Facing Eviction
Travel restrictions
Settlement delay
Covid Testing
Cancelled
Social Distancing
Unemployment
Rescheduled
Loss of income
furlough
Quarantined
Drive thru Foodbanks
Laid off
Courts closed
Virtual Events
Default on mortgage
Pandemic
Rent Overdue
Medical bills
Wear Your Mask
Crisis
eergency
Delay
Work from home
No scheduled visits
Dear Friends,

First, we want to thank you for the generous support we received throughout 2020 as we responded to the numerous issues created by the pandemic.

We are pleased to report that, in tandem with our partners, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri rose to meet the challenges of COVID-19. This report details how we added services, adapted to community needs and marshalled resources to help families survive critical and life-threatening situations.

- Created a new task force of staff and volunteers to help with unemployment applications and appeals.
- Convened staff from across the agency to help with a community response to the housing and eviction crisis impacting so many families.
- Added a new attorney position to help families facing utility cut-offs.
- Developed a library of online materials and webinars to help families and community partners deal with legal issues including children’s special education needs, help for small businesses and information about COVID-19 relief funds.

In spite of quarantines, closed courts and working from home, we did what we have always done for the past 65 years...we found a way to help our clients and the community by making sure everyone has equal access to resources and care.

We act for others …
We are a voice for justice …
We provide hope for those in need.

We could not have done this critical work without our partnership with you. On behalf of the Staff and Board, thank you.

Dan Glazier
Executive Director

Maria Perron
President, Board of Directors

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri advances justice through legal representation, education and supportive services. We partner with the community to improve lives, promote fairness and create opportunities for those in need.
Adapting to meet new needs

In 2020 we faced new and unique challenges. We are proud that we continue to be a front-line provider throughout the crisis. The struggle continues and we stay committed to serving with ACTION. JUSTICE. HOPE.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly devastating for low-income families. For many, paying the rent, balancing bills and keeping their families fed has always been a challenge. The devastation of pandemic restrictions impacted their lives much more than most. For the first time, many families faced unemployment, loss of health insurance, food shortages, virtual learning for their children, and the threat of eviction.

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri quickly responded to the needs of the community and worked alongside community partners to help keep people safe, informed of their rights and equipped with the resources they needed during rapidly changing situations.

This included:

• Virtual meetings with staff and community partners and the local agencies and pandemic task forces to effectively disseminate new information to address client needs.

• Identifying and responding to new needs such as:
  - Help with applications for unemployment, food stamps, tax credits, and health insurance.
  - Providing anti-eviction information and advocacy.
  - Sharing resources for online learning and advocating for kids with special education needs who are struggling with virtual learning.
  - Supporting the small businesses most severely impacted by the pandemic.

• Adapting to serve clients in virtual courtrooms for access to vital resources, such as orders of protection.

• Creating extensive online resources providing information and pandemic resources for clients.

• Seeking out and securing new funding to expand resources to help those in need.

Overcoming Adversity

Ann’s* husband was incarcerated for abusing her. When she tried to move away, her husband’s family took her children and refused to return them. His family used the legal system to keep Ann’s children from her by filing false claims against her.

Ann turned to Legal Services for help, but the pandemic restrictions made defending these charges and regaining her children far more difficult. Attorneys were unable to meet with Ann and had to help her navigate technology for a virtual hearing.

Despite these obstacles, the judge ruled in Ann’s favor and she was reunited with her children. Ann and her children are now living in a safe environment free from violence. She has a stable job and hopes for a new beginning for her family.

*Clients’ names have been changed to protect their identity.
Responding to Urgent Issues

New protections offered to tenants during coronavirus pandemic

June 4, 2020  by Joel Ferber

“... an unprecedented number of tenants may need legal help. It is critical that landlords work with tenants to create reasonable payment agreements and avoid unnecessary late fees that could extend and exacerbate the crisis for low-income families. The coronavirus relief act’s tenant protections are an important step in ensuring that the pandemic and the resulting financial crisis do not increase homelessness or create new cycles of debt for the vulnerable families in our community.”

ACTION. Legal Services is partnering with the COVID-19 Regional Response Teams’ Housing and Courts Response Group, organized by Forward Through Ferguson to ensure equitable treatment for low-income tenants and homeowners to mitigate the impact of eviction, foreclosure and homelessness.

ACTION. When the need for assistance with unemployment benefit applications increased, Legal Services’ Volunteer Lawyers Program organized and trained a cross-department team of lawyers, paralegals and volunteers to help callers with a variety of unemployment benefit questions. In 2020 the team responded to more than 14,600 calls for help. We assisted clients applying for benefits and appealing denials and/or demands for refund of benefits.

Missourians Struggle With Unemployment Applications As State Juggles Record-Level Claims

By KAE M. PETRIN • 5/7/20

“Increased applications and call volume have spurred Legal Services of Eastern Missouri to help low income workers apply for unemployment benefits. The nonprofit organization also offers legal aid and assists people appeal denied claims”.

ACTION. When the need for assistance with unemployment benefit applications increased, Legal Services’ Volunteer Lawyers Program organized and trained a cross-department team of lawyers, paralegals and volunteers to help callers with a variety of unemployment benefit questions. In 2020 the team responded to more than 14,600 calls for help. We assisted clients applying for benefits and appealing denials and/or demands for refund of benefits.
When schools switched to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Education Justice Program learned of a school district charging a homeless student $25 for a Chromebook for remote learning. On behalf of the client, Legal Services informed both the school district and the Missouri Department of Education that charging a technology fee may be unconstitutional when children are entirely reliant on a device to access education.

As a result, the school district agreed to provide a Chromebook and a hot spot to all families as needed for the 2020-2021 school year. The school district also agreed to provide tutoring for three students who, as a result of this fee, were unable to access remote learning for the spring semester 2020.

In addition, the Missouri Department of Education agreed to issue guidance to all school districts that the charge of any fees for technology during a time of remote learning, when no option for in-person learning was available, may be unconstitutional.
Volunteers

Legal Services is very grateful for the significant impact of volunteers in 2020!

The value of contributed hours by volunteer lawyers, paralegals, law students, social workers and others totaled $893,985 as reported in the 2020 independent audit. The breakdown of hours and cases is shown below.

Young Friends of Legal Services

Despite the unique challenges of 2020, the Young Friends of Legal Services still connected via zoom bi-monthly to support the agency and again adopted one of our 100 Neediest Families to provide support during the holidays.

President: Michael Cherba  
Vice President: Ryan Turnage  
Secretary: Nino Przulj

Board Members: Mackenzie Allen; Katherine Fechte; Laura Halfmann-Morris; Remington Harris; Lucas Jackson; Elizabeth Lenivy; Loren Menefee; J. Thomas Mihalczo, II; Kara Moskowitz; Vannah Shaw; Ericka Simpson-Conner.
Legal Services’ staff, board and volunteers are extremely grateful for the generous support received during the difficult pandemic of 2020.

The generosity of Legal Services’ supporters, partners and funders enabled us to quickly develop new strategies to help clients during the pandemic.

In addition to annual operating support and program grant funding, in 2020 Legal Services was also fortunate that new grant resources became available to maintain – and in some cases expand - services for those struggling because of the pandemic.

New grants for 2020 included:

• Legal Services Corporation: Telework capacity building and COVID-19 response

• Flourish-St. Louis: Direct client assistance

• United Way of Greater St. Louis: Phase 2 COVID-19 response

• St. Louis Community Foundation: Utility advocacy and COVID-19 response

• Wells Fargo: Housing stability

• St. Louis County: CARES humanitarian response

• St. Louis City: CARES Act funding

• St. Louis Regional Business Council: Direct client assistance

Thanks to these gifts, grants and donations, we were able to address the pressing needs of clients in a timely manner, even while the staff worked from home, the courts were closed and a public lock-down was in place.

Thanks to you, ACTION. JUSTICE. HOPE. continued.
Services

Individual Rights

**Consumer Law**  
Represents clients with creditor/debtor problems, victims of deceptive business practices or predatory lending and student loan defaults.

**Elder Law**  
Represents clients 60 years of age or older.

**Education Justice**  
Provides information about students’ rights and advocates for students facing unfair discipline.

**Public Benefits**  
Helps with applications and appeals for public benefit programs, including Medicaid, TANF, food stamps and Social Security.

Communities

**Community Economic Development - Microenterprise Program**  
Provides legal assistance and education for low-income entrepreneurs and community nonprofits.

**Community Economic Development - Neighborhood Vacancy Initiative**  
Provides community development services addressing blighted and vacant housing in St. Louis City neighborhoods.

**Housing Law**  
Assists with landlord/tenant issues, eviction, utilities, and other housing problems.

**Immigration Law**  
Assists immigrants with residency and citizenship and serves victims of human trafficking.

**Volunteer Lawyers Program**  
Provides pro bono opportunities for attorneys and law firms to help clients.

Health

**Access to Health Coverage**  
Connecting Kids to Coverage helps uninsured children and families enroll in health insurance plans.

**Advocates for Family Health**  
Helps pregnant women and families with children with Medicaid managed care.

**Legal Advocacy for Adults with Mental Illness**  
Assists adults with serious mental illness with a variety of legal matters.

Families

**Children’s Legal Alliance**  
Provides advocacy for children with special education needs and homeless children.

**Parental Justice Program**  
Representing parents in dependency cases for the reunification of families in St. Louis County Family Court. *(Located in the St. Louis County Court Building)*

**Lasting Solutions Family Law**  
Helps survivors of domestic violence and their families achieve safety and stability.

**Youth and Family Advocacy**  
Serves homeless and vulnerable youth and families in St. Louis County and City.

Regional Offices

**Hannibal Office**  
Provides a full range of legal services to qualified low-income residents in fourteen Northeast Missouri counties (Adair, Clark, Knox, Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marion, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Ralls, Schuyler, Scotland, Shelby).

**Union Office**  
Provides a full range of legal services to qualified low-income residents in four Missouri counties (Franklin, Lincoln, Warren and Washington).
Service Statistics

- 96% of those served were at or below 200% poverty level
- 77% of clients were women
- 50% of those served were children
- 50% of clients were BIPOC
- 32% of cases involved domestic violence
- 114,630+ Requests for help
- 8,850 People served through direct client work
- 35,000 More people assisted through community education, outreach, court helpdesk and referrals
- 96% Success rate for cases
- $4.8 million Monetary benefits gained for clients.

Types of Issues Solved

- Family Cases / Abuse and Neglect: 32%
- Housing: 22%
- Healthcare Insurance: 19%
- Public Benefits and Food Stamps: 8%
- Immigration: 4%
- Consumer: 4%
- Education: 4%
- Community Economic Development and other issues: 9%

43,850+ served in 2020
2020 Agency Financials

Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants</td>
<td>$6,431,227*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Contributions &amp; United Way</td>
<td>$1,127,977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donated Services</td>
<td>$823,985</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Foundation Grants</td>
<td>$1,326,807</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>$153,287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$322,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>$571,422</td>
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Total: $10,757,616

Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Expenses</td>
<td>$7,642,684**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration/General</td>
<td>$1,215,487</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$299,404</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>$76,364</td>
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Total: $9,233,939

Balance Sheet Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Net Assets</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$12,467,134***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$13,990,811</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes Legal Services Corporation’s special grants: $165,255 COVID 19 Response; $18,660 Teleworking.
**Includes value of Pro Bono donated services.
***Includes a one-time Cy Pres award of $2,841,020: $1 million designated for the Hon. Richard B Teitelman Fund; $1,150,000 designated to the Building Capital and Litigation Expenses Reserve Fund; $657,894 designated to the Cy Pres Reserve Fund for operations.

NOTE: Legal Services of Eastern Missouri received a $600,000 Payroll Protection Program loan in 2020 which was fully forgiven in 2020.

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri is a grantee of the federal Legal Services Corporation (LSC) and complies with all LSC conditions and prohibitions in acceptance of all funds.

The 2020 independent audit is available at www.lsem.org/about/financial-and-tax-info/.
Legal Services of Eastern Missouri depends on gifts, grants and contributions for most of its income. Thank you to the following donors for supporting our work and providing **ACTION. JUSTICE. HOPE.**

Below is a list of general donations and grants received in 2020. Please accept our apologies for any errors or omissions, and thank you to the many donors not listed here, who also play an important part in helping us fulfill our commitment to the community.

### Donors

#### CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, OTHER ENTITIES

**$100,000+**
- Legal Services Corporation
- St. Louis Community Foundation
- Missouri Bar Foundation
- Missouri Basic Civil Legal Services Fund
- Missouri Department of Social Services
- Missouri Foundation for Health
- Missouri Lawyers Trust Fund Account
- St. Louis County Children’s Service Fund
- St. Louis Mental Health Board
- United Way of Greater St. Louis
- US Department of Health & Human Services
- Wells Fargo, LLC

**$50,000 - $99,999**
- St. Louis Development Corporation

**$20,000 - $49,999**
- American Direct Marketing Resources, LLC
- Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis
- Northeast Missouri Area Agency of Aging
- St. Louis Area Agency on Aging
- St. Louis City Department of Health: Ryan White/HIV AIDS Program

**$10,000 - $19,999**
- Aging Ahead
- Citi
- Deaconness Foundation
- Emerson Charitable Trust
- Franklin County Area United Way
- Missouri Department of Public Safety
- PNC Foundation

**1,000 - $9,999**
- AJ Bitker Charitable Foundation
- American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation Association of Corporate Counsel – St. Louis
- AT&T Foundation
- Boeing Employees Community Fund
- Buffalo Township United Fund
- Commerce Bancshares Foundation
- Equal Justice America Inc.
- Franklin County Community Resource Board
- Mary Ranken Jordan & Ettie Jordan Charitable Foundation
- Montgomery Area United Way
- New Covenant Legal Services
- Peace UCC
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Sandcastle Foundation
- St. Louis Economic Development Partnership
- Stanley & Lucy Lopata Charitable Foundation
- STLRB Family Foundation
- The Daniel & Henry Company
- Thompson Reuters

**$250 - $999**
- Family Court of St. Louis County Lawyers Association of St. Louis
- Pecha Family Foundation
- Stern Family Charitable Trust
- The Bar Plan Mutual Insurance Co.
- Tower Grove Neighborhood CDC
- United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- United Way of the Mark Twain Area

#### LAW FIRMS

**$50,000+**
- Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP
- Butsch, Robert & Associates, LLC
- Dowd Bennett LLP
- Husch Blackwell, LLP
- Thompson Coburn LLP

**$20,000 - $49,999**
- Capes Sokol
- The Simon Law Firm, P.C.

**$10,000 - $19,999**
- Gray, Ritter & Graham, P.C.
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- Stinson LLP

**$1,000 - $9,999**
- Armstrong Teasdale LLP
- Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, LC
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- Brown & James, P.C.
- Burger Law
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- Gallagher Davis, LLP
- Lewis Rice LLC
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- Spencer Fane
- Stange Law Firm, P.C.
- The Perron Law Group
- USA&M Midwest, Inc.
- Wolfgram & Associates, PC

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- Brinkman & Alter
- Cervantes & Associates
- Childress Ahlheim Cary, LLC

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- Mr. & Mrs. Max Margulis*
- Mr. Kevin Muesenfechter
- Mr. & Mrs. Andrew A. O’Brien
- Mr. & Mrs. John G. Simon
- Mr. Guy Slay
- Mr. & Mrs. Nelson G. Wolff

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- Senator & Mrs. John C. Danforth
- Dr. Robert G. Hughes & Dr. Linda J. Shaw
- Mr. & Mrs. Alvin J. Siteman

**$1,000 - 4,999**
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- Mr. & Mrs. Alvin J. Siteman

*credit with the proceeds of Cy Pres Awards
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All communications are confidential.
Interpreters provided.

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Previdoci su obezbjedjeni.

Los servicios son gratuitos.
Todas las comunicaciones son confidenciales.
Intérpretes disponible.

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Adapting to Change: Going Virtual

Pandemic restrictions challenged every aspect of our work and fundraising in 2020. This need required a quick response and new, virtual strategies that were immediate and accessible.

- **Created Facebook Live and Zoom informational sessions** to address urgent questions concerning unemployment benefits and other matters, including food stamps, housing rights, special education rights and how to access pandemic resources.

- **Created a video library** on Legal Services’ YouTube channel to help clients navigate applications for unemployment benefits, food stamps and how to claim pandemic tax credits, etc.

- **Created a comprehensive, online library** of COVID-19 reference materials including more than 30 fact sheets and more than 50 links to other community resources.

- **Presented the 2020 “For The Common Good” awards volunteer recognition event virtually through a livestream.**

- **Launched an e-newsletter** for donors, volunteers and community partners.

We thank our 2020 sponsors who made this transition to virtual communications/events possible:

Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP • Emerson • Missouri Lawyers Media • Thompson Coburn LLP

- Alaris Litigation
- Armstrong Teasdale LLP
- The Association of Corporate Counsel – St. Louis;
- Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, LC
- Brown & James, P.C.

- Capes Sokol
- Dowd Bennett LLP
- Gray, Ritter & Graham, P.C.
- Husch Blackwell, LLP
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- Polsinelli PC

- St. Louis Public Radio
- Stange Law Firm, P.C.
- The Bar Plan Mutual Insurance Co.
- The Simon Law Firm, P.C.
- USA&M Midwest, Inc.
Thank you
to all our 2020 supporters and community partners who made it possible for us to continue providing Action. Justice. Hope.

We act for others. We are a voice for justice. Our actions provide hope to those we serve.