of staff members involved in the MLP. The initial advisory council included the VA medical center director, physicians from primary care and mental health – two of the focus areas where the MLP was focusing its efforts – a nurse, a social worker, and a housing case manager to ensure that all areas that the MLP is focused on are involved. Through the advisory council, the MLP ensures that important input and feedback from those who are actually seeing what is happening on the ground is raised and can be addressed. Ideas about improvements or changes to better address Veterans' legal needs are discussed among all departments associated with the MLP, including frontline staff and leadership, which enhances interdepartmental collaboration and MLP buy-in from all clinical staff.

- c. **Legal Assistance Limited to Certain Issues.** PTLA staff and volunteers shall provide legal assistance primarily in legal issue areas that have been identified in the initial needs assessment as unmet legal needs adversely affecting the health and stability of veterans. PTLA shall retain the right to determine case acceptance priorities, based on capacity, conflicts of interest, and Legal Services Corporation regulations.
- d. **Training Healthcare Staff Members.** PTLA will provide initial training to healthcare staff members on PTLA's services, the legal clinic, the role of healthcare staff members and the medical-legal partnership model. Subsequent trainings on substantive areas of law to ensure unmet legal needs are appropriately identified will be held monthly or as needed and as mutually agreed.
- e. **Development of Tools for Healthcare Staff Members.** PTLA will develop specific tools to enable healthcare staff members to recognize issues appropriate for legal assistance including, but not limited to, a legal needs screener form.
- f. **Establishment of Advisory Group.** PTLA will establish a medical-legal partnership advisory group that will include VA healthcare staff, VA non-healthcare staff, community organizations, and PTLA staff. This group will meet once monthly or as otherwise needed and agreed to mutually by all parties. The group will discuss and advise on medical-legal partnership best practices for VA MEHCS.
- g. **Malpractice Insurance.**
 - i. PTLA shall provide malpractice insurance for its staff and pro bono attorneys.
 - ii. PTLA will indemnify VA MEHCS against any claims brought against VA MEHCS arising from complaints of professional misconduct or malpractice regarding services provided by PTLA.
 - iii. PTLA will not indemnify VA MEHCS for any other legal claims.



Having our legal clinics in the VA hospitals is a form of outreach in and of itself. I have had a lot of Veterans come up to ask me about our services simply because they heard me calling for the next legal appointment in the waiting room. Being there, being able to build relationships with Veterans and their health care providers, is a great way to ensure as many Veterans as possible are aware of the clinic and the free legal resources available to them.

David Titus, JD, Senior Staff Attorney
LegalHealth, New York Legal Assistance Group



Identifying the correct healthcare team for the MLP lawyer to partner with was crucial for the success of the MLP. That meant embedding the MLP lawyer with our H-PACT clinic: an interdisciplinary team where there is already frequent contact, coordination, and co-location across disciplines. H-PACTs include primary care providers, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and peer support, so adding a lawyer was just another piece to the puzzle. In particular, our social worker was crucial to connecting the dots, facilitating the initial discussions, and furthering the work.

Anjani Reddy, MD, H-PACT Director
West Los Angeles VA Medical Center





The medical champions at the VA were instrumental in the early success of our MLP. They helped establish a foundation and helped me navigate a lot of the administrative issues that I simply wasn't equipped to deal with as a non-VA employee. It's one thing for a VA Medical Center to say, 'Sure, we aren't opposed to an MLP,' but I think that the next step is the most important: identifying your medical champion, the provider on the VA side of things that is going to make this partnership work.

Jon Killoran, JD, Homeless Veterans Project Supervising Attorney
Inner City Law Center



From the very beginning, I wanted to build a relationship with the medical staff. Because my appointments with the veterans are one-on-one, I knew I was not going to be interacting with the doctors and the clinicians regularly. Attending the weekly clinical staff meetings gives me regular face time with the clinicians. I learn the processes that they go through and what their daily life is like and they learn more about the work I do and are more informed to refer their patients to me.

Melody Osuna, Staff Attorney
Long Beach VA MLP



Strategies for Targeting the MLP Intervention

- **Focus on specific Veteran populations:**
 - **Women Veterans**
 - VA Long Beach Healthcare System developed a Women's Health Center to address military sexual trauma (MST).
 - **Older Veterans**
 - San Francisco VA Health Care System offers legal services to Veterans in geriatric and palliative care clinics, the Community Living Center, and its inpatient hospital.
 - **Focused Care Teams**
 - Homeless Patient Aligned Care Teams (H-PACT): Provide legal assistance to veterans who are at risk of homelessness.
 - Implementation sites include the West LA VA Center and Errera

Contact Information

Jennifer Trott

jtrott@email.gwu.edu



www.medical-legalpartnership.org



National_MLP

Delivery Models - SSVF

- SSVF provides supportive services to very low-income veteran families to prevent veteran homelessness and rapidly re-house veterans who become homeless
- SSVF statute authorizes legal services, at [38 USC section 2044](#):
 - (vii) legal services to assist the veteran family with issues that interfere with the family's ability to obtain or retain housing or supportive services;
- Can help with: Eviction, child support issues, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), landlord/tenant issues, outstanding warrants/fees, obtaining VA benefits, driver's license reinstatement, expungement, debt collection, and discharge upgrades ("if Veteran is enrolled on SSVF and current the upgrade is directly connected to the Housing Stability Plan") ([2017 Program Guide](#), p. 49)
- Cannot help with: Court adjudicated judgements or fines



Delivery Models – SSVF (continued)

1. In-House Counsel
2. Subcontract (ex. Flat fee or fee for service)
3. Built-in legal service module to SSVF grant
4. Referral or informal agreements (ex. Legal aid clinics, pro bono, law schools)

Want to see a sample MOU
or a list of best practices?

Reach out to us at
resourcedesk@nlada.org

SSVF

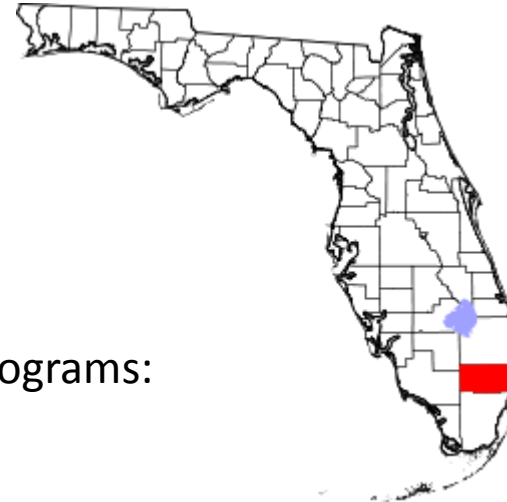
Patrice Paldino, Coast to Coast Legal Aid

Veteran Legal Issues

- Contracts
- Evictions/Foreclosures
- Fair Housing
- Reasonable Accommodations
- Criminal Records
- Driver's License Suspensions
- Change of Name and Gender Marker Change
- Veteran Discharge
 - Upgrade Dishonorable Discharge
 - Allows more Benefits to the Veteran (Financial, Healthcare)
- Debts/Garnishments
- Subsidized Housing Terminations
- VAWA
- Domestic Violence
- LGBTQ
 - Dishonorable Discharges Occurred for Sexual Orientation
- Seniors
- Advanced Directives
- Estate Planning
- Veteran's Benefits Applications
- Military Sexual Assault
- Lease reviews

Veteran Legal Services in Broward

- 2 legal service providers in Broward:
 - LAS and CCLA
 - Co-located
 - Share Board of Directors
 - Avoid duplication of services
 - Coordinate services
- Services are provided to Veterans through several programs:
 - Mission United (SSVF)
 - Limitation : homeless or verge of homeless
 - VALOR
 - Mission United Pro Bono Project
 - OST (SSVF)



Broward County Mission United : Proudly Serving Those Who Have Served

- Funding through Supportive Services for Veterans Grant (SSVF)
 - Funded by Veterans Administration
- Collaborative led by United Way of Broward includes :
 - Case management
 - Legal
 - Housing Support
 - Employment services
 - Education
 - Health
 - Financial Stability
 - Mentorship



<https://www.unitedwaybroward.org/mission-united>

Mission United Pro Bono Project

- Independently funded by the United Way (not SSVF)
- Attorney volunteers to provide pro bono to Veterans
- Currently 23 Mission United sites across 12 states including 7 in Florida
- Cases include those LAS and CCLA cannot handle in house
- 2018/2019 FY:
 - Legal Assessments: 1266
 - Intakes: 286
 - Referrals to Partner Orgs (BCBA, non-Broward Legal Aid, other nonprofit): 290
 - Placement with Pro Bono Attorney: 115
 - Total Pro Bono Advocates: 395
 - Recorded Pro Bono Hours (since inception): 4,293.4
 - Dollar equivalent of recorded hours: \$1,288,020
 - Estimated value of legal services provided this year (based on 286 new open cases): \$686,400

Cases handled by pro bono attorneys in FY 18/19

VA Benefits and Military Upgrades	76
Family	69
Estate Planning, Probate, Guardianship	45
Bankruptcy	20
Housing (non-foreclosure/eviction)	16
Social Security	15
Contracts	8
Employment	8
Foreclosure	7
Consumer	6
Driver's Licenses	6
Taxes	4
Sealing and Expungement	3
Immigration	3

In house SSVF services

Coast to Coast Legal Aid (CCLA)

- Housing services to Veterans over 60
 - Evictions
 - Conditions
 - Security deposits
 - Subsidized housing disputes
- Benefits services
 - Cash Assistance (TANF/TCA), Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps (SNAP), Social Security Disability (SSD) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Reemployment Assistance Benefits (RA)

Legal Aid Service of Broward

- Housing services Veterans under 60
 - Evictions
 - Conditions
 - Security deposits
 - Subsidized housing disputes

Different model to consider

- Legal Aid Service of Broward
 - Also funded by OST (Operation Sacred Trust)
 - SSVF dollars
 - Housing services on site
 - Weekly outreach by an in house attorney
 - A&C on spot; screen for cases for possible representation

Referrals/service delivery

Referrals come through many different methods:

- in house transfers
- case management
 - Limitations – incomplete legal knowledge of CM; high turnover; UPL; requires referral for success
 - Partial solution – repeat trainings
- outreach
- application asks Vet status, if any
- VA outreach center (VALOR)

- Dependent on community need
- LAS/CCLA split : based upon existing structure and division of service areas
 - Requires good screening and no client “bounce”
- “Legal Check up”
 - To CM and all applicants
- Rent assistance grants
 - SSVF v. in house success
- Family attorney in house
- Housing - why the distinction?
 - Evictions in house
 - Foreclosures pro bono

Contract/billing models

- Per case or per hour:
 - Per case : need a good dollar amount to balance cases requiring more time
 - Average 7 hours per case (as a measure)
 - What do you want to be paid?
- FTE – full time employees:
 - Limitation: they own your staff
- Current contract – hybrid:
 - 108 unduplicated clients
 - Carryover does not count
 - Billing : one quarter hour = one unit of legal service
 - Complication : K provides hourly rate and dollar cap we cannot exceed
 - One FT attorney and one FT paralegal
 - Part of supervising attorney
 - Data entry into SAMIS and HMIS



Our legal assistance is cost effective!

Florida Bar Foundation Study

- In Florida, \$2.9 million in emergency shelter costs were avoided for low-income families who, with the assistance of legal aid advocates, were able to avoid eviction or obtain time to seek alternative housing.
- The results of this, and other studies, suggest that every additional \$100,000 in funding enables legal aid organizations to generate at least \$719,000 in increased impacts for clients and their communities, **representing a 7 to 1 economic return on investments made into free legal services.**
- In 2015, Florida civil legal aid organizations produced **well over a half -billion dollars** (\$600 million) worth of economic impacts, with **\$83 million** in total funding from sources including The Florida Bar Foundation, the Legal Services Corporation, local governments, donors and others.
- The implication of this finding is that additional funding for civil legal aid will produce a commensurate increase in economic impacts benefiting residents and communities across Florida.



\$600 million in savings

- **\$120.6 million in SSI, SSDI, and other Social Security benefits**
- **\$70.7 million in Medicaid and Medicare-funded reimbursements** received by Florida health care providers.
- **\$24.2 million in child and spousal support**
- **\$38.3 million in increased wages to immigrants** due to attainment of legal permanent resident (LPR) status or becoming U.S. citizens
- **\$10.5 million in other dollar benefits** food stamps (SNAP benefits), cash assistance payments and unemployment compensation.
- **\$2.9 million in avoided costs of emergency shelter** who were able to avoid eviction or to obtain additional time to seek alternative housing.
- **\$50.6 million in foreclosure costs** that were avoided by low-income homeowners, lenders, neighbors, and local governments through the legal assistance
- **\$6.9 million in avoided costs associated with domestic violence.**

See Economic Impacts of Civil Legal Aid Organizations Funded in Part by The Florida Bar Foundation (November 4, 2016), available at <https://thefloridabarfoundation.org/impact/>

FBF study findings continued...

- In 2015, Florida civil legal services provided assistance in over 83,000 cases
- Clients included low-income residents, domestic violence victims, vulnerable immigrants, and older adults
- Legal issues directly impacted their homes, incomes, jobs, access to health care and utilities
- Legal assistance results in decreased burden on the courts
- Civil legal services support the narrowing of the justice gap through recruitment of pro bono attorneys

For more information about the justice gap in Florida, see Florida Access to Justice Commission, *Interim Report* (October 1, 2015), available at <http://www.nosue.org/app/download/7244201970/Florida-Commission-ATJ-Interim-Report.pdf>

Q & A



NLADA
National Legal Aid &
Defender Association
nlada.org

Wait! Before you go...

- Do you like NLADA and the Justice in Government Project? Help us better meet your needs! Fill out our survey here: <https://tinyurl.com/nladajgpsurvey>
- Want curated research in your inbox every month? Sign up for our newsletter here: <https://tinyurl.com/justresearchsignup>
- Read our veterans newsletter here: <https://tinyurl.com/justvets>
- **Seeking technical assistance? Reach us at resourcedesk@nlada.org**