

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Below are the definitions of certain terms, sorted alphabetically, referenced on the reporting forms required for several of DC Bar Foundation's grant programs. Direct all questions to [grants@dcbarfoundation.org](mailto:grants@dcbarfoundation.org).

**Brief service** includes legal assistance such as making a phone call or writing a brief letter on the client's behalf. Brief service generally involves assistance which 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.

**Cases placed** with pro bono attorneys refers to those cases where the pro bono attorney has assumed responsibility for the representation. It does not include co-counseling cases.

**Direct legal assistance** includes 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. Direct legal assistance does not include legal information offered to an individual in the form of a pamphlet or a letter, or oral presentations or conversations offering general legal information.

**Extended representation** is any legal representation beyond legal advice and counsel or brief service, as defined above. It may include, but is not limited to transactional work or negotiation, administrative representation, litigation and other forms of advocacy. This number is the number of cases closed during the period being reported on, even if the case was opened during a prior time period.

**Legal advice or counsel** 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 not tailored to the circumstance of the client.

**Legal information** consists of general guidance provided one-on-one to individuals regarding their legal rights and responsibilities, as well as steps that should take to resolve their legal problem on their own. It may 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 or general distribution of pamphlets in waiting rooms or through other groups or organizations.

**Systemic cases** or projects are efforts that (1) affect or could potentially affect significant segments of the eligible population, and (2) achieve or potentially could achieve relatively permanent improvement in legal rights or basic living conditions of those affected. A key element that distinguishes systemic work is the concept of addressing a fundamental problem for the benefit of many people affected by that problem. An example of a systemic case is an action to eliminate illegal activity by a landlord against low-income tenants. An example of a systemic project is policy or administrative advocacy aimed at effecting a change in eligibility criteria for a major benefits program. A systemic case or project is not defined solely by complexity or a high level of effort - for example, a case should not be deemed "systemic" simply because it took 100 hours to resolve. A systemic case could only require a relatively few hours of actual work. In addition to litigation, we are interested in hearing about the program's non-litigation systemic efforts.