

LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

July – December 2017

The purpose of the Legal Assistance (LAV) Program is to strengthen civil and criminal legal assistance for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking through innovative, collaborative programs. These programs provide victims with representation and legal advocacy in family, immigration, administrative agency, housing, protection or stay-away order proceedings, and other similar matters. The LAV Program is intended to increase the availability of civil and criminal legal assistance in order to provide effective aid to victims who are seeking relief in legal matters arising as a consequence of abuse or violence.^{1,2}

- **178** grantees reported this period.

VICTIM SERVICES

LAV grantees provided direct legal services to **26,787** victims of domestic/sexual violence in matters arising from the abuse or violence. Beyond traditional legal services, lawyers and non-lawyers provide safety planning and other support services. The partnerships between legal services providers and victim services organizations allow grantees to increase the number and type of support services they offer.

Victims seeking services ³		
Victims	Total	Percentage
Served	22,746	80%
Partially served	4,041	14%
Not served	1,812	6%
Total seeking services	28,599	100%

- **175** grantees used funds for victim services (98% of all grantees reporting).

¹ This report contains selected data submitted by LAV Program grantees on a semi-annual progress report.

² Throughout this document, the sum of percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

³ Percentages are based on victims seeking services.

Services provided to victims:

- Safety planning (by lawyers) was provided to **9,872** victims (37% of all victims receiving services);
- Safety planning (by other staff) was provided to **8,329** (31%) victims;
- Support services (by other staff) were provided to **5,665** (21%) victims;
- Non-attorney legal advocacy (by other staff) was provided to **5,175** (19%) victims;
- Support services (by lawyers) were provided to **3,958** (15%) victims;
- Pro se clinics/group services (by lawyers) were provided to **502** (2%) victims; and
- Pro se clinics/group services (by other staff) were provided to **330** (1%) victims.

Victims served or partially served by type of victimization:

- Domestic/dating violence: **20,835** (78% of all victims receiving services)
- Sexual assault: **5,322** (20%)
- Stalking: **630** (2%)

Demographics of victims served	Total	% of those receiving services
Race/ethnicity^{4,5}		
White	12,109	48%
Hispanic or Latino	8,145	32%
Black or African American	3,465	14%
Asian	1,189	5%
American Indian or Alaska Native	486	2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	317	1%
Gender⁴		
Female	24,836	93%
Male	1,730	7%
Age⁴		
13-17	657	3%
18-24	3,305	13%
25-59	20,508	79%
60+	1,588	6%

⁴ Percentages are based on victims receiving services for whom this information was known.

⁵ Some victims may identify with more than one race/ethnicity, so the total for this category may be higher than the total number of victims served.

Other demographics⁶		
Immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers	7,666	29%
Rural	6,600	25%
Limited English proficiency	6,569	25%
Disabilities	2,999	11%

Victims' relationship to offender⁷	Total	% of those receiving services
Domestic violence		
Spouse/intimate partner	18,433	87%
Dating relationship	1,309	6%
Other family/household member	1,248	6%
Acquaintance	194	1%
Sexual assault		
Spouse/intimate partner	3,198	56%
Acquaintance	1,190	21%
Other family/household member	624	11%
Stranger	393	7%
Dating relationship	357	6%
Stalking		
Spouse/intimate partner	1,087	77%
Acquaintance	129	9%
Dating relationship	114	8%
Other family/household member	42	3%
Stranger	33	2%

TRAINING

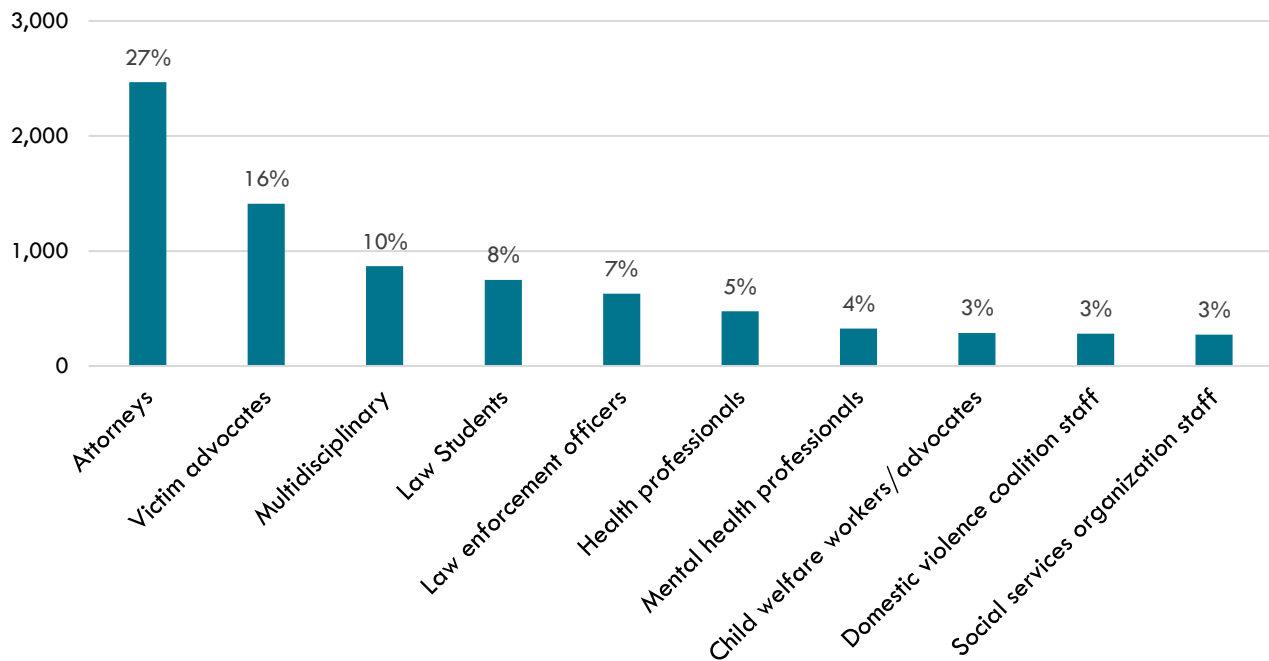
Grantees provide training for professionals so that they can improve services to victims of domestic/sexual violence facing complex legal issues and to increase offender accountability.

- **89** grantees used funds for training (50% of all grantees reporting).
- **9,091** professionals attended **380** events.

⁶ Because victims may be represented in more than one of these categories, or not at all, the total for this category may be higher or lower than the total number of victims served.

⁷ Victims may have been abused by more than one offender and/or may have experienced more than one type of victimization, so the total for each victimization category may be higher than the total number of victims served in each of those categories. Percentages presented here are based on the total number of known relationships in each victimization category.

Types of professionals most frequently trained



Topics on which the most grantees provided training:

- Domestic violence overview, dynamics, and services;
- Protection orders;
- Domestic violence laws;
- Identifying legal issues;
- Safety planning;
- Issues specific to victims who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers;
- Sexual assault overview, dynamics, and services;
- Issues specific to victims who have limited English proficiency;
- Sexual assault laws; and
- Immigration.

STAFF

Grant-funded staff provide direct legal services, training, and mentoring for lawyers representing victims, and support services for victims, to increase victim safety and offender accountability.

- **176** grantees used funds for staff (99% of all grantees reporting).
- **381.55** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff were funded this period.

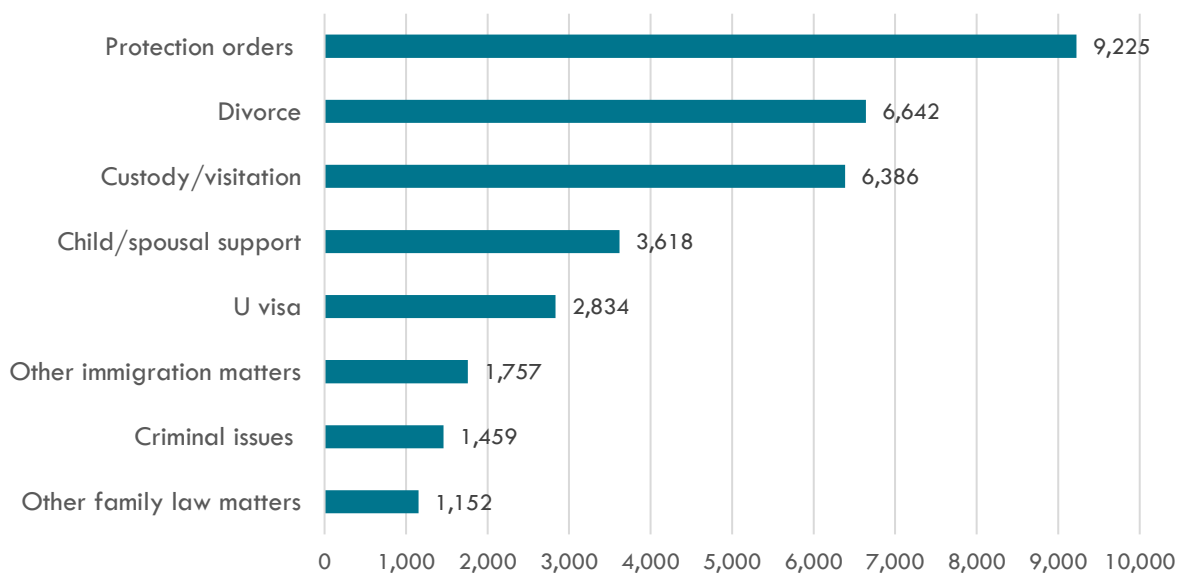
Funded staff positions	FTEs	% of all funded staff
Attorney	212.31	56%
Paralegal	40.54	11%
Victim advocate	35.79	9%
Legal advocate	35.06	9%
Program coordinator	20.04	5%
Support staff	18.92	5%
Administrator	12.33	3%
Law student intern	1.40	< 1%
Trainer/educator	0.98	< 1%
Translator/interpreter	0.90	< 1%
Information technology staff	0.52	< 1%

LEGAL SERVICES

Grant-funded lawyers, paralegals, and specially appointed advocates provide legal services to victims of domestic/sexual violence to assist them with a variety of legal matters, including family law (divorce, child custody, and visitation), protection orders, immigration, and housing.

- **5,486** victims received assistance with multiple legal issues (20% of all victims receiving services).

Victims receiving assistance with legal issues



Legal Outcomes

Grantees report on a number of legal outcomes for the cases for which there is a final disposition. These outcomes include provision of information and referral services only; brief services; negotiated resolution; court decision; and/or an administrative decision. Grantees report on the disposition of each legal matter they addressed.

- **23,737** legal issues were disposed of.⁸

Legal outcomes	Total	% of outcomes⁹
Protection orders	7,602	32%
Court decision (40% of protection orders)		
Received information/referral/advice only (28%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (12%)		
Received brief services only (9%)		
Victim withdrew (7%)		
Other result (3%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (1%)		
Administrative decision (< 1%)		
Custody/visitation	4,265	18%
Received information/referral/advice only (49% of child custody/visitation)		
Court decision (21%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (12%)		
Received brief services only (10%)		
Victim withdrew (5%)		
Other result (2%)		
Divorce	4,073	17%
Received information/referral/advice only (50% of divorce)		
Court decision (17%)		
Received brief services only (13%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (8%)		
Victim withdrew (6%)		
Other result (4%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (< 1%)		
Administrative decision (< 1%)		

⁸ The total number of outcomes includes all dispositions for all categories of issues. Only the top five categories of legal issues disposed of are presented.

⁹ Percentages for types of outcomes are based on the number of issues disposed of in each category.

Child/spousal support	2,051	9%
Received information/referral/advice only (46% of child/spousal support)		
Court decision (22%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (13%)		
Received brief services only (11%)		
Victim withdrew (5%)		
Other result (2%)		
Immigration matters¹⁰	1,856	8%
Administrative decision (35% of immigration matters)		
Received information/referral/advice only (34%)		
Received brief services only (10%)		
Other result (9%)		
Victim withdrew (5%)		
Court decision (3%)		
Administrative decision (35%)		
Received information/referral/advice only (34%)		

¹⁰ Immigration matters include the following categories: U visa, VAWA self-petition, T visa, cancellation of removal, and other immigration matters.