



TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Lacey G. Simpson, Acting City Manager

DATE: July 22, 2022

RE: **Alaska Legal Services Corporation Quarterly Activity and Financial Reports – April Through June 2022**

Pursuant to paragraph (a) and (b) of Section 14 of the 2022 Community Agency Funding Agreement between the City of Ketchikan and Alaska Legal Services Corporation, attached for City Council review are copies of the agency's quarterly activity and financial reports for the period of April through June 2022. Should Councilmembers have questions regarding these reports, staff can attempt to respond accordingly.

July 19, 2022

Via Email

City of Ketchikan
Attn: Community Agency Grant Committee
334 Front Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901
Email: karla@ktn-ak.us
dianeb@ktn-ak.us

Re: 2023 Community Agency Funding
Q2 Activity Report

Dear Grant Committee:

Enclosed please find Alaska Legal Services Corporation's quarterly activity report for April to June 2022.

Please feel free to call or email with any questions. I can be reached at (907) 222-4503 or mhummm@alsc-law.org and our Southeast Supervising Attorney, Heather Parker, can be contacted at (907)586-5963 or hparker@alsc-law.org.

Sincerely yours,



Maggie Humm
Deputy Director

Enclosures: as stated

Cc: Tracey Janssen, ALSC CFO
Heather Parker, ALSC Supervising Attorney
Linda Keizer, ALSC Paralegal

ALASKA LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION
KETCHIKAN OFFICE

**Alaska Legal Services Corporation
Elder and Family Advocacy Project
2nd Quarter Report 2022
(April to June 2022)**

ALSC thanks the City of Ketchikan for its continued support of our Elder & Family Law Advocacy Project. We are pleased to report that we are continuing to meet our goals and objectives for this project, and we have once again exceeded our client service numbers.

This quarter, ALSC provided Ketchikan residents with assistance in a wide variety of matters, with housing, family issues, and income maintenance at the forefront. ALSC also continues to undertake a number of activities to proactively help the client community face the challenges of the pandemic and to address an increased demand for services. Our attorneys and advocates are regularly updating the legal information and COVID-19 resources on our website, alaskalawhelp.org; our statewide landlord-tenant hotline continues to operate four evenings per week instead of just two; and we have offered numerous virtual education events.

Summary of Total Served

Between April 1 and June 30, 2022:

- ALSC received 30 new applications. Due to a lack of staff resources, conflicts, or other eligibility reasons, 12 cases from City households were rejected during this time;
- ALSC served a total of 38 individual clients in 46 separate cases and had a total reach of 83 individuals this quarter;
- All 38 of the clients served were at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines, with 32 clients below 125% of the guidelines;
- Nineteen (19) clients self-identified as having a disability; and
- Fifteen (15) clients were age 60 or older and 9 were age 65 or older.

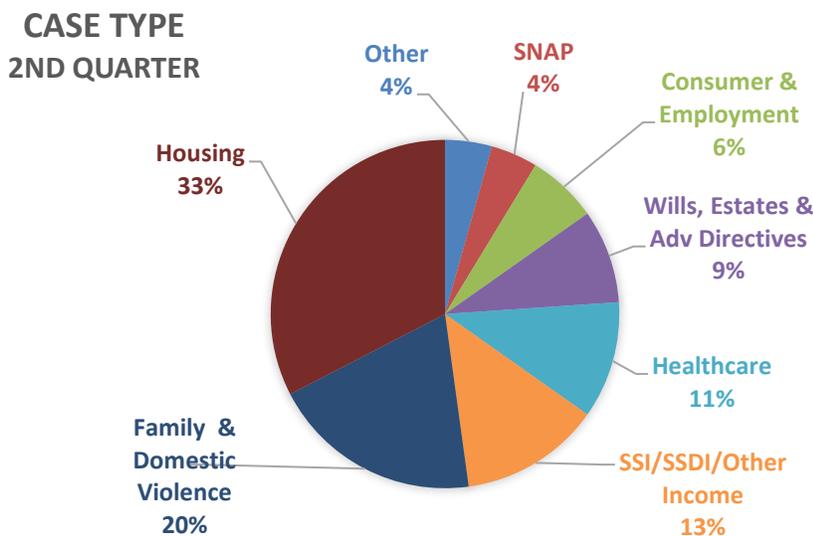
ALSC continues to give priority to elders, individuals with disabilities, and those at risk of homelessness, facing domestic violence, or struggling with reductions of critical medical care.

Goals & Objectives

Goal #1: Program participants will avoid domestic violence, homelessness, and poverty through civil legal representation.

Objective #1: Each quarter, between 10-12 City households will receive legal advice, assistance with legal forms, representation in court, or other forms of direct representation to help maintain family safety, housing, disability rights and benefits, income maintenance, or legal protections for seniors.

This objective was far exceeded. Our total caseload of 46 cases had a wide range of case types as indicated in the chart below.



As seen above, this quarter there was a high demand for assistance with housing issues, including landlord-tenant problems. We also saw a high demand for help with social security matters, family issues, and healthcare issues.

Objective #2: ALSC will track specific outcomes, including financial benefits, for Social Security, debt collection, income maintenance, landlord tenant, and foreclosure cases.

This objective was met during the first quarter. Between April 1 – June 30, 2022, ALSC closed 16 cases with the following outcomes:

- 2 clients received assistance on consumer or employment issues;
- 2 clients receive assistance with a SNAP issue;
- 2 clients received assistance with a wills/estate issue;
- 2 clients received assistance with a healthcare issue;
- 2 clients received assistance with a landlord/tenant issue or other housing issue;
- 3 clients received assistance on family law matters; and
- 3 client received assistance with an SSDI or other income maintenance issue.

Some highlights of our work in these cases include:

Access to Safe Housing

ALSC's Southeast offices continue to receive multiple applications per week relating specifically to housing issues. Below are two examples of our work in this area:

Alan¹ is low-income and experiences disabilities. He came to ALSC for help after getting a notice from Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) that he was going to be evicted. We wrote a reasonable accommodation request letter for him, and represented him in an informal settlement meeting, which is the first step in the AHFC eviction process. Alan was granted a reasonable accommodation and was given additional time to engage in community services prior to being evicted. Due to ALSC's efforts, he was able to remain safely housed in the Ketchikan community.

ALSC represented George in a lawsuit filed against a landlord. George suffered bedbug bites, scarring on his arms, legs, and other parts of his body after living in an apartment infested with bedbugs. The parties were ultimately able to reach an agreement. George is no longer living in the apartment and his quality of life has drastically improved.

Income Maintenance

We previously reported on a SNAP case where we had represented an elderly, disabled resident in an appeal to the Superior Court regarding calculation of SNAP benefits for her household. To recap, the State had determined that our client was not entitled to any food benefits because she lived with an adult daughter. ALSC filed a challenge to the State's decision and received a favorable ruling. *Update: the client was issued \$12,000 in retroactive SNAP benefits, in addition to getting approved for benefits going forward!* This decision also makes it easier for other elderly and disabled Alaskans living in multi-generational households to obtain food benefits.

In another case, ALSC was able to help Thomas, a homeless client, access public benefits through the Division of Public Assistance. Thomas had previously been living at a homeless care facility in Juneau and then he moved to Ketchikan. However, his public benefits kept going to the Juneau location, leaving him with little to no income. ALSC assisted the client with having his benefits re-issued. ALSC also helped connect the client to wraparound services in the Ketchikan community.

Family Stability

ALSC continues to offer consults to victims of domestic violence in Southeast Alaska seeking help with divorce, custody, or other family law matters on a monthly basis. Whereas previously the Southeast offices offered a clinic only to Juneau-based clients, since the pandemic, the clinic has shifted to consults over the phone. Ketchikan clients have been served through this expanded program since March 2020. Two clients had cases closed were served through this program; another two clients have currently open cases through this program.

Goal #2: Program participants will resolve non-legal issues that put them at risk of domestic violence, homelessness and poverty, and work toward self-sufficiency.

Objective #1: ALSC will work in coordination with other social service agencies so that clients get a wrap-around team when needed to help resolve a combination of legal and other issues.

During this quarter, ALSC continued to partner with other social service agencies to provide clients a wraparound team approach. ALSC also continues to partner with Ketchikan Indian Community,

¹ Names have been changed to protect confidentiality

Southeast Alaska Independent Living, Community Connections, and other local service providers to answer questions and resolve other, non-legal issues.

Objective #2: ALSC will attend regular community meetings with partner agencies to stay updated on other program information and collaborate on team approaches to resolving individual client issues.

ALSC staff continue to collaborate with partner agencies both to keep them updated on programming and also to take a team approach to resolving clients' issues. This quarter, ALSC staff attended monthly SEANET meetings with several community partners.

Objective #3: ALSC will work with partner agencies to ensure that their staff is informed of the scope of our services and make appropriate referrals.

ALSC's paralegal has connected with other agency and government staff to ensure that appropriate referrals are being made to ALSC, that we are able to respond to referrals quickly, and that appropriate releases of information are in place to allow agencies to work together efficiently to serve our mutual clients.

Goal #3: Increase knowledge in the target population re: the existence of civil legal rights and remedies.

Objective #1: ALSC will engage in at least ten community legal education events in 2022, including outreach activities, legal presentations, clinics, and hosting information tables at community fairs.

While no in-person trainings were offered this quarter due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ALSC continues to provide resources to Ketchikan providers and to the Ketchikan community.

ALSC hosted two Facebook Live legal education events this quarter:

- May 6th: Know your Rights as an Employee
- May 6th: Pandemic Food Benefits Q & A

The Facebook Live sessions have been well attended and have provided individuals across the state the opportunity to connect with ALSC attorneys, partner organizations, and state officials. Links to these and other past events are available on ALSC's Facebook page.

ALSC continues to offer a free landlord-tenant hotline four times a week. This toll-free line is staffed by volunteer attorneys every Monday-Thursday, from 6-8 p.m. As reported previously, this hotline was expanded from 2 days per week to 4 days per week in response to the increased demand for assistance regarding housing and eviction issues in Southeast and throughout the state.

Objective #2: ALSC will maintain an updated library of civil legal resources on its alaskalawhelp.org website, and offer educational materials through handouts and brochures available in our office, partner agencies offices, and at community resource fairs.

ALSC continually updates information on alaskalawhelp.org, an online legal resource library. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, ALSC staff have worked to keep this website updated with the latest information regarding legal issues that are arising from the pandemic including housing, domestic violence, workers' rights, debt issues, public benefits, and more.