

2018-2019 CIVIL LEGAL COUNSEL PROJECTS PROGRAM

Program Overview and Application Instructions

I. About the DC Bar Foundation

Since 1978, the DC Bar Foundation has funneled more than \$60 million into DC’s legal aid network to ensure that every District resident, regardless of income, has access to justice. The Foundation makes strategic investments in legal aid providers and the critical issues facing District residents in order to strengthen and expand our civil legal aid network and improve our community. As the largest funder of civil legal aid in the District, the Foundation is a steadfast community partner, committed to protecting access to justice in life’s most pivotal moments.

In addition to our grant programs, the Foundation administers loan repayment assistance programs for attorneys working at DC legal aid organizations and provides training and technical assistance to these organizations. Learn more by visiting our website: www.dcbfoundation.org.

II. Overview of the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program

The DC Bar Foundation (DCBF) is pleased to announce that it will award at least \$4,900,000 to nonprofit legal aid providers located in the District of Columbia to fund eviction defense services to low-income District residents through the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program (CLCPP).

Thanks to a grant from the District of Columbia Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, eligible civil legal aid providers can apply for a grant that covers July 1, 2018 to December 31, 2019, to provide eviction defense services.

Organizations may apply for funding for one project and joint projects, by submitting one project per application.

III. Eligibility for Funding

A. Eligibility for Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program Funding

Qualified recipients under the Expanding Access to Justice Amendment Act of 2017 must:

1. Be a not-for-profit corporation headquartered in DC;
2. Have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
3. Maintain a practice of furnishing free legal services to individuals who cannot afford the services of a licensed legal professional;
4. Be experienced in “housing, landlord-tenant law, or related experience in representing eligible individuals or groups in covered proceedings;”

5. Have “adequate infrastructure and expertise to provide consistent, high-quality, oversight, training, evaluation, and strategic responses” to the changing needs of clients;
6. Engage only in “covered proceedings” with these funds;
7. Only serve tenants who reside in DC and have a gross household income either at or below 200% of the current Federal Poverty Guidelines; and,
8. Legal services performed under these funds shall be provided by licensed legal professionals only.

B. Definitions

DCBF defines the following terms for the purpose of determining eligibility for the Grants Program:

1. **“Civil legal services”** must include the individual representation of District residents. It may also include the supervision of such representation. Representation must be performed by a Licensed Legal Professional. A “Licensed Legal Professional” is: (1) a member of the District of Columbia Bar; (2) a law student participating in an authorized, attorney supervised clinical program through an accredited law school in the District of Columbia; or (3) a member of the bar of another jurisdiction who is legally permitted to appear and represent a specific client in a particular proceeding.
2. **“Covered proceeding”** is any actual or reasonably anticipated administrative or judicial proceeding in the District of Columbia that is meant to evict a tenant or tenant group.
3. **“Federal Poverty Guidelines”** is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The table of 2018 eligible incomes can be found at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>. This table is updated annually in mid-January. Tenants may also be eligible for these funds if they are “seeking, receiving, or eligible for services from a program covered by section 3 of the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 (D.C. Official Code § 4-754.01).”
4. **“District resident”** is defined as any individual with a residential address in the District of Columbia.

IV. Funding Principles, Standards and Priorities

A. Principles to Guide Allocation of Funds

The primary purpose of the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program is to fund civil legal services to low-income tenants facing eviction in DC. Thus, funding will be provided:

1. ONLY for free civil legal services;
2. ONLY for services to low-income District residents; and,

3. ONLY for projects that provide eviction defense legal services.

B. The Foundation's Standards for Funding

1. Standards for Organizations

Funding will be provided to civil legal aid organizations that have systems in place that align with widely accepted industry standards for promoting quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in the delivery of civil legal aid, including methods for self-assessment to provide feedback regarding the extent to which those systems are achieving their desired purpose.

A strong proposal will demonstrate that the applying organization:

- a. Seeks to identify and respond to the most pressing civil legal needs of the low-income people it serves;
- b. Has systems in place to ensure appropriate supervision, training, and development of its staff, applies feedback obtained from stakeholders and clients to evaluate and improve organization effectiveness and quality;
- c. Integrates pro bono attorneys and others to supplement and increase the effectiveness of its representation and other services;
- d. Provides other services designed to increase accessibility of legal services to low-income DC residents, such as assistance with self-help strategies, legal information through its website or other channels, community legal education; and,
- e. Engages with other important stakeholders working on behalf of or serving its targeted client population, such as the judiciary, government agencies, and social services agencies.

2. Standards for Projects

Funding will be provided only to projects that measure and report to DCBF their performance against stated goals with respect to legal services to be delivered, pre-court intervention and collaboration, pro bono development, and any other activities to be funded under the requested grant.

A strong proposal will demonstrate that the project:

- a. **Has ambitious yet realistic goals for delivering significant amounts of eviction defense legal services**, as measured by the volume and type of legal services to be provided, the number of DC residents to be assisted, the number of cases to be accepted, the DC wards from which the majority of clients are anticipated, and other measures.
- b. **Seeks to increase access to eviction defense legal services to residents in underserved areas of the District**, as measured by the percentage of the total proposed legal services that will be provided in areas containing the greatest concentrations of low-income residents.

- c. **Has high goals for providing significant amounts of pre-court intervention and collaboration**, as measured by the number of outreach efforts and/or trainings directed to low-income tenants particularly vulnerable to eviction, the number of individuals to whom outreach will be conducted, the number of trainings to be held, the number of DC residents who will attend, the volume of materials distributed (literature, website accesses, etc.), and other relevant measures.
- d. **Seeks to increase engagement of pro bono attorneys and law firms in the provision of legal services to low-income DC residents**, as measured by the number of pro bono attorneys recruited, the number of attorneys trained, growth in the total number of attorneys and firms participating, and other relevant measures.
- e. **Has adequate capacity for delivering the services that are proposed**, while at the same time **maintaining high service quality**, as indicated by experience in providing services similar to those being proposed, related current work that will be supported or enhanced by the proposed services, and other factors.
- f. **Has a high likelihood of sustainability**, taking into account such factors as potential funding sources beyond DCBF, a track record of successful fundraising, a longer-term service delivery strategy, and other factors.

C. The Foundation's Priorities for Funding

Additionally, in allocating available funding, the Foundation will give priority to proposals that seek to address the most pressing legal needs of the District's low-income residents and make legal services accessible to this population.

Proposals that address one or more of the following criteria will be given priority (all other factors being equal):

1. Addresses the most critical legal needs of low-income DC residents facing eviction.
2. Is likely to expand the number of DC residents who are provided with effective legal assistance in eviction matters.
3. Seeks to avoid duplication of services being provided in the District, in the same issue area, or to the same special population segments as those being proposed.
4. Is likely to make effective legal assistance aimed at preventing eviction more accessible to DC residents.
5. Is likely to expand pro bono participation by recruiting, training, and supervising law firm attorneys to help deliver free legal assistance to DC residents.
6. Is likely to leverage DCBF resources by applying them strategically to expand efforts by other service providers and/or provide services that could NOT potentially be supported by other funding sources.
7. Will test innovative approaches for achieving the above priorities.

V. Application Instructions and Timeline

A. Application Structure

There are three sections required for the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program application:

1. **PART ONE: ORGANIZATION DATA** describes the overall civil legal aid organization that is applying for DCBF funding. If you are applying for more than one grant, this information should be the same for all applications, including all applications for funding, since it is about your organization, rather than about your proposal (Part Two).

There are two options: (1) you can submit one application before starting the second, and the information entered in Part One will auto-fill into Part One of your second application, if the second application is created under the same account which the first was submitted; or (2) you can download the Word document version of Part One from the online application or our website, prepare your answers on this document, and then copy and paste into Part One of each application.

2. **PART TWO: PROPOSAL** describes the proposed project or program for which funding is requested. You must submit a different Part Two for each proposal submitted.
3. **PART THREE: PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS** includes required signatures, the Data Packet (the project budget*, proposed staffing, and funding), client eligibility guidelines, data and information requirements, client story, letters of support, memoranda of understanding, resumes, staff training, and any supplemental documents.

*For the **project budget** in the Data Packet, Tabs A and B are for the six-month project budget and proposed staffing for the amount requested for July 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2018, and Tabs C and D are for the 12-month project budget and proposed staffing for the amount requested for January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. However, you only need to provide a project budget for the period(s) for which you are seeking funds. The same is true for performance measures: provide performance measures for the period(s) for which you are seeking funding. For example, if you are not seeking funding for July 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2018, but you are seeking funding for Jan. 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2019, you do not need to complete the six-month budget or staffing tab (Tabs A and B), only complete the 12-month budget and staffing tabs (Tabs C and D). For performance measures, only provide data on the period for which you are requesting funding, which would be Jan. 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2019 for this example. If you have any questions about this please contact the Director of Programs (contact information on Page 9).

B. Definitions of Application Terms

- **“Legal services”** include any activity designed to help an individual understand or resolve a legal problem. It includes representation limited to advice or brief service as well as all forms of extended representation. Legal services do not include legal information offered to an individual in the form of a pamphlet or letter or oral presentations, trainings, or conversations offering general legal information. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #1a.]
- **“Advice, legal counsel, or limited scope representation”** consists of guidance or explanation of options, often with a recommendation for a course of action offered in the context of the attorney-client relationship, based on the specific circumstances of the client and the law which applies to those circumstances. It includes advice given in the course of “limited scope representation,” such as an advice clinic, if an attorney-client relationship is formed and the assistance is not mere legal information that is not tailored to the circumstance of the client. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #1c.]
- **“Brief service”** includes assistance such as making a phone call or writing a brief letter on the client’s behalf. Brief service generally involves assistance that takes less than two hours. Brief service may take place in the context of “limited representation,” in which the client agrees at the outset that assistance will be limited to the service that is offered, although the matter could call for extended representation. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #1d.]
- **“Extended representation”** refers to any legal representation beyond advice, legal counsel, or brief service, as defined previously. It may include, but is not limited to, transactional work or negotiation, administrative representation, litigation, and other forms of advocacy. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #1e.]
- **“Legal information”** consists of general guidance provided to the general public regarding legal rights and responsibilities, as well as steps that can be taken to resolve legal problems on their own. The information can be given in the form of a pamphlet, self-help packet, letter with generalized advice, or guidance provided in a pro se clinic. No attorney-client relationship is formed when legal information is provided. *Do not* include participants in community legal education events. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #3a.]
- **“Cases placed with pro bono attorneys”** are cases for which the volunteer attorney has assumed responsibility for the representation. [Appears in Part Two Proposal Performance Measures, Question #4d. It does not include “co-counseling cases,” which is captured in Question #4e.]

C. How to Apply

The application and all attachments must be submitted via our online system. The link to start a Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program application are available on our website here: <https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/civil-legal-counsel-grants/>. The link is unique to the CLCPP application.

Log into the system using a previously created account or create a new account by following the steps as instructed on the screen. **The system works best in Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox and Safari.**

All attachments for which the Foundation provides the template – Attachments 2A, 2B, and 2D – are available for download here: <https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/civil-legal-counsel-grants/>. If a template is not provided (e.g. client eligibility guidelines, staff training, etc.), please create your own, using your organization’s letterhead, when appropriate.

For technical questions on using our online system, please refer to this page: <https://dcbarfoundation.org/grants/grantee-portal/>. The most frequently asked questions are:

1. To access an application you have begun or submitted, log in via the main grantee portal (https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_2334) with the same username and password used to start or submit the application. Select “Applications” in the top left corner and make sure the correct status is selected in the drop-down on the right side of the page (“Submitted Applications” or “In Progress Applications”).
2. If you are applying for multiple grants, you can submit multiple applications for your organization under the same account (or different accounts). Just click the unique URL provided to start a new blank application.

D. Applying for a Joint Project

Applications for joint projects are welcome under the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program. Please follow the instructions below when applying for a joint project:

1. Each organization must submit an application for the joint project.
2. Each organization should submit a unique **Part One Organization Data**, meaning your *answers and attachments* for this section should only include information about your organization. For example, do not include the partner organization’s mission statement for Section C, Question #1; only include your organization’s mission statement.
3. For the questions asked in **Part Two Proposal**, the only questions for which answers may differ are:
 - a. Section A, Question #3: for “Applicant Interviews,” each organization should submit a form;*
 - b. Section A, Question #4: “Past Funding;”
 - c. Section C: “Funding Requested, Budget, and Staffing;”
 - d. Section F, Question #1: “Number of low-income DC residents who will benefit from this funding;” and,
 - e. Section G: “Performance Measures for Assessing Alignment of this Project with DCBF Standards.”

4. For the attachments requested in **Part Three Proposal Attachments**, only Attachment 2F: Letters of Support and Attachment 2G: Memoranda of Understanding may be the same. Note a Memoranda of Understanding between the two partner organizations is required for joint projects.

*For organizations submitting a proposal for a new joint project, the partner organizations will participate in the same interview. In other words, the interview will be conducted jointly so please consult with each other on interview availability and select the same interview slots on the form.

E. Timeline of Application Process

Thursday, March 1, 2018	Application released
Thursday, March 8, 2018	Information session regarding 2018 Civil Legal Counsel Projects and Access to Justice housing-related funding. Email grants@dcbfoundation.org to RSVP.
Monday, April 2, 2018	Application due by 3:00 pm
April 17-20, 2018	Applicant Interviews
Mid-June 2018	Awards announced
Friday June 22, 2018	Revised budgets and performance measures due
Friday June 29, 2018	Signed grant agreements due
Sunday July 1, 2018	Grant year begins

VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

If your proposal is approved, your organization must submit quarterly financial reports, semiannual Data and Information reports, and one annual programmatic report (schedule below). Plus, your organization may be required to participate in a programmatic and/or a financial site visit. The Foundation will contact the grantee directly to schedule site visits.

July 2018	Mandatory CLCPP and ATJ Subgrantee Meeting
October 2018	Quarterly Financial Report
January 2019	Mandatory CLCPP and ATJ Subgrantee Meeting, Quarterly Financial Report, Semiannual CLCPP Data and Information Requirements
April 2019	Quarterly Financial Report
July 2019	Quarterly Financial Report, Semiannual CLCPP Data and Information Requirements
October 2019	Quarterly Financial Report

January 2020

Quarterly Financial Report, Annual Programmatic
Report, Final semiannual CLCPP Data and
Information Requirement

VII. Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the Civil Legal Counsel Projects Program, how to apply, or our monitoring and evaluation processes, please contact:

Imoni Washington
Director of Programs
Email Address: washington@dcbfoundation.org
Phone Number: (202) 853-9023