



ARKANSAS LEGAL AID QUICK FACTS

- Arkansans who face criminal prosecution have a constitutional right to have an attorney appointed to represent them in court. **No such right exists for Arkansans facing life-altering civil legal problems such as domestic violence, loss of a family home, or financial scams.** When left unresolved, these problems can snowball into crises that have a negative ripple effect on families and local communities.
- The most recent census data (2014) indicates that more than **722,248 Arkansans are currently eligible** by income to receive civil legal aid (eligibility is set at 125% of the Federal Poverty Level, which comes to \$29,813 for a family of four).
- Our state has two nonprofit organizations that provide free, high-quality legal representation for indigent Arkansans who face civil legal issues: **The Center for Arkansas Legal Services and Legal Aid of Arkansas together serve every county in state.** They receive a total of nearly 30,000 calls statewide each year from Arkansans with civil legal issues who qualify for help. **Half are turned away because legal aid does not have the resources or capacity to meet the demand.**
- In spite of limited financial resources, CALS and LAA stretch the dollars they receive in innovative ways, allowing them to **help about 12,000 clients each year with a combined staff of only 50 attorneys.** A recent study conducted by a team of students from the Clinton School of Public Service found that in 2013, these two programs provided services **a cost that was \$2.4 million less than the equivalent cost of such services in the private legal market** and that such services generated **more than \$32 million in economic activity** in the state.
- In 2015, legal aid staff attorneys and pro bono volunteers handled a total of approximately 11,222 cases statewide, resulting in help for approximately 32,342 constituents.