

NATIONAL CONVOCATION DATA POINTS

Click on a jurisdiction to learn more about its legal needs

A diminishing amount of funding of legal services in conjunction with the nation's rising poverty rate has left a large group of low-income individuals and families unable to receive assistance for or resolve their legal needs.

In 2010, the nation's poverty rate rose to 15.1%, its highest level since 1993. For children, the rate rose to 22% in 2010, or more than 1 in 5 children. Yet, in fiscal year 2012, Congress decreased funding to the Legal Services Corporation from approximately \$404 million to \$348 million. Interest on lawyers' trust account, the second largest source of funding for legal services and legal aid programs, have fallen as much as 80% due to the decline in the housing market and in interest rates, while foundation grants, state funding, and other sources have been cut drastically.

In 1994, the national Comprehensive Legal Needs Study of the American Bar Association found that approximately 80% of low-income individuals and families who had a major life problem capable of being resolved in the justice system did not get assistance. This percentage has been reaffirmed in legal need studies across the nation. Among those who recognized their need for and sought legal assistance, one person was turned away for every person who received help from their local legal services program. These statistics reflect the situation before the recent increase in poverty and reduction in funding for legal services and, therefore, likely underreport the current extent of unmet needs among the poor.

To read more about the current unmet civil legal needs of low-income Americans, access the Legal Service Corporation's 2009 report [Documenting the Justice Gap in America](#).

Alabama

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	12.2%
2009	14.3%
2011	19.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$9,944,565	\$10,222,090	\$9,856,547

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,039,499 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 82% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Almost half (48%) of the low-income households in Alabama experienced one or more legal problems in 2006. Low-income households had an average of 1.7 legal problems and households that experienced at least one legal problem faced an average of 3.6 issues where some form of legal assistance could have been needed.

The state ranks last in spending for legal services for the poor. It spends less than \$10 per person versus national average of \$23. Due to court funding reductions, many courts houses have closed and those that remain open have reduced hours and security staff.

Source: [Alabama Access to Justice Commission: 2007 Legal Needs Report](#)

Alaska

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.1%
2009	9.0%
2011	10.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$3,115,811	\$3,006,015	\$3,441,751

**LSC-funded entities received \$209,194 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 44% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

An Alaskan legal aid organization rejected 979 of the 2,834 applications it received and half of the rejected applications could have been helped if there were more resources. Twenty-nine percent of Alaska residents lack ready access to justice system services because of geographic isolation.

Higher costs of living make the poverty rate less meaningful than it would be if living costs were a consideration.

Source: [Alaska Supreme Court 1997 Report: Fairness and Access Problems and Recommendations](#)

Arizona

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	15.6%
2009	16.5%
2011	19.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$15,084,294	\$16,894,783	\$16,519,707

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,617,989 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 73% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

As of 2009, 16.5% of Arizona’s population – over 860,000 residents – lived at or below the federal poverty guideline. A 2007 study by the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education found that approximately 32% of the population living in poverty had a crisis issue within the prior 12 months with which an attorney’s help was needed. Combined, these statistics suggest that the poorest Arizona residents alone had 276,000 matters needing an attorney’s assistance.

Source: [Arizona Access to Justice Task Force Report 2011](#)

Arkansas

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	17.0%
2009	18.8%
2011	19.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$6,445,788	\$6,625,067	\$6,411,177

**LSC-funded entities received \$603,507 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 67% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2011, over 500,000 Arkansans were eligible for legal aid, but only 30,821 eligible clients requested help. Of them, 15,812 clients were served, while 15,009 were turned away due to resource constraints.

1,334 private attorneys volunteered to take pro bono cases, and the dollar value of pro bono services rendered by attorneys was \$1.9 million. 0% of funding for legal aid in 2011 came from IOLTA.

Source: [Arkansas Access to Justice 2011 Annual Justice Partners Report](#)

California

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.7%
2009	14.2%
2011	16.6%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$99,976,331	\$106,207,996	\$105,223,864

**LSC-funded entities received \$7,188,687 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 50% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

There are approximately 8 million people in California eligible for IOLTA-funded legal services. A 2005 survey indicated that roughly 75% (170,000) cases were being rejected every year. The justice gap was estimated at \$390M in 2000. Over 4.3 million court users are pro se including 70% of family law matters (2007). Average total funding by county ranges from \$18.56 per poor person annually in California's 28 rural counties to a mean of \$44.83 per poor person in the seven urban counties of the state.

Source: [Improving Civil Justice in Rural California Report](#)

Colorado

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	8.7%
2009	12.9%
2011	13.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$15,569,961	\$15,188,938	\$13,169,525

**LSC-funded entities received \$597,912 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 31% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 1980, there was one legal service attorney for every 4,839 eligible clients. In 2008, there was one legal service attorney for every 16,890 eligible individuals. In 2007, Colorado ranked 40th in state funding for civil legal services for the indigent at \$1.29 per low-income individual. Since 1980, the number of legal aid lawyers has been cut in half, while the number of low-income people has increased by almost 75%.

Source: [Colorado Access to Justice Commission: 2008 Report](#)

Connecticut

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	7.7%
2009	9.4%
2011	10.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$2,884,611	\$3,341,885	\$3,360,900

**LSC-funded entities received \$385,711 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 91% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Connecticut households are eligible for legal aid services if their incomes are at or below 125% of the federal poverty level. Eligible households face an average of 2.7 civil law problems a year, which translates into 289,000 civil law problems among households at or below the federal poverty level. A survey found that 90% of the civil law problems identified by respondents did not receive any attention from lawyers.

Source: [Connecticut Access to Justice Commission: 2012 Report](#)

Delaware

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.3%
2009	10.8%
2011	11.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$1,041,279	\$1,029,561	\$1,020,067

**LSC-funded entities received \$100,602 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 68% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2009, state funding for legal services was in the bottom 20% per capita of all states. The Delaware Community Legal Aid Society has had to significantly reduce staffing, resulting in a loss of 19 of employees from its previous staff total of 58. The number of attorneys has been reduced from 24 to 15.

Source: [Legal Services Corporation of Delaware, Inc.: 2009 News Article](#)

Florida

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	12.8%
2009	14.9%
2011	17.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$41,629,340	\$46,030,306	\$45,839,719

**LSC-funded entities received \$2,922,448 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 48% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2009, Florida changed the court funding structure from general state revenue to filing fees. While Governor Scott approved \$14 million to support mediation, arbitration, and court education, the reduced funding threatens furloughs within the court system and delays in distribution of justice.

In 2006, 52% of the in-state attorneys who completed the Florida Bar survey reported providing pro bono legal services. During the period of 2000 to 2006, the Florida pro bono programs for the poor reported a 30% decline in the number of attorneys who provided pro bono legal services through the program.

Source: [The Florida Bar News](#)
[2008 Florida State Bar Report on Pro Bono](#)

Georgia

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	12.6%
2009	16.5%
2011	19.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$23,561,959	\$23,982,274	\$23,336,155

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,547,249 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 48% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In Georgia, 40.4% of low-income households with unmet legal needs reported that the problem caused significant trouble and 66.0% reported that legal problems caused some level of trouble. On average, there are three legal needs per year per low-income household. For all low-income households only 9.1% of problems received legal assistance.

Source: [Report: Civil Legal Needs of Low and Moderate Income Households in Georgia in 2009](#)

Hawaii

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	8.8%
2009	10.4%
2011	12.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$8,990,998	\$8,805,703	\$11,098,847

**LSC-funded entities received \$262,793 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 16% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2007, it was estimated that close to one in five low-income residents have their legal needs met. There are 2,291 low-income individuals (125% or below poverty level) per legal service attorney.

Source: [Hawaii Legal Aid Foundation: 2007 Assessment of Legal Needs Barriers](#)

Idaho

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.4%
2009	14.3%
2011	16.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$2,437,717	\$2,502,285	\$2,471,269

**LSC-funded entities received \$233,277 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 65% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2011, more than 700 attorneys provided over 16,000 volunteer hours to more than 1,200 low-income individuals, including providing legal representation in more than 550 court cases. These free services are valued at over \$2,500,000.

Source: [Idaho Pro Bono Commission: 2011 News Release](#)

Illinois

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.1%
2009	13.3%
2011	15.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$30,064,980	\$31,650,388	\$33,109,063

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,933,637 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 40% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2003 study found that low-income people face more than 1.3 million civil legal problems per year. Low-income Illinoisans received legal assistance for only one out of every six legal problems they encountered in 2003; there was one full-time equivalent legal aid lawyer for every 4,752 legal problems faced by low-income individuals.

In the past three years, the number of pro bono cases handled by volunteer attorneys has increased by 69%. While the number of cases handled by pro bono lawyers is increasing, paid staff of legal aid organizations continue to address the great majority of legal problems taken on by those organizations. In 2005, more than 50% of low-income households in Illinois had unmet legal needs.

Source: [The Legal Aid Safety Net 2005 Report](#)

Indiana

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.1%
2009	14.4%
2011	16.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$9,317,138	\$9,123,956	\$9,317,138

**LSC-funded entities received \$837,363 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 67% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Approximately 900,000 low-income people (125% or below poverty level) faced civil legal problems in 2008, or about 86% of the low-income population in the state. Of the income-eligible applicants applying to Indiana Legal Services, 75% were unable to receive attorney representation necessary to fully meet their legal needs. There are 8,850 low-income individuals per legal service attorney. If residents with income below 200% of the federal poverty line are considered, the ratio increases to approximately one attorney per 16,100 potential clients.

Source: [Unequal Access to Justice Study in 2008](#)

Iowa

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.0%
2009	11.8%
2011	12.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$8,298,013	\$8,465,885	\$7,919,191

**LSC-funded entities received \$386,153 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 35% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Legal services programs serving low-income Iowans are forced to routinely turn away large numbers of applicants for services due to limited staff or are only able to provide clients with advice over the telephone or through a pamphlet. Because of their unfamiliarity with the law and court procedures, pro se litigants have trouble negotiating the court system and require judicial staff to spend additional time explaining and assisting litigants through the process.

Source: [ISJA and ISBA Task Force: 2005 Pro Se Report](#)

Kansas

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.5%
2009	13.4%
2011	13.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$7,681,288	\$7,633,274	\$8,053,043

**LSC-funded entities received \$385,885 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 33% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Kansas Legal Services regularly serves between 20,000 to 30,000 persons a year, and thousands more through its website. Still, for every person served, two are turned away because of limited resources. It is reported that there is an average of 4.66 legal needs per household over a three-year period, with about 2.07 needs reportedly unmet.

Source: [Kansas Legal Needs Study 2011](#)

Kentucky

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	16.4%
2009	18.6%
2011	19.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$18,329,031	\$18,799,057	\$17,190,829

**LSC-funded entities received \$922,691 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 82% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

The need for civil legal aid in Kentucky is great and continues to grow. Kentucky Legal Aid receives 4,000 calls a month requesting legal help and closes about 24,000 cases each year, which provides critical assistance to 68,000 low-income families and children who have nowhere else to turn for help. About 55% of the people who apply and are eligible for civil legal aid services are turned away because of lack of resources.

Source: [Kentucky Access to Justice Commission](#)

Louisiana

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	20.0%
2009	17.3%
2011	20.4%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$13,903,426	\$15,047,030	\$14,881,927

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,786,379 less in FY12—a reduction of 24%. LSC made up 65% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

With approximately one million poor persons in Louisiana, and an estimated 25% of these individuals experiencing at least one legal problem each year, Louisiana has a large number of individuals who cannot afford an attorney.

Twenty-six percent of children in Louisiana live in poverty, which makes them most at risk for homelessness.

Source: [Louisiana State Bar Access to Justice Committee](#)

Maine

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.1%
2009	12.3%
2011	14.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$6,478,218	\$6,693,099	\$6,390,340

**LSC-funded entities received \$224,556 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 29% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2005 study found that 83% of eligible individuals seeking legal aid were unable to receive the help or the level of assistance they needed. In 2009, Maine's largest legal aid providers met 24% of total demand for civil legal assistance.

Source: [Justice Action Group 2007 Planning Report](#)

Maryland

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.3%
2009	9.1%
2011	10.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$23,925,305	\$26,469,824	\$27,535,482

**LSC-funded entities received \$660,571 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 17% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2007 study estimates that approximately 250,000 Maryland residents who are eligible for free legal services experience legal problems. Low and moderate-income households have between one and three legal problems per year. In 2011, more than 40,000 people seeking legal help were turned away.

In 2010, court filing fee surcharges increased to generate additional revenue to support legal services. In 2011, the surcharge generated \$12.9 million.

Source: [Final Report and Recommendations on the Potential Use of Private Lawyers](#)
[Maryland Legal Services Corporation 2011 Annual Report](#)

Massachusetts

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.6%
2009	10.3%
2011	11.6%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$7,557,577	\$8,567,604	\$10,838,222

**LSC-funded entities received \$855,531 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 59% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Over 700,000 Massachusetts residents have incomes at 125% or less of the federal poverty line. Two-thirds of these people encounter at least one legal problem every year, only 20% of which are addressed. In a 2006 survey of legal aid programs, half of the clients were turned away. Approximately 100,000 litigants represent themselves in civil matters in state courts each year.

Source: [2010 Report on Access to Justice Initiatives in the Trial Court](#)

Michigan

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.1%
2009	16.2%
2011	17.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$25,172,328	\$26,171,328	\$26,058,787

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,556,051 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 44% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

For every four persons served by legal services organizations in Michigan in 2005, three are turned away because of insufficient resources. Nearly half of those who need legal help with eviction and foreclosure defenses are denied legal services. Only 25% of low-income individuals are able to receive legal help.

There is one lawyer for about every 300 people in the general population, but only one legal aid lawyer for every 13,223 poor persons. In 2007, lawyers in Michigan devoted 278,935 hours of pro bono service. The average number of hours per attorney providing free civil legal services for poor individuals declined by nearly six hours per attorney from nearly 22 hours in 1996 to slightly more than 16 hours in 2007.

Source: [Documenting the Justice Gap in Michigan in 2012](#)

Minnesota

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	6.9%
2009	11.0%
2011	11.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$17,973,230	\$17,202,914	\$16,699,781

**LSC-funded entities received \$627,467 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 26% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2003, it was reported that coalition programs served only between 2% and 19% of the estimated legal needs in their respective areas. Total revenue for all civil legal services programs declined by over \$5 million in annual funding from all sources from 2008 to 2011. This led to layoffs across many programs and resulted in one practicing attorney for every 446 Minnesotans and one legal services attorney for every 4,453 eligible clients in Minnesota. In 1995, there were 38 offices providing civil legal services in Minnesota. In 2009, there were only 26 legal services offices in Minnesota.

Source: [Minnesota Legal Service Planning Commission: 2005 Report](#)

Mississippi

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	18.2%
2009	21.9%
2011	22.6%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$9,306,483	\$7,870,446	\$7,698,668

**LSC-funded entities received \$863,865 less in FY12—a reduction of 18%. LSC made up 78% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

At the time the Mississippi Commission was created Mississippi ranked 49th in overall funding per person for civil legal services. In 1980, there were approximately 100 legal services attorneys statewide in 29 fully staffed offices across the state. In 2009, there were only ten offices, and most are minimally staffed.

Source: [2009 Report: The Unmet Needs of Civil Legal Needs](#)

Missouri

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.2%
2009	14.6%
2011	15.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$20,255,562	\$21,000,348	\$20,804,319

**LSC-funded entities received \$954,713 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 32% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Montana

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.4%
2009	15.1%
2011	14.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$3,360,432	\$3,411,525	\$3,335,258

**LSC-funded entities received \$218,266 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 51% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2010, 49% of low-income households in Montana faced legal problems, with an average of 3.47 legal needs per household. The total number of legal problems was estimated at 245,000 in 2005. 77.1% of households reported doing nothing in response to at least one of their civil legal needs.

Source: [Montana Legal Needs Survey Final Report](#)

Nebraska

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.6%
2009	12.3%
2011	13.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$2,393,679	\$5,264,797	\$5,145,554

**LSC-funded entities received \$246,798 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 34% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Nevada

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.9%
2009	12.4%
2011	15.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$3,125,486	\$3,446,502	\$3,357,707

**LSC-funded entities received \$329,690 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 70% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2008 survey showed that over 67% of low-income households in Nevada experience significant civil legal problems that require assistance from an attorney. Those with legal problems average 2.4 legal needs per household. An estimate projects that 20% of low-income households were not able to access services for all of their legal problems.

Source: [Nevada Access to Justice Commission: 2008 Assessment of Legal Needs Report](#)

New Hampshire

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	5.3%
2009	8.5%
2011	8.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$897,111	\$951,733	\$1,063,813

**LSC-funded entities received \$115,925 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 74% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

From 2005 to 2010, legal aid in New Hampshire saw a 43% increase in the total number of cases they turned away due to lack of resources. From 2008 to 2010, legal aid was forced to decrease their case load by 9.4%. Overall, only 3.4% of individuals eligible for legal aid in New Hampshire are receiving legal aid services.

Source: [The Legal Needs of Low-Income Citizens in New Hampshire for 2011](#)

New Jersey

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	7.9%
2009	9.4%
2011	10.4%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$48,690,655	\$41,099,524	\$33,628,608

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,047,172 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 22% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2009, a study reported that 32.5% of lower-income respondents in New Jersey reported at least one new legal problem during the preceding year. 30.6% of respondents who tried to get the help of a lawyer or believed they needed the help of a lawyer were able to get assistance. Respondents with lower incomes rated 58.2% of their legal problems as most serious.

Source: [Legal Services of New Jersey Civil Justice Gap 2009 Report](#)

New Mexico

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	18.0%
2009	18.0%
2011	21.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$6,367,815	\$6,512,495	\$5,869,015

**LSC-funded entities received \$533,520 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 62% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

75% of legal needs in New Mexico are either not brought into the legal system or unlikely to receive appropriate service. A number of courts have vacancies that are not being filed due to budget shortfalls, which has resulted in a reduction in programs for litigants including court clinicians serving family court cases.

Source: [State Bar of New Mexico: 2009 LSC Report](#)

New York

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.1%
2009	14.2%
2011	16.0%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$98,493,353	\$102,056,432	\$98,121,805

**LSC-funded entities received \$4,029,343 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 30% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

At least 6,328,000 New Yorkers are living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. At best, 20% of the need for civil legal services is being met in New York State. The New York IOLA Fund generated close to \$32 million in 2008. In 2009, that figure plummeted, with only \$6.5 million in IOLA revenue available for distribution in 2010.

Source: [Report from the Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services in New York](#)

North Carolina

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.1%
2009	16.3%
2011	17.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$23,105,281	\$24,853,411	\$25,327,374

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,470,668 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 46% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Legal Aid of NC turns away eight eligible clients for every client accepted. There is only one legal aid attorney for every 15,500 low-income people. More than 1.3 million people under age 65 are uninsured in North Carolina, including some 240,000 children. Availability of legal services often makes the difference in access to vital health care.

Source: [2008 Initial Report of NC Equal Access to Justice Commission](#)

North Dakota

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.6%
2009	11.7%
2011	12.2%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$1,903,872	\$2,124,478	\$2,119,711

**LSC-funded entities received \$135,443 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 49% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2009 survey indicated that approximately 68% of respondents had experienced a need for legal representation during the prior five-year period. The most common areas of legal need were in housing law, family matters, estate planning, and consumer issues.

Source: [Exploring Equal Justice: 2009 Report](#)

Ohio

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.1%
2009	15.2%
2011	16.4%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$50,341,361	\$51,657,637	\$46,940,743

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,752,151 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 27% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 1991 statewide assessment of the legal needs for low-income individuals, revealed that 83% of those in need receive no attention. There is an average of 1.6 legal needs per household. Ohio attorneys reported 45% more pro bono hours for 2010 than 2009 for a total of almost 140,000 hours, the most in the three years the statistics have been collected.

Source: [The Spangenberg Report: 1991](#)
[Ohio Supreme Court 2010 News: Pro Bono Reports](#)

Oklahoma

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.8%
2009	16.2%
2011	17.2%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$11,986,031	\$12,164,909	\$12,058,109

**LSC-funded entities received \$869,743 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 53% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma’s Tulsa office turned away 18% more people in the first quarter of 2009 than in the same period in 2008. In 2004, Oklahoma made the IOLTA program mandatory. Since then, Oklahoma Bar Foundation’s awards dramatically increased.

Source: [Support for Legal Aid](#)

Oregon

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.2%
2009	14.3%
2011	17.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$9,062,862	\$9,584,966	\$8,239,309

**LSC-funded entities received \$612,146 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 51% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

The current legal services delivery system in Oregon is meeting the legal needs of low income people in 53,650 (17.8%) of the 301,944 cases a year that require a lawyer’s assistance. 82.2% of legal problems are not addressed with legal representation, 9.7% obtain help from a legal services program, 8.1% obtain help from a private attorney.

Source: [The State of Access to Justice in Oregon](#)

Pennsylvania

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.5%
2009	12.5%
2011	13.8%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$35,588,163	\$38,016,322	\$38,389,495

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,951,835 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 36% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

It is estimated that one of every two people who sought and were eligible for legal aid in Pennsylvania had to be turned away. In 2002, a \$2 surcharge on court filings generated revenue for free civil legal assistance and in 2009 a \$1 filing fee was enacted to offset a decline in IOLTA funding. The surcharges raised \$10.8 million in FY 2011.

Source: [Civil Legal Aid in Pennsylvania: 2009 Report](#)

Rhode Island

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.7%
2009	11.5%
2011	14.7%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$3,683,913	\$4,130,269	\$3,834,411

**LSC-funded entities received \$180,134 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 32% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In March through May of 2005, Rhode Island legal services turned away 500 cases. Volunteer attorneys closed 16% of the cases closed by Rhode Island Legal Services in 2003, above the national average of 12%.

Rhode Island courts have delayed filling judicial vacancies, vacancies in clerks' offices, and vacancies in judicial support positions. They have also frozen the salaries of judges and staff. These steps have resulted in delayed court proceedings, data entry, and mail processing. Other impacts include delayed issuance of bench warrants, limited interpreter services, and incomplete case records.

Source: [Addressing Unmet Legal Need for 2004 in Rhode Island](#)

South Carolina

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	14.4%
2009	17.1%
2011	18.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$10,067,434	\$9,919,803	\$10,488,745

**LSC-funded entities received \$819,979 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 54% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

The poverty rate for children in South Carolina increased to 26.1% in 2010, the equivalent of more than 1 in 4 children.

Due to a lack of funding there has been a reduction of legal aid services including layoffs of four attorneys and closing of two offices. Annualized staff salary increases have not been issued since 2007.

Source: [South Carolina Access to Justice Commission: 2009 Executive Summary](#)

South Dakota

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.5%
2009	14.2%
2011	13.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$3,005,958	\$3,335,429	\$3,086,250

**LSC-funded entities received \$1,039,499 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 82% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Tennessee

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	13.5%
2009	17.1%
2011	18.3%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$21,724,002	\$23,642,697	\$20,615,234

**LSC-funded entities received \$296,936 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 66% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2003 survey reveals that more than 70% of the one million low-income individuals in Tennessee have one or more civil legal needs in a year and that the most widespread problems involve predatory lending practices, medical bills, health insurance, and housing or utility issues. Of the 15.7% of survey respondents that sought civil legal assistance, legal aid programs could help only slightly more than half because of the lack of lawyers and resources.

Source: [Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services Legal Needs 2004 Survey](#)

Texas

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	15.1%
2009	17.2%
2011	18.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$55,212,183	\$67,391,557	\$64,972,569

**LSC-funded entities received \$4,720,130 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 54% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

About one in five legal aid applicants in Texas receive the civil legal services they need. Due to a lack of resources, there is approximately only one legal aid lawyer for every 10,500 Texans who qualify for services. As a result, only 20-25% of the civil legal needs of poor and low-income Texans are being met.

In 2009, 51.9% of active in-state attorneys provided an average of 57.5 hours of pro bono legal or indirect legal services that benefited the low-income individuals.

Sources: [Texas Access to Justice Commission 2008 Report](#)
[State Bar of Texas Pro Bono Survey](#)

Utah

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	8.8%
2009	11.5%
2011	13.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$4,217,161	\$4,492,867	\$4,309,550

**LSC-funded entities received \$322,322 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 56% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

According to a 2006 survey, 67% of low-income households in Utah will face an average of 1.28 civil legal disputes per year. The survey found that there is an enormous need for legal services that is not being met – more than 80,320 cases each year. In family law cases, 49% of petitioners and 81% of respondents proceed pro se.

Due to a reduction in court funding, some staff positions have been cut and judges' salaries have been frozen. The state legislature unanimously passed a bill that will provide data on the extent of, and the demographics attached to, inter-generational poverty.

Source: [Utah Legal Services: The Justice Gap in 2006 Report](#)

Vermont

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	10.7%
2009	11.4%
2011	11.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$687,626	\$742,130	\$777,023

**LSC-funded entities received \$81,763 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 92% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A 2001 survey reported that greater than 50% of low-income households in Vermont faced a legal problem, and 75% of low-income families faced their legal problem without help. Low-income households face an average of 1.1 legal problems, amounting to a total of 59,000 legal problems per year.

The child poverty rate in Vermont rose from 13.3% in 2009 to 16.7% in 2010.

Vermont judges and lawyers believe that the most effective solution to the unmet legal needs of the poor is increased funding for legal services. In FY2011, the court-funding budget was \$37.6M and for FY2012, this has been increased to \$39.3M. Over the past year, VT consolidated the courts into one trial court with four divisions, consolidating management positions.

Sources: [Committee on Equal Access to Legal Services: 2001 Report](#)
[Vermont Courts Budget: 2010](#)

Virginia

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	9.2%
2009	10.5%
2011	11.5%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$18,199,356	\$21,443,886	\$20,196,883

**LSC-funded entities received \$982,778 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%.
LSC made up 35% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

A Virginia legal needs study reported that the average number of legal needs among households with at least one legal need was 3.62. The average number of legal needs a year per low-income household was 2.4. The report states that 17% of households with a legal need used a private lawyer or legal aid to assist them with that problem.

A reduction in funding has resulted in legal aid staffing layoffs of 20 lawyers and 10 support staff. It is estimated that another 5 to 10 lawyers will be let go in 2012. Funding reductions have also increased the amount of judge vacancies.

Source: [Virginia 2007 Legal Needs Survey](#)

Washington

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.6%
2009	12.3%
2011	13.9%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$21,756,860	\$22,535,056	\$23,062,267

**LSC-funded entities received \$963,320 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%.
LSC made up 35% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2003, more than three-quarters of all low-income households in Washington experience at least one civil legal problem each year. In the aggregate, low-income people experienced more than one million important civil legal problems annually and more than 85% of those problems go without help from an attorney. Attorney assistance is most successfully secured in family-related matters, but still only 30% of legal problems reported are addressed with the assistance of an attorney. Removing family-related problems, low-income people receive help from an attorney with respect to less than 10% of all civil legal problems.

Source: [Task Force on Civil Equal Justice Funding: 2003 Report](#)

Washington, D.C.

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	17.5%
2009	18.4%
2011	18.7%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$2,385,724	\$1,848,447	\$1,691,730

**LSC-funded entities received \$163,886 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 72% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2005, it was estimated that 90% of low-income Washington D.C. residents' legal needs are unmet. In 2009, legal services providers lost the capacity to represent 1,050 clients. In 2007 and 2008 the appropriation for Access to Justice funding was \$3.1 and \$3.6 million respectively. This funding has been threatened in recent years, requiring a coordinated effort to convince the DC government to continue it.

Source: [DC Access to Justice Commission: 2009 Report](#)

West Virginia

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	18.6%
2009	17.7%
2011	18.6%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$7,953,404	\$8,515,700	\$8,571,539

**LSC-funded entities received \$472,639 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 38% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

Legal Aid of West Virginia has a staff of only 40 attorneys serving a potentially eligible low-income population of approximately 300,000 people. In 1981, there were about 75 legal aid attorneys in West Virginia.

Source: [Current Legal Assistance - Legal Aid of West Virginia \(2010 - 2012\)](#)

Wisconsin

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	8.9%
2009	12.4%
2011	13.1%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$10,525,749	\$12,221,834	\$12,719,233

**LSC-funded entities received \$701,288 less in FY12—a reduction of 17%. LSC made up 44% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In Wisconsin, 80% of low-income households that confront a legal need do so without legal assistance. More than half a million Wisconsinites must contend with significant legal troubles without any legal help and 60% of the time the party on the other side is represented by a lawyer. Most legal aid organizations are able to help only about 20% of those who qualify.

Source: [Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission: 2007 Report](#)

Wyoming

Poverty Statistics†

Year	Percentage
2000	11.4%
2009	9.8%
2011	11.3%

Legal Aid Funding*

Year	2009	2010	2011
Amount	\$552,926	\$869,784	\$1,002,283

**LSC-funded entities received \$4,234 more in FY12—an increase of 1%. LSC made up 79% of total funding for these organizations in FY11.*

In 2009, there were only about 15 lawyers in Wyoming Legal Services and the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence serving the poor, a population of between 50,000 and 55,000. While they handle over 3,000 cases a year, it is estimated that they only meet 20% of the need in the income eligible population.

Source: [The Wyoming Road to Equal Justice in 2009](#)

†Poverty statistics were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau - [American Fact Finder](#)