



Legal Services

of NORTH FLORIDA

HOPE. JUSTICE. FOR ALL.

In 1976 **Legal Services of North Florida, Inc. (LSNF)** was established as a non-profit corporation to serve the legal needs of low income persons in north Florida. Today **LSNF** serves a poverty population of more than 200,000 people in 16 counties from five offices located in Tallahassee, Quincy, Panama City, Fort Walton Beach and Pensacola, Florida. Our mission is

"To provide An Opportunity for Justice for eligible residents through representation conducted efficiently and comparable in quality to that of the private bar, and through other forms of legal assistance designed to provide a full range of civil legal services to those in need."

LSNF provides civil legal services with a multi-cultural, multiracial, experienced and very dedicated staff of sixteen attorneys and seven paralegals, aided by interns, administrative and support staff who provide legal services in tandem with 340 active volunteer attorneys who provided 5,258 hours of representation last year, valued at \$1,051,600. Partnerships with community organizations, social service agencies, and various court and governmental entities expand our capacity to serve thousands of clients annually without a fee primarily to persons whose income falls below 125% of the federal poverty level and who experience problems in the following priority areas:

- Preservation of the home and promotion of home ownership
- Support for families and children
- Promotion of employment, economic security and health
- Promotion of safety and stability
- Protection of vulnerable populations

LSNF has established many creative ways to serve those in need and provide alternative access to our services. These include intake forms transmitted by e-mail, mail, fax, phone; and collaborations with local bar associations, State Attorneys' Offices, Clerks of the Court, and Public Defenders' Offices; and, active referral and joint programs with domestic violence centers, homeless shelters, disaster relief centers and many human and social service agencies in our community. We make a special effort to reach out to people who have difficulty coming to our offices through outreach in rural areas and at various community human services agencies and through community events, our legal hotline and information posted on our website www.lsnf.org. Special projects include: Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, LSNF Websites, Elder and Homeless Outreach Events, First Saturday, Hotline Intake, Services to Veterans, help with IRS controversies, and the recovery of over \$2.7 million in claims for the people of north Florida since the Oil Spill Representation Project began.

As Legal Services of North Florida begins its 40th year we are challenged with continuing to provide hope and justice while federal, local and private funds continue to shrink. And while our level of service has been impacted due to budget cuts, we continue to try and serve those most in need of escaping violence, keeping their homes and escaping a life of poverty while responding to the most pressing needs of our community.

In 2014 LSNF served 6,528 clients resulting in \$1,405,422 in one time benefits and \$578,856 in annualized benefits in addition to obtaining 260 injunctions for protection and 55 dissolutions of marriage for victims of violence, relief for 119 families allowing them to remain in their homes, preparation of 472 wills and advanced directives, and other legal solutions including recovering social security benefits for disabled clients, representing children in the foster care system, protecting victims of violence and children, and saving our neighbors' homes. As a consequence of direct services provided to clients by **LSNF** staff and volunteers, **LSNF** relieves the demand for other social services. Due to the work of LSNF there is less stress on law enforcement. When civil disputes are left unresolved they often escalate to criminal matters, costing the community more to resolve and endangering people who are impacted. Because of the representation we provide we impact the local economy in a positive way. When we obtain child support benefits, disability benefits, or other types of relief those dollars get spent in our community. Additionally, when we keep people in their homes the tax base is strengthened and neighborhoods are more stable.

LSNF is proud of its 39 years of service to the community and grateful for the many community, governmental, grant and private partners who have helped us provide hope and justice.

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