



Collaborating for Change

2023 Annual Report

LEGAL COUNCIL
FOR HEALTH JUSTICE

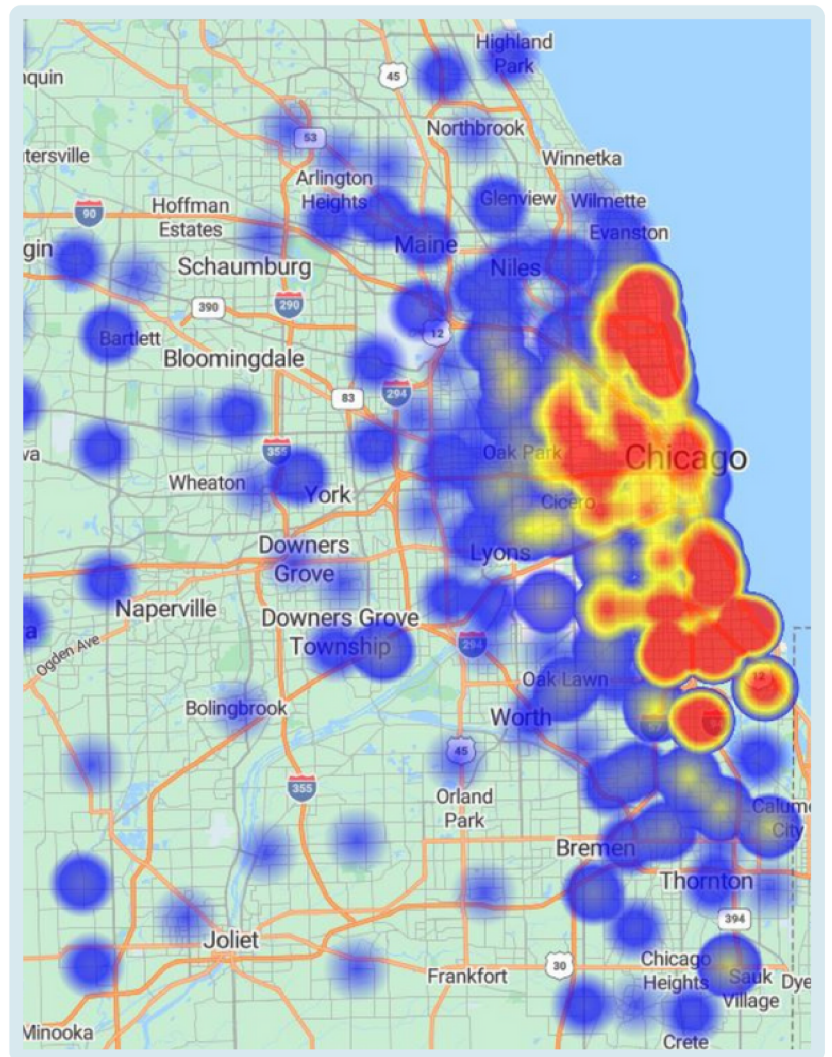
Our Mission

Legal Council for Health Justice uses the power of the law to secure dignity, opportunity, and well-being for people facing barriers due to illness or disability.

Our Vision

Everyone deserves a fair chance to lead a life of dignity and opportunity.

In 2023, we represented clients from **nearly 200 zip codes** in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.



A Note to Readers

In this report, you will read the stories of many of the clients we worked with this year. Unless otherwise noted(*), all names and any personally-identifying information have been changed.

A Word from Leadership

Of the more than 1,600 clients that Legal Council for Health Justice served in 2023, all had one thing in common—a chronic health condition or disability that impacted their ability to access income, employment, housing, education, health care, or insurance.

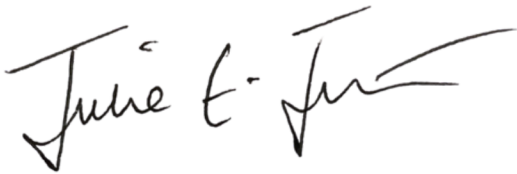
Through collaborations with partner organizations throughout Chicago, we met hundreds of clients—in hospitals and health centers, at public libraries, at schools and clinics, at temporary shelters, and at encampments on the streets—and provided them expert legal help to secure essential services and supports. In this report, you will meet a few of the many individuals we proudly assisted.

We know that for each client we help, thousands more have similar legal needs. Recognizing this need, we pressed for high-impact legislative and administrative changes that:

- Will reduce medical debt for Illinois families by requiring hospitals to screen uninsured patients for insurance coverage and financial support;
- Ended Medicaid pre-authorization requirements for essential hepatitis C cures;
- Prevented thousands of unwarranted Medicaid disenrollments by providing information and support to eligible recipients, and by pushing the state to address problematic terminations; and
- Improved opportunities for students with disabilities transitioning out of secondary school.

With the advent of 2024, we know that we've come a long way, accomplished a lot, and that we still have a lot to do to ensure that all people in our community can live with dignity and security.

Sincerely,



Julie E. Justicz (she/her)
Executive Director



1,644

Individual Clients

1,995

Legal Issues Addressed

1,341

Individuals Trained on Health-
Harming Legal Issues

Advocacy in Action

Our legislative advocacy—always conducted in compliance with nonprofit rules—is guided by our clients' stated needs and experiences.

Through our work with community partners, we identify and explore issues that need to be addressed and consider all approaches—informal advocacy, media, litigation, and legislation—to determine how to best achieve outcomes for those we serve.

We work in coalition with organizations across the state and with community partners throughout Chicago. Together, our advocacy successes in Springfield and beyond make a real difference in the lives of people throughout Illinois.



Ruth Edwards (she/her) sharing about Legal Council's work at a pro bono and community fair.

20+
Stakeholder groups
we regularly engage
with:

ABA in EPSDT Coalition
Access Living
AgeOptions Advocacy Task Force
The Alliance for Welcoming Healthcare
Black AIDS Institute Coalition
Black Treatment Advocates Network (BTAN)
CPS Board of Education Special Education Advisory
Committee: School Discipline Working Group
CTU Special Education Task Force
Equip for Equality
Healthy Illinois Coalition
Healthy Schools
IL AG Advisory Committee on Special Education
IL Children's Mental Health Partnership
Illinois Early Literacy Coalition
Illinois HIV Action Alliance
Illinois SNAP Advocates
Immigrant Access to Benefits Work Group
The Immigrant Health Academy
National Health Law Program's Health Justice Project
National Social Security Administration Advocates Task Force
Protecting Immigrant Families
Protecting Immigrant Families Illinois
Protect Our Care Illinois
School Health Access Collaborative
Special Education Advocacy Coalition of Chicago (SPEACC)
Strengthening WIC in Illinois

Medical Debt

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, medical debt is the most common debt impacting credit scores. It disproportionately impacts Black and immigrant communities and can cause many people to forgo medical treatment because of high costs.

To help reduce medical debt for uninsured Illinoisans, Legal Council worked with Rep. Dagmara "Dee" Avelar and Senator Robert Peters and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) to pass the Protect All Illinoisans from Unfair Medical Debt Act, which Governor J.B. Pritzker signed into law on June 27, 2023. The law ensures that hospitals affirmatively screen uninsured patients for health coverage and financial support rather than waiting for patients to request a screening—a win for health equity and justice.



Sen. Peters (left) and Rep. Avelar (right) share a high five at our Summer Soirée in celebration of Protect All Illinoisans from Unfair Medical Debt's passage.

Legal Council collaborated with the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights on their March report “Crisis in the Shadows: Medical Debt in Illinois,” which details the crisis of medical debt in the state.

Arturo's Story

Arturo, who immigrated to the United States to attend college, was referred to Legal Council for assistance after his Medicaid application was denied. When Staff Attorney Debbie Nall (she/her) met Arturo, he had over \$8,000 in unpaid medical bills, and was no longer able to work because of his fragile health.

Debbie worked closely with Arturo to correct the denial of Medicaid benefits, which Arturo should have received. The two then filed applications for hospital financial assistance with two major health systems to request forgiveness of the unpaid medical bills, arguing that Arturo should not have to pay the bills he incurred while he was eligible for Medicaid. Arturo was eligible for financial assistance, and both applications were granted.

Today, Arturo has Medicaid coverage, and his medical debt was addressed by hospital financial assistance, as it should have been in the first place.

Legislative Wins

Our ambitious legislative agenda for 2023 was grounded in health and racial equity to ensure everyone in Illinois has access to quality care. Legal Council was an active partner in the following bills' passage:

Statewide Literacy Plan (HB2872/SB2243)

Removing Barriers to Higher Education Success Act (SB99)

Protect All Illinoisans from Unfair Medical Debt (HB2719/SB2080)

Improving Access to Dual Credit Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (HB3224)

The Civil Rights Remedies Restoration Act (HB2248)

DHS Stolen SNAP Benefits Data (HB2214)

Legal Council can resolve systemic issues through administrative advocacy with state agencies. This year, we worked on a bill to end the prior authorization requirements in Illinois Medicaid for direct-acting antivirals that cure Hepatitis C, a condition that disproportionately impacts Black communities. The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services agreed to end prior authorization requirements for the drugs without the need for legislation. **Treatment for Hepatitis C is now more accessible and equitable.**

Public Charge

In 2023, the Cook County and ICIRR public charge litigation team received an Award for Excellence in Pro Bono and Public Interest Service from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and the Chicago Chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Legal Council attorneys Meghan Carter (she/her) and Carrie Chapman (she/her) represented ICIRR with co-counsel from Sidley Austin LLP, Shriver Center on Poverty Law, and the National Housing Law Project; co-plaintiff Cook County was represented by the Cook County State's Attorney's Office and Goldberg Kohn, Ltd.

Supported by national partners, co-plaintiffs Cook County and ICIRR litigated for more than three years to successfully end the Trump administration's harmful public charge rule.





Medicaid Unwinding

Medicaid is an essential lifeline for low-income individuals and people with disabilities. During the Public Health Emergency (PHE), federal COVID-19 relief laws allowed states to pause termination and provide continuous coverage to people with Medicaid insurance.

These provisions ended when Congress separated the rule from the PHE. Beginning April 1, states were permitted to resume regular Medicaid eligibility redeterminations and disenrollments, putting Medicaid members at risk of losing access to health coverage for procedural reasons even though they remain eligible for Medicaid.

Medicaid members who have disabilities and older adults who are terminated, despite remaining eligible, face challenges accessing medications, medical equipment, and specialty care, even if they are ultimately reinstated. Procedural terminations lead to delayed or neglected medical treatment, worsening health outcomes, and increased financial burden for individuals who may have to pay out-of-pocket for services that Medicaid would have covered.

Legal Council is responding to these realities. Our team works with current clients to navigate the difficult processes involved in maintaining their health insurance, and we continue to accept referrals from our health partners for individuals who faced termination and need assistance to appeal their cases. Additionally, we are engaged in ongoing dialogue with the state to address challenges and opportunities for positive change, including amplifying the lived experiences of Medicaid enrollees and educating decision-makers on the importance of providing the greatest possible access to coverage options.

Our advocacy work is crucial in providing feedback when systemic issues arise and promoting changes to protect Medicaid members' rights.

450+

Individuals trained on redeterminations and Medicaid unwinding

The MLP Model

Legal Council provides services through a Medical Legal Partnership (MLP) model. MLPs are innovative, evidence-based models of civil legal aid, that partner health systems and legal services organizations. MLPs use the power of medicine and the law together to make people and places healthier.

Our client-centered model provides comprehensive, trauma-informed services to clients in their communities. We embed attorneys and legal advocates within hospitals, community health clinics, and homeless services agencies to provide direct legal representation on:

- Accessing healthcare through advocacy on Medicaid, Medicare, Marketplace Insurance coverage, and other medical and prescription coverage;
- Public benefits advocacy, including Social Security, SSI, SNAP, and other benefits;
- Education cases for children with special needs due to chronic health care issues.

Through our three projects serving different priority populations—our AIDS Legal Council Program, Children’s Program, and Homeless Outreach Program—we are able to meet the legal needs of individuals who are unlikely to know about or seek legal assistance.

Step 1: Train



We train healthcare and social service providers to evaluate their patients for legal needs that impact their health and well-being.

Step 2: Identify Need



Patients are screened for legal needs during regular visits to their healthcare providers. When a legal issue is detected, patients are referred to Legal Council.

Step 3: Treat



After screening referred patients for additional legal issues that may not have come up with their provider, we treat now-clients with trauma-informed, personalized legal services.

Homeless Outreach Program

The Homeless Outreach Program (HOP) serves people with mental health and other issues who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through partnerships with social services agencies. HOP staff also see clients on the streets, in encampments, and in temporary housing.

MLP Partners



Kate Miller (she/he) and summer law student Clayton Kovich (he/him) at Harold Washington Library,

Adam's Story

Adam is a lifelong Chicago resident with a good-natured smile always at the ready, never failing to extend a helping hand to others. He had been experiencing homelessness since 2000 when our legal team connected with him through the collaborative CPL Cares program at Harold Washington Library. He had struggled for years to find affordable housing and work because of his disabilities, history of co-occurring substance use disorder, and reentry following incarceration. Adam wanted his situation to improve but was understandably wary of legal help.

After gaining Adam's trust with time, patience, and trauma-informed services, Senior Legal Advocate Kate Miller (she/he) represented him through his SSI disability application process.

Today, Adam has regular income and a permanent home.



At intake, 4 of every 5 HOP clients are actively experiencing homelessness.

Maximizing the MLP

Legal Council's MLP at ACCESS Community Health Network exemplifies how combining legal advocacy and medical expertise promotes patient health and mitigates the systemic barriers that prevent individuals from accessing the care and resources they need.

Thomas Sanchez (Health & Community Integration Project Manager) and Hayley Willey (Care Coordinator) at ACCESS shared their insights on the critical role of MLPs.

What have been the benefits of having a medical-legal partnership at ACCESS?

Thomas: It's been very beneficial to our patients and aligns well with our mission to achieve greater health equity by removing the barrier to legal assistance. For example, if a patient with asthma has issues with a landlord who refuses to address a mold problem in their dwelling, often without legal support, that problem would never get resolved, and the landlord would not be held accountable.



Why should other health centers and systems consider incorporating an MLP into their sites?

Thomas: Legal assistance may feel impossible for many of our patients to access or afford, so having Legal Council's free services and resources available within our health centers is extremely valuable to our patients and staff. It's just one more way we can address social determinants of health and help improve our patients' and communities' quality of life.

Can you share any examples of a case where the MLP significantly impacted a patient's care or well-being?

Hayley: We work with Taylor Belew and Lena Lazar, who are on the Children's team at Legal Council. With their assistance, a pregnant patient avoided an illegal eviction. They also frequently assist patients with Supplemental Security Income (SSI) appeals, which help provide financial security.



How has this MLP impacted your team's ability to provide services?

Hayley: Any detail or question we have about housing, public benefits, or tenant rights, Lena and Taylor take the time to offer detailed explanations. Not only have I learned so much from them, but I have better tools to help support my patients.

Medical and social
service provider
partners

15

250+

Consultations with
service providers on
potential legal issues

As we strive for health equity, it is vital to recognize the power of collaborative efforts and their positive impact on individuals and communities alike.

Chicago Medical-Legal Partnership for Children

The Chicago Medical-Legal Partnership for Children (CMLPC or the Children’s Program) serves children with complex medical issues that impact their day to-day functioning. We also serve family members when the legal issues impact the families’ ability to care for their children or concern access to food, shelter, and income.



CMLPC staff members rallying in support of healthcare for immigrant adults.

MLP Partners

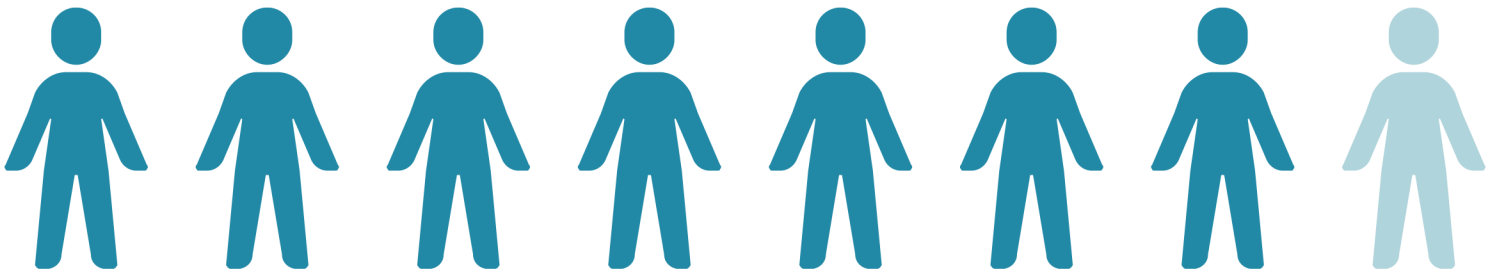


Ashley's Story

Young mother Ashley was referred to us for a housing issue. In screening for other legal issues, legal advocate Lena Lazar (she/her) noticed Ashley was not receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), despite being eligible for the program.

She also noticed that Ashley had inadvertently missed her SNAP (food stamps) redetermination deadline. Lena worked with Ashley to set up an online account that allowed her to apply for and track all of her benefits in one place and guided her through the application process. Lena also assisted Ashley in submitting redetermination paperwork to get her SNAP reinstated.

Ashley prioritized being able to provide care for herself and her son and had already sought out and applied for other programs on her own before we met her. Our efforts enabled Ashley to receive additional resources she needed for her and her young son quickly.



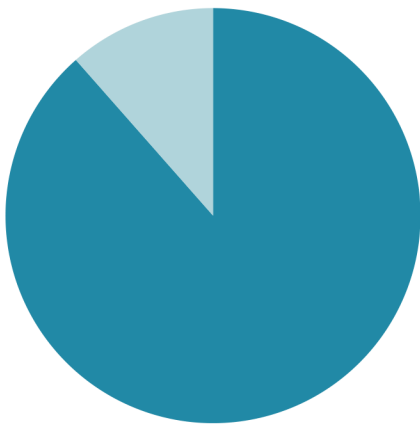
Nearly 90% of CMLPC clients under 18 have a disability.

The MLP: From Issue to Impact

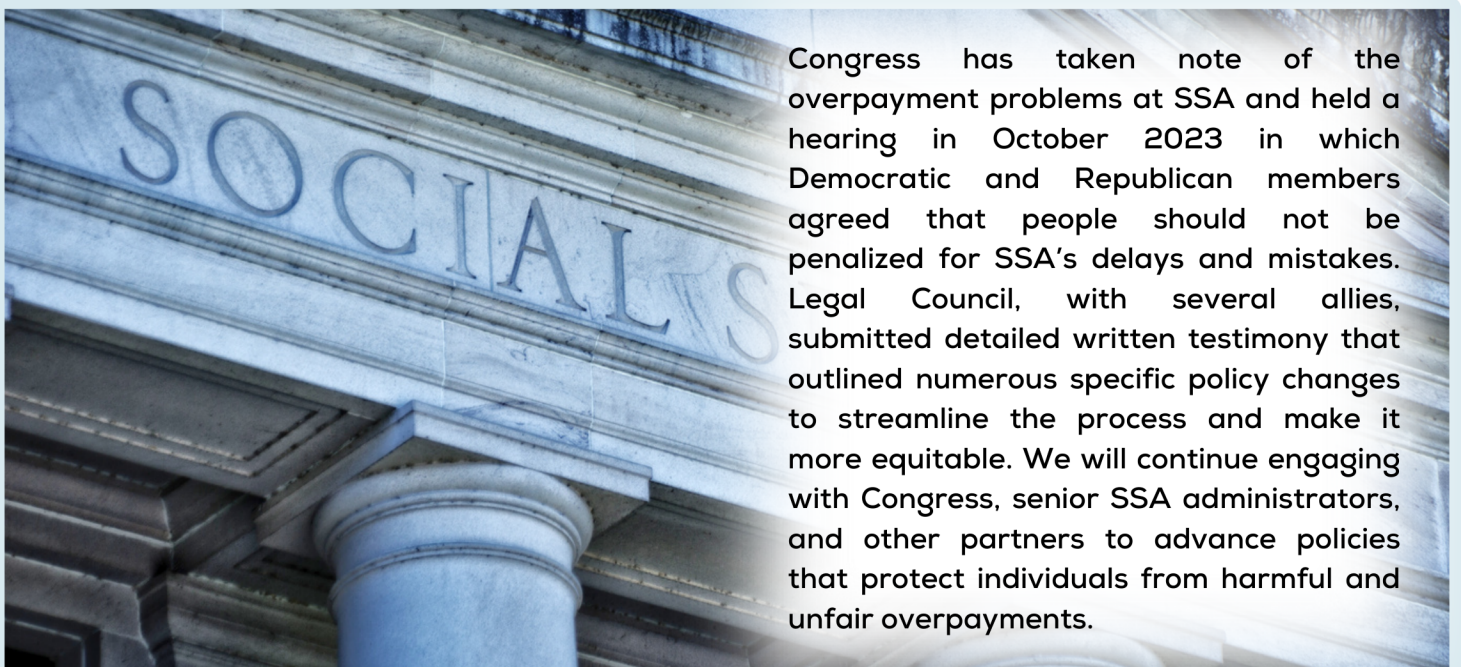
Every year, nearly 1 million individuals across the United States are told that the Social Security Administration (SSA) miscalculated the benefit amount they were eligible for and paid them more or less—sometimes by tens of thousands of dollars—than they should have received. Because of complicated rules and difficulty getting answers from local SSA offices, when overpayments arise, it is nearly impossible to know whether SSA’s action is correct and to navigate the appeals or waiver process without the help of an advocate.

In 2023, Legal Council assisted over 50 individuals with issues related to overpayments. We are also active in a national coalition of legal aid advocates that pushes for improvements in the disability program rules and processes, including in the overpayment arena. Legal Council advocates for changes to the harsh eligibility rules that cause overpayments and for expansions to the waiver rules that allow for forgiveness of the overpayment when the individual is not at fault.

Representing clients like Mariela enables us to better understand the widespread, systemic issues they face and, in coalition, craft powerful policy advocacy remedies that address them.



Over 75% of public benefits cases we encounter involve issues with Social Security benefits.



Congress has taken note of the overpayment problems at SSA and held a hearing in October 2023 in which Democratic and Republican members agreed that people should not be penalized for SSA’s delays and mistakes. Legal Council, with several allies, submitted detailed written testimony that outlined numerous specific policy changes to streamline the process and make it more equitable. We will continue engaging with Congress, senior SSA administrators, and other partners to advance policies that protect individuals from harmful and unfair overpayments.

The MLP: From Issue to Impact

Mariela's Story

Even when individuals do everything right—like responding to the Social Security Administration's communication promptly—they can still be hit with the devastating ask to pay back sometimes thousands of dollars. One of these people is our client, Mariela.

Mariela is a hard-working, loving wife of Ricardo Sr. and mother of three who immigrated to the United States. Her son Ricardo Jr. has been disabled since birth, and Mariela has been his advocate, ensuring he receives needed supports and services for his health and wellbeing. Last winter, during a visit to one of Ricardo Jr.'s specialists at Lurie Children's Hospital, Mariela told her providers that Ricardo Jr.'s monthly benefit amount from SSA—benefits which he had been receiving since infancy—had suddenly decreased to less than \$100 per month. These monthly benefits were a significant portion of the family's income, and losing most of them created severe hardship.

In collaboration with our legal team, Mariela contacted SSA, who claimed that they had overpaid Ricardo Jr. nearly \$8,000 in benefits over the last year due to an increase in the family's income. SSA said they would take the money they were owed from Ricardo Jr.'s monthly payments until the entire overpayment was recovered.

Our legal team helped Mariela file a formal appeal to SSA arguing that the overpayment they alleged was incorrect. Months later, because of her persistence and support from our legal team, SSA provided Mariela with an explanation and a new decision. It turned out that, for years, SSA had recorded Ricardo Sr.'s income as Ricardo Jr.'s income, therefore miscalculating the amount that Ricardo Jr. should receive and underpaying the family. SSA dropped the overpayment, restored Ricardo Jr.'s monthly benefits to their full amount, and awarded the family over \$11,000 in back pay.

Our representation of clients like Mariela enables us to better understand the widespread, systemic issues they face and, in coalition, craft powerful policy advocacy remedies that address them.

“The MLP model is especially beneficial for public benefits cases. When a family's food stamps or Social Security benefits are reduced or stopped, these are situations where most people don't know that they have legal rights. A lawyer can really make a huge difference.”



Katie Shelton (she/her), Children's Program Legal Director

Summer Soirée

At Legal Council, we love to gather with our community at the Summer Soirée to celebrate the successes we achieve together and to energize our supporters about our future endeavors. All funds raised benefit our work, providing hope and stability for children and adults with life-changing health conditions. At the 2023 Summer Soirée on August 18, we raised over \$135,000!

The Summer Soirée is also an opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations contributing to our clients' access to quality, affordable, and equitable healthcare.



A special thank you to J&L Catering, Christine Grost Photography, and Robin Reid Drake of Young Chicago Authors (pictured middle) for making our event such a success.

Thank You to Our Event Host and our Top Event Sponsors



KIRKLAND & ELLIS
SIDLEY

Kimball & Karen Anderson



Adriana's Story

All funds raised at our Summer Soirée directly benefit our work with clients like Adriana and her family. Four-year-old Adriana was diagnosed with autism, but her mother had difficulties getting her school to provide special education services. Our team, including Senior Staff Attorney Sarah Hess (she/her), worked with the family to file a state complaint to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Adriana and her family got compensatory education funds and related services to ensure that she has an opportunity to be successful in her learning.

James Monroe Smith Founder Award



We were proud to recognize Representative Dagmara Avelar and Senator Robert Peters, who led the effort to pass the Protect Illinoisans from Unfair Medical Debt bill that became law on June 28.

Pictured Left: Carrie Chapman (she/her), Senior Director of Litigation and Advocacy, with Rep. Dagmara Avelar and Sen. Robert Peters.

Kimball & Karen Anderson Community Award

The Pro Bono Network (PBN) connects attorneys with pro bono opportunities that impact the lives of under-resourced individuals and communities. PBN staff have collaborated with Legal Council's Children's and AIDS Legal Council Programs numerous times.

Pictured Right: Rebecca Cabezas (she/they) with Linda Rio, PBN Executive Director.



Ann Hilton Fisher Advocate Award



Norma Rolfsen is a dedicated nurse practitioner caring for low-income patients living with HIV. Norma has been integral to Legal Council's medical-legal partnership with the Michael Reese Care Program at UI Health, ensuring that all services are available in the same setting during a clinic visit, which decreases the stigma of HIV and mental health care.

Pictured Left: Marina Kurakin (she/her), Senior Legal Advocate and Health Insurance Specialist with Norma Rolfsen.

Thank You to Our Silent Auction Donors



Bob Klunk

Chicago Bears

Dont Fret

John Hern

Liesl Pereira & Ashley Olson

Longwith Art

Sue & Larry Yellen

Thomas & Athene Carras

Thomas Yates & Diane Ratekin

AIDS Legal Council

The AIDS Legal Council (ALC) Program provides free legal services to low-income individuals living with or at risk for HIV infection. Access to health care and services, access to cash benefits, and addressing stigma and discrimination due to HIV are vital parts of the work.

MLP Partners



Amy Martin (she/her) and Raine Cáceres (they/them) walking in this year's AIDS Run & Walk.

Marcus' Story

Marcus had been struggling to afford his utility bills despite a written agreement that his landlord would cover utility costs. Marcus had lost a job recently and had to reduce his hours to part-time work because of longstanding health issues, so he was in a difficult financial situation and worried about his utility services being cut off. Marcus had repeatedly asked his landlord to pay the utilities as required by the terms of his lease, but he was ignored. Marcus was forced to put his own limited income towards the utility payments his landlord should have been paying to keep the balance low and maintain his credit score.

Staff attorney Nooreen Reza (she/her) worked with Marcus to send a demand letter to his landlord, reminding them of their obligation to pay the utility costs as reflected in the lease agreement. Their efforts were successful; Marcus' outstanding balances were paid off by his landlord.

With the burden of outstanding utility payments off his plate, Marcus is now able to focus his energy and resources on HIV-related support and treatment, ultimately enhancing his quality of life and wellbeing.



Of every **10** ALC clients, **7** have HIV or AIDS.



AIDS Run/Walk

Legal Council is proud to partner with AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) on the AIDS Run & Walk each year, raising awareness and funds for AFC and 25+ CommunityDirect partners. Proceeds from the event directly benefit programs and services improving the lives of Chicagoans living with and vulnerable to HIV or chronic conditions.

We are strong participants in the fight to end the HIV epidemic in Illinois by 2030 and believe that connecting individuals to vital HIV treatment, prevention, and housing support will help them thrive and get us closer to zero new cases of HIV. Through our team, the Legal Beagles, the funds from the Run & Walk support our mission and bring us closer – step by step – to making this goal a reality.



Board Member Anthen Perry starting the race off strong.



Marina Kurakin (she/her) walking with Norma Rolfsen (left), Chris Bradley (right), and her dog.

Z's Story

Ms. Z Williams*, a transgender woman, was denied coverage for facial feminization surgery (FFS) through Medicare Part C. She wanted to live as her authentic self, but bureaucratic obstacles prevented her from accessing this form of gender affirmation. Z, a passionate advocate for the transgender community, was determined to fight this denial not just for herself but also for all transgender recipients of Medicare to have access to this vital care.

Staff Attorney Milo Vieland (he/him) worked with the medical team at Northwestern plastic surgery to submit a comprehensive request to Medicaid, explaining that Z's primary insurance, Medicare, had denied this medically necessary surgery after months of appeals. Senior Legal Advocate Marina Kurakin (she/her) worked closely with Medicaid to ensure that Z's monthly spenddown payments were processed in time for Z's surgery date. Medicaid approved the procedures, and Z received the life-changing, life-affirming transformational surgery this fall. She is thrilled.

Z's story exemplifies the importance of legal expertise and continued advocacy to bring Medicare coverage in line with current healthcare guidelines.



Artwork created by Z Williams for Transgender Day of Remembrance, observed annually on November 20.

63

Individuals assisted with name and gender-marker changes.

Funding & Administration

This data reflects funding and administration during fiscal year 2023.

Revenue and Other Support

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Non-government grants and contributions (including individuals)	\$279,633	\$1,407,783	\$1,687,416
Government grants	\$1,015,621	-	\$1,015,621
Program service fees	\$769,941	-	\$769,941
Special events	\$82,838	-	\$82,838
Donated legal services	\$77,500		\$77,500
Interest income	\$17,522	-	\$17,522
Net assets released from restrictions due to satisfaction of program restrictions	\$1,927,410	\$(1,927,410)	-
Total Revenue	\$4,170,465	\$(519,627)	\$3,650,838

Expenses

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Program services	\$2,867,046	-	\$2,867,046
Administrative	\$316,940	-	\$316,940
Fundraising	\$495,300	-	\$495,300
Total Expenses	\$3,679,286	-	\$3,679,286
Change in net assets	\$491,179	\$(519,627)	\$(28,448)
Net assets, beginning of year	\$1,190,691	\$536,428	\$1,727,119
Net Assets, end of year	\$1,681,870	\$16,801	\$1,698,671

Partnerships

Medical-Legal Partner Support

\$50,000+

ACCESS Community Health Network
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Christian Community Health Center
Howard Brown Health

\$30,000 - \$49,999

Michael Reese Research & Education Foundation

\$10,000 - \$29,999

Center for Law and Social Policy
Comer Children's Hospital
Medical Home Network



Maria Duque (she/her), Marina Kurakin (she/her), Kate Miller (she/he), Ruth Edwards (she/her) and Lisa Parsons (she/her) accepting awards for their many years of service at Legal Council during our staff holiday party.

Government Support

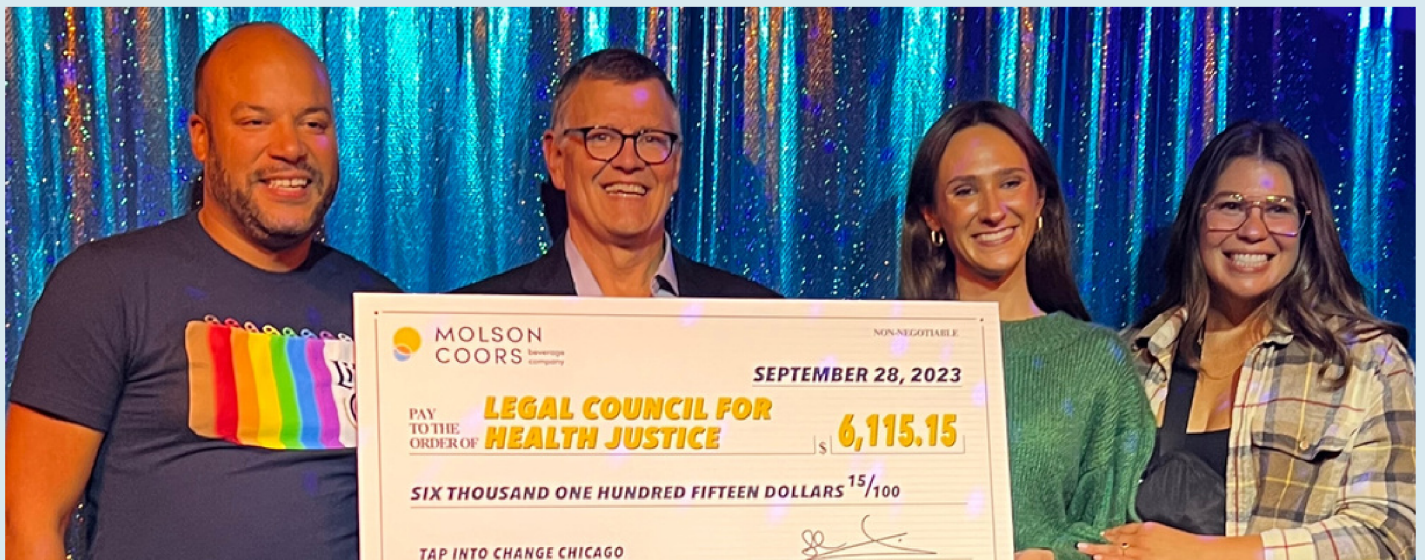
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services

Chicago Department of Public Health

Health Resources & Services Administration (Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, Parts A & B),
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

Illinois Department of Human Services

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services



Michael Nordman of Molson Coors Beverage Company, Former-Executive Director Tom Yates (he/him), Emily Decker (she/her), and Rebecca Cabezas (she/they) at the Molson-Coors Tap Into Change award ceremony.

Foundation Support

(*) Denotes sub-grantee funds.

\$50,000+

All Chicago Making Homelessness History
Alphawood Foundation
The Chicago Bar Foundation
Healthy Communities Foundation
Illinois Access to Justice
Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois
The Reva and David Logan Foundation
Michael Reese
National Health Law Program
Polk Bros. Foundation
RRF Foundation for Aging
ViiV Healthcare

\$30,000 - \$49,999

Anonymous
Illinois Equal Justice Foundation
Safer Foundation
University of Virginia Law School Foundation

\$20,000 - \$29,999

Anonymous
Chicago Community Foundation -
LGBTQ+ Community Fund
Design Industries Foundation Fighting AIDS
Illinois Immigrant Funders Collaborative
Michael J. Cushing Family Foundation
Northern Trust Foundation
Walder Foundation*

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Packard Foundation*
Public Interest Law Initiative

\$5,000 - \$9,999

AIDS Foundation of Chicago -
ViiV Healthcare Positive Action for Women
Illinois Bar Foundation
Louis & Nellie Sieg Fund
National Immigration Law Center

Corporate & Law Firm Support

\$15,000+

Kirkland & Ellis LLP

\$10,000+

Anonymous
Sidley Austin LLP

\$5,000+

Actuate Law
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Illinois Health & Hospital Association
Mayer Brown LLP
McDermott Will & Emery LLP
Molson Coors Beverage Company
Winston & Strawn LLP

Additional Support

ACCESS Community Health Network
Dentons LLP
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Pro Bono Support

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Pro Bono Network

Class Action Litigation Partners

Disability Rights Advocates
Goldberg Kohn Ltd.
Hughes Socol Piers Resnick & Dym, Ltd.
National Health Law Program
National Housing Law Project
Robbins, Salomon & Patt Ltd.
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
Sidley Austin LLP

Individual Donors

This listing reflects gifts made between October 2022 and the end of December 2023.

\$5,000+

Karen Gatsis Anderson and Kimball Anderson
Jennifer Butkus, CAMS, and Eric Butkus
Michael Casner, M.D., Esq.
Bryce Cooper, Esq., and Taylor Atkins
Elizabeth Farrington, Esq., and Andrew
Farrington
Holly King
Emily and Matthew Kirsch
Christopher McAdam, Esq.
Swarup Mehta, Pharm.D., and Tom Emerick
Jonathan Motto, Esq., and Kyle Barrettsmith
James Perry and Robert J. Horton
Thomas Yates and Diane Ratekin

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Alexander J. Bandza, Esq.
Dr. Robert Jespersen and Dr. Glenn Arakaki
Anthen Perry, Esq.
Bob Riesman and Rachel Kaplan
Philip J. Tortorich, Esq.

\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Thomas A. Dunn
Gabrielle Sigel and Howard Epstein
Michelle and Ed Eugeni
Ann and Bill Fisher
Brian E. Fliflet, Esq.
Nancy Gerrie
Vincent J. Getzendanner, Esq.



Staff pictured outside the South Side Community Art Center during our walking tour of Bronzeville.

Mark R. Greer, Esq.
Matthew Herek
Barbara Kahn
Robert Kovats and David Lopez
Jason Krigel
Jena Levin
Pallavi Mehta
Kevin Mork
Mark Parts and Faith Spencer
Smith T. Powell and Eva J. Powell
Dr. Susan Rogers and Dr. Richard Stephenson
Ron Sangthong and Don E. Budzinski
Charles Wintersteen
Betty Yang
Sue and Larry Yellen

\$500 - \$999

Anonymous (3)
David Baltmanis and Meghan Carter
James Bennett and Dr. Terry Vanden
Hoek
Colin Bowes-Carlson
Daniel Burke and Margot McMahon
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Gifts made to Legal Council support our work to improve health outcomes for all in our communities, including clients like Sharon and Roberta.

Sharon's Story

Sharon had been struggling with vision impairments since she was 12. Despite numerous doctors' visits and a variety of vision tests, her doctors could not identify the cause of her vision impairments. When she entered adulthood, her vision only worsened—so much so that she couldn't see well enough to work her computer. Unable to work and without income, she became homeless in 2015.

Sharon started working with our team this year, and her circumstances began to improve. Since Sharon had not seen a doctor about her vision for many years, we helped her identify an appropriate vision specialist and get updated medical records documenting the severity of her vision impairments.

Finally, in July, the decision from SSA arrived—Sharon was approved for nearly \$6,000 in backpay and \$1,700 per month going forward. With a stable income, Sharon is able to move into permanent housing, receive in-home care to help her with daily tasks, and better care for her vision impairments.

1,200+

**Medical records
requests submitted
by our admin team.**

\$250 - \$499

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Roberta's Story

Though Roberta is an effective advocate—for herself and for her aging mother—she faced numerous systemic barriers directly related to her physical and mental disabilities that adversely affected her quality of life. She was financially insecure from not being well enough to work, and Social Security had denied her disability claim multiple times, leaving her without reliable income.

Her landlord had also compromised her accessibility in her residence by denying her reasonable accommodations; Roberta was at risk of losing housing.

Our legal team represented Roberta in her Supplemental Security Income (SSI) appeal. After explaining the severity of her mostly-“invisible” conditions in her testimony, the Judge decided that Roberta would receive SSI monthly benefits going forward. Additionally, Legal Council advised Roberta on her right to a reasonable accommodation for her disability under the Fair Housing Act. Through exercising her rights, Roberta was able to keep her emotional support animal—a dog named Eclipse.

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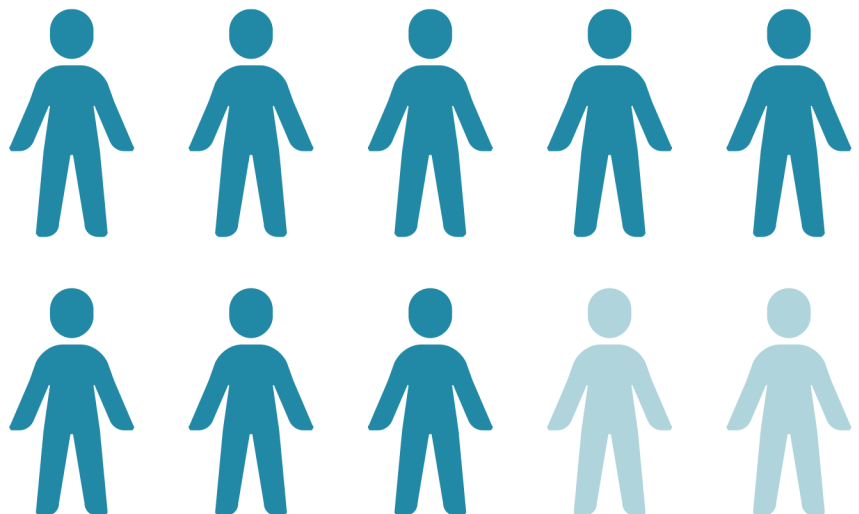
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2023 was a year of transitions as we said goodbye to Tom Yates (he/him), who served as the Executive Director of Legal Council for nearly a decade, and welcomed Julie Justicz (she/her) as our new Executive Director. We are grateful to Tom for his leadership, commitment to our work, and belief in the enduring power of advocacy.



Board Members pictured with Former-Executive Director Tom Yates at our Summer Soirée.



Of every 10 clients, 8 have a disability.

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