



ACADIANA LEGAL SERVICE CORPORATION
EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL

Bridging the Gap

2025
ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE TO OUR **Friends and Supporters**

As we reflect on our impact in 2025, we are grateful to the clients, staff, volunteers, partners, board members, and supporters who make our mission possible. Every day, Acadiana Legal Service Corporation works to ensure that justice is not determined by income, geography, or circumstance. This year, that commitment was more important than ever as families across Louisiana faced growing economic uncertainty, housing instability, and barriers to opportunity. Through it all, ALSC remained steadfast in our mission to provide exceptional civil legal services that promote fairness, protection, and justice for those who need it most.

We served 14,166 individuals, including 6,118 children, and closed 7,335 cases across 42 parishes. Our outreach reached more than 11,000 people through 246 community events, and our online engagement connected us with hundreds of thousands more. These numbers represent far more than services delivered. They represent families who remained housed, survivors who found safety, veterans who received benefits, seniors who protected their futures, and individuals who gained a second chance to rebuild their lives.

This year's report highlights three areas of work that demonstrate the power of civil legal aid. Through our heirs' property initiatives, we helped families secure clear ownership of homes and land, preserving generational wealth and opening pathways to disaster recovery and financial stability. Through Justice on the Geaux and Legal Help Access Points, we brought legal services directly to rural and underserved communities. Through housing advocacy and workforce enhancement programs, we protected tenants from unnecessary displacement and helped Louisianans overcome criminal record barriers that limited employment and economic opportunity.

On behalf of everyone at ALSC, thank you for believing in our mission and investing in a more just future. Your support helps bridge the gap between legal challenges and life-changing solutions, creating opportunities for stability, dignity, and hope for thousands of individuals and families across Louisiana.



George D. Ernest III
Board President



Sachida R. Raman,
Executive Director



Tamiko Chatman,
Deputy Director

A THANK YOU TO Our Board Members

Thank you to our board members for believing in our mission and supporting our vision of bringing equal justice to all marginalized Louisiana residents.

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George D. Ernest III, President
Santrica Pope, Vice President
Anna Simmons, Secretary
Julhelene Jackson, Treasurer

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Melody Trout
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EXECUTIVE STAFF MEMBERS:

Sachida R. Raman, Executive Director
Tamiko Chatman, Deputy Director
Thomas H. Fields, Litigation Director
Avis Gutekunst, Chief Financial Officer

*Together, we are not only changing outcomes.
We are transforming lives.*

MISSION

We provide exceptional civil legal services by advocating for fairness, protection and justice for our disadvantaged client community.

VISION

Our disadvantaged client community has easy and timely access to exceptional civil legal assistance.

CORE VALUES

Respect
Compassion
Innovation
Responsible
Integrity

A THANK YOU TO Our Supporters

Thank you to our following funders and community supporters for your generosity that supported our mission of equal justice for all.

In Memory of Earl Waits
In Memory of G.P. Raman
Legal Services Corporation
Louisiana Bar Foundation
U.S. Department of Housing and
Urban Development
Community Foundation of North LA
The Ben Coleman & Patricia Broussard
Legal Services Fund.
Caddo Parish Commission
U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs
Hunt, Guillot and Associates
State of Louisiana, Office of Community
Development
FHLBank Dallas
Red River Bank
Loyola University - Gillis Long Summer Award
Players Coalition Charitable Foundation

Louisiana Governor's
Office of Elderly Affairs
Beauregard Parish COA
Bienville Parish COA
Bossier Parish COA
Caddo Parish COA
Calcasieu Parish COA
Caldwell Parish COA
Cajun AAA
Cameron Parish COA
CENLA AAA
Claiborne Parish COA
DeSoto Parish COA
Jeff Davis Parish COA
Lincoln Parish COA
Morehouse Parish COA
Natchitoches Parish COA
Ouachita Parish COA
Red River Parish COA
Sabine Parish COA
Vernon Parish COA
Webster Parish COA
West Carroll Parish COA

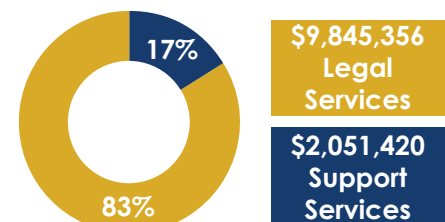
A LOOK AT OUR Financial Summary

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation's statement of activities for twelve months ending December 31, 2025.

REVENUE

Grant Revenue	\$11,527,223
Interest Earnings	\$93,208
Donations	\$3,265
Other Revenues	\$2,324,988

EXPENSES



2025

Impact Report

Total Persons Served

14,166

Children Served

6,118

Cases Closed

7,335

Were age 60
and older

1,297

Veteran
Households

222

Involved
Domestic Violence

367

Community
Outreach Events

246

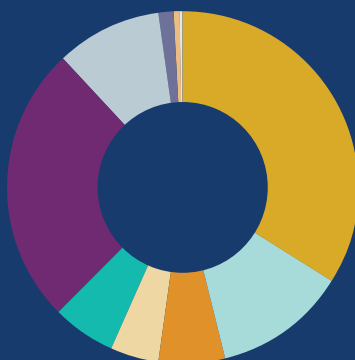
Persons Reached
During Outreach

11,161

Online Community
Engagement

467,570

AREAS OF PRACTICE

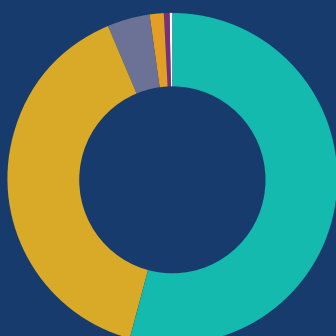


2025 Open Case Types, ALSC

- 34% Family
- 25% Juvenile
- 12% Housing
- 9.6% Individual Rights
- 6.1% Miscellaneous

- 5.7% Consumer/Finance
- 4.4% Income Maintenance
- 1.5% Employment
- 0.6% Health
- 0.02% Education

POPULATION SERVED



2025 Race/Ethnicity, ALSC

- 55% Black
- 40% White
- 2.75% Other
- 1.3% Hispanic
- .68% Native American
- .27% Asian/Pacific Islander

Women	75%
Men	24%
Other	.5%

2025 Gender Identified, ALSC

HEIRS' PROPERTY

Clearing the Path to Homeownership



In 2025, we focused on a persistent barrier to stable homeownership: **heirs' property** and unclear ownership. Property often passes from generation to generation without the legal steps necessary to formally transfer ownership. Although this tradition is deeply rooted in our communities, it can create serious challenges when families need to prove that they own their homes or land.

The consequences can be especially severe after disasters such as hurricanes, flooding and winter storms. Without clear title, residents may be unable to qualify for federal or local assistance to repair or rebuild their homes. The cost of hiring an attorney, paying filing fees, clearing a title, or completing a succession is beyond the reach of low-income families.

We aspire to help people overcome legal barriers that affect their daily lives, financial stability, and well-being. By helping families establish legal

ownership of their property, we can open the door to disaster recovery assistance, home improvement financing, and greater long-term stability. Clear ownership can also prevent disputes among heirs and protect family land for future generations.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT EXPAND ACCESS

In 2025, we received several grants to support title clearing, wills and successions, foreclosure prevention, and related legal costs.

The Players Coalition Charitable Foundation awarded us a \$25,000 grant to cover client filing fees throughout our service area. We also received a generous \$100,000 grant from FHL Dallas Bank and Red River Bank.

Through a partnership with Lafayette Habitat for Humanity, we provided title clearing assistance, estate planning services, and financial education related to property ownership. These

services helped residents better understand their rights and navigate homeownership responsibilities.

We also connected with tax assessor offices across our service area to provide legal education and information about how residents can apply for assistance. These offices are important referral partners because they frequently encounter low-income property owners who may be at risk of tax sales or partition actions involving other heirs.

Together, these partnerships are helping us remove systemic barriers, preserve family property, and protect generational wealth in historically marginalized communities.

PREVENTING LEGAL PROBLEMS THROUGH EDUCATION

Legal education is an important part of our work. By helping residents understand the law before a crisis occurs, we can prevent legal issues from becoming more complicated and expensive.

Throughout the year, we partnered with community and faith-based organizations to offer workshops on olographic and notarial wills. Participants received worksheets explaining Louisiana law, helping them determine whether they needed a will, and guiding them through the initial steps of estate planning.

The worksheets also gave participants an opportunity to prepare an olographic will or

plan for the free notarial will services we provide. We reached 2,816 individuals in 2025 and resolved legal issues involving wills and successions for 216 clients.

In addition, we partnered with Louisiana Appleseed, Lagniappe Law, and the Access to Justice Commission to host and participate in clinics where residents could complete a will on-site. These clinics combine legal assistance with practical education, empowering individuals to protect their property, strengthen their financial stability, and plan for their families' futures.

PROTECTING HOMES AND BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Heirs' property issues are not simply paperwork problems. They can determine whether a family keeps its home, receives disaster assistance, or preserves land passed down for generations. By providing direct legal assistance, community education, and access to trusted resources, we helped Louisiana families establish secure ownership and protect what they have worked to build.

Protecting Your Legacy Workshop, Rapides Parish



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Connecting Communities to Justice



For many rural Louisianans, accessing civil legal assistance can mean long drives, missed work, and added family challenges. To help remove these barriers, we partnered with the Louisiana State Bar Association's Access to Justice Commission and Lagniappe Law Lab to launch Justice on the Geaux, bringing legal resources directly into underserved communities.

In January 2025, we hosted four free civil legal fairs in Beauregard, East Carroll, LaSalle, and Concordia parishes, near existing Legal Help Access Points. Community members were able to apply for legal services, attend educational workshops, and meet one-on-one with attorneys.

Sessions covered family law, custody, veterans' benefits, successions, estate planning, and self-help legal resources. Local organizations and community partners also participated, connecting residents with services and support.

The events highlighted Louisiana's Legal Help Access Points, technology-enabled kiosks located in libraries and community agencies that provide access to legal aid applications, court forms, self-help materials, virtual attorney consultations, and remote court proceedings.

Across the four events, 74 residents connected with legal professionals and community partners. Participant feedback revealed a strong demand for wills, successions, and estate planning assistance, helping us better understand and respond to the legal needs of rural communities.

As the civil legal aid provider for 42 Louisiana parishes, we continue to expand access to justice through innovative outreach efforts and strong community partnerships, ensuring more residents can obtain the legal help they need, closer to home.



ADVOCACY

Housing Stability: Protecting Homes, Preserving Futures.



KEEPING FAMILIES HOUSED THROUGH ADVOCACY, EDUCATION, AND ACTION

Safe, stable housing is the foundation for healthy families and strong communities. In 2025, we strengthened housing stability across our service area through legal advocacy, community education, and strategic partnerships that protected tenants' rights and help prevent unnecessary displacement.

We expanded our housing work through the HUD Eviction Protection Grant, awarded as part of a statewide partnership with Southeast Louisiana Legal Services. As one of only six organi-

zations nationwide selected for a statewide initiative, we increased legal representation, community outreach, and court-based education for tenants facing eviction. Our housing attorneys met with judges and court officials throughout the service area to provide resources and improve awareness of tenant protections, helping residents better understand their rights when confronted with housing crises.

ADVOCACY THAT CHANGES LIVES

In one of our most complex housing cases, a public housing tenant faced multiple eviction attempts over several

months. Our housing attorney challenged procedural deficiencies, improper notices, and potential violations of federal housing regulations. While the court ultimately approved the eviction, we negotiated a resolution that allowed the client to retain her housing voucher, avoid an eviction record, and transition to safer housing.

The case underscored the value of client-centered advocacy and highlighted broader concerns about tenant access to due process. We used the opportunity to engage court officials and advocate for greater transparency and clearer notice procedures for tenants facing eviction.

In another significant case, we represented a tenant whose sudden loss of income led to eviction proceedings. Our housing attorney demonstrated that the property owner failed to provide the notice required under federal housing regulations. The court ruled in the tenant's favor, preventing the eviction and allowing the client to remain housed while pursuing financial recovery.

BUILDING MORE STABLE COMMUNITIES

Every housing case represents a person, a family, and the fundamental need for a safe place to call home. By protecting tenants' rights, preventing improper evictions, and increasing access to legal information, we continue to preserve housing stability for hundreds of households across our service area.

Through advocacy, outreach, and partnerships, ALSC helped hundreds of families remain securely housed and build stronger futures.

**Tenants provided
with legal services**

547

Total closed cases

372

**Tenants reached
through outreach**

2,317

**Households
connected to
rental assistance
and support
referrals**

2,317

**Households
preserved
tenancy**

340

WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT

Second Chances, Stronger Communities



In Louisiana, a single mistake can make it hard for people to find jobs, housing, education, or financial security. Our expungement and workforce reentry programs help people overcome these challenges and open doors to new opportunities.

We worked with groups like Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana, Louisiana Works, State Probation and Parole, and volunteer attorneys to help more people get a fresh start. In rural areas, more and more people are asking for help with expungement so they can rebuild their lives and join the workforce.

This year, we started 755 expungement cases for people looking for jobs. We helped 262 individuals clear their criminal records, removing a major obsta-

cle to finding work. We also held 13 outreach events, sharing information about expungement and reentry resources with 443 community members.

EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Nearly 600,000 people in Louisiana could qualify for expungement, but the state's laws are some of the most complicated and strict in the country. This makes it especially hard for low-income residents. Expungement clinics and legal education events give people a chance to get reliable advice and legal help.

With Goodwill and other reentry groups, we held expungement clinics that helped over 150 people. Many also

needed legal help with other issues like housing, family law, and custody.

INVESTING IN WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT

As more people need these services, we found extra funding to cover costs like court fees, filing fees, background checks, and other charges that can stop low-income individuals from clearing their records. Our Workforce Enhancement Program helps pay these costs, making it easier for people to get jobs. Thanks to three grants from the Louisiana Bar Foundation's Jock Scott Community Partnership Panels, we can help with expungement fees in over 20 rural parishes in North and Central Louisiana and Acadiana Community Partnership Panel. The Caddo Parish Commission grant serves Caddo Parish only. These funds do more than cover costs—they give people hope, new chances, and the opportunity to build better lives for themselves and their families.

CLIENT STORY: NICOLE'S SECOND CHANCE

Nicole's difficulties started when she unknowingly used a fake \$20 bill to pay a utility bill. Even after finishing her sentence and qualifying for an automatic First Offender Pardon, a felony arrest stayed on her record for years because of a paperwork mistake.

Nicole volunteered at her local schools, but the unresolved felony record put her ability to help her community at risk and made it harder for her to find new opportunities to volunteer or seek employment. When Nicole asked our attor-

neys for help, they looked into her case and found the problem. An unpaid fee of only \$14.20 had stopped her pardon from being processed.

We worked with several agencies to help Nicole fix the issue and finally get the pardon she deserved. The felony arrest was taken off her public record, so she could volunteer at local schools again and didn't have to pay for a formal expungement. With our legal help, Nicole saved about \$500 to \$600 in court and legal fees.

Today, Nicole is still making a positive difference in her community. Her story shows how legal help can break down barriers, restore dignity, and help people get back opportunities they should have never lost.

Client name changed to protect privacy.

LOOKING AHEAD

As more people need expungement services, we are committed to helping Louisiana's workforce and economy grow. Next year, we'll work with the Lafayette Bar Association, Lafayette City Court, and the Justice and Accountability Center to teach courts and lawyers about expungement law and reach more people in the community.

When someone clears their record, it helps more than just that person. Families become more stable, employers have a bigger pool of workers, and communities grow stronger and safer. Each expungement is more than a legal step—it's a second chance and a path to a better future.

The Road to Impact Starts With You!

Acadiana Legal Service Corporation (ALSC) provides free civil legal services to low-income individuals and families in over 65% of Louisiana's parishes. We are committed to ensuring fairness, protection, and justice are within reach for those who face the greatest challenges.

DONATE



Local organizations and individuals like you make our work possible. Contribute to the fight for justice by making a gift today.

VOLUNTEER



Our volunteers help us to expand our services and help our clients receive the justice they deserve. Learn more about how to volunteer today.

Get Connected!



LSC America's Partner
for Equal Justice
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Acadiana Legal Service Corporation offers legal services to low-income and elderly individuals through a streamlined intake process and specialized law units to deliver high-quality legal representation.