

# LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Legal Assistance for Victims Grant Program

January – June 2018

The purpose of the Legal Assistance for Victims (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.<sup>1,2</sup>

- **177** grantees reported this period.

## VICTIM SERVICES

LAV grantees provided direct legal services to **26,193** 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 <sup>3</sup>		
Victims	Total	Percentage
Served	22,591	81%
Partially served	3,602	13%
Not served	1,831	7%
<b>Total seeking services</b>	<b>28,024</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Percentages are based on victims seeking services.

## Services provided to victims:

- Safety planning (by lawyers) was provided to **9,491** victims (36% of all victims receiving services);
- Safety planning (by other staff) was provided to **9,250** (35%) victims;
- Support services (by other staff) were provided to **6,509** (25%) victims;
- Non-attorney legal advocacy (by other staff) was provided to **5,896** (23%) victims;
- Support services (by lawyers) were provided to **3,350** (13%) victims;
- Pro se clinics/group services (by other staff) were provided to **459** (2%) victims; and
- Pro se clinics/group services (by lawyers) were provided to **411** (2%) victims.

## Victims served or partially served by type of victimization:

- Domestic/dating violence: **20,189** (77% of all victims receiving services)
- Sexual assault: **5,459** (21%)
- Stalking: **545** (2%)

Demographics of victims served	Total	% of those receiving services
<b>Race/ethnicity<sup>4,5</sup></b>		
White	11,526	46%
Hispanic or Latino	7,905	32%
Black or African American	3,569	14%
Asian	1,396	6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	622	2%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	157	1%
<b>Gender<sup>4</sup></b>		
Female	24,286	94%
Male	1,624	6%
<b>Age<sup>4</sup></b>		
13-17	654	3%
18-24	3,696	14%
25-59	20,391	80%
60+	904	4%

<sup>4</sup> Percentages are based on victims receiving services for whom this information was known.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<b>Other demographics<sup>6</sup></b>		
Immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers	7,665	29%
Limited English proficiency	6,707	26%
Rural	6,156	24%
Disabilities	2,901	11%

<b>Victims' relationship to offender<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of those receiving services</b>
<b>Domestic violence/dating violence</b>		
Spouse/intimate partner	18,376	87%
Dating relationship	1,407	7%
Other family/household member	1,131	5%
Acquaintance	158	1%
<b>Sexual assault</b>		
Spouse/intimate partner	3,270	54%
Acquaintance	1,263	21%
Other family/household member	756	12%
Stranger	419	7%
Dating relationship	347	6%
<b>Stalking</b>		
Spouse/intimate partner	1,047	77%
Acquaintance	136	10%
Dating relationship	104	8%
Other family/household member	39	3%
Stranger	30	2%

## TRAINING

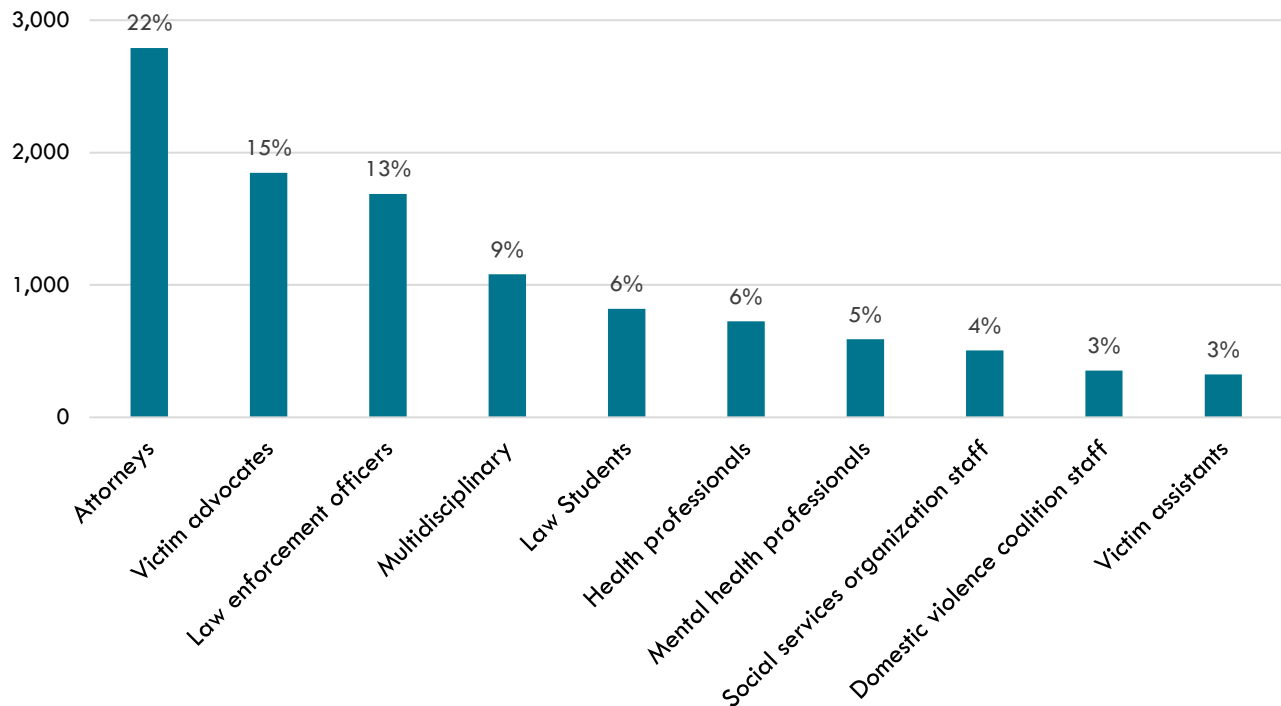
Grantees provide training for professionals so that they can improve services to victims of domestic/sexual violence facing complex legal issues and to increase offender accountability.

- **89** grantees used funds for training (50% of all grantees reporting).
- **12,685** professionals attended **464** events.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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 laws;
- Protection orders;
- Domestic violence overview, dynamics and services;
- Identifying legal issues;
- Issues specific to victims who are immigrants, refugees, or asylum seekers;
- Safety planning;
- Serving underserved/unserved populations;
- Sexual assault overview, dynamics and services;
- Issues specific to victims who have limited English proficiency;
- Confidentiality; and
- Sexual assault laws.

## 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.

- **174** grantees used funds for staff (98% of all grantees reporting).
- **398.60** full-time equivalent (FTE) staff were funded this period.

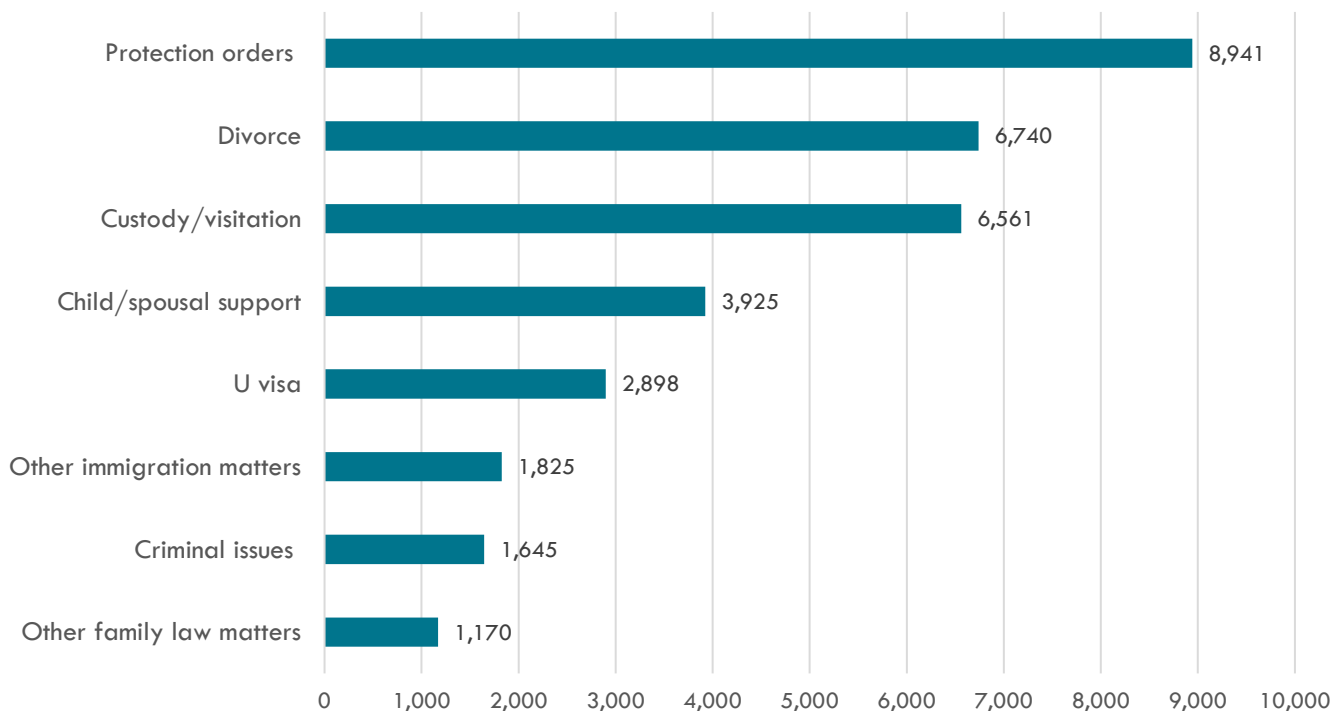
Funded staff positions	FTEs	% of all funded staff
Attorney	220.60	55%
Paralegal	41.48	10%
Victim advocate	39.16	10%
Legal advocate	33.50	8%
Program coordinator	20.43	5%
Support staff	18.63	5%
Administrator	16.87	4%
Trainer/educator	2.50	1%
Translator/interpreter	1.95	<1%
Law student intern	0.76	<1%
Information technology staff	0.46	<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.

- **5,782** victims received assistance with multiple legal issues (22% 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.

- **23,528** legal issues were disposed of.<sup>8</sup>

<b>Legal outcomes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of outcomes<sup>9</sup></b>
<b>Protection orders</b>	<b>7,132</b>	<b>30%</b>
Court decision (40 % of protection orders)		
Received information/referral/advice only (34%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (10%)		
Received brief services only (7%)		
Victim withdrew (7%)		
Other result (2%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (<1%)		
Administrative decision (<1%)		
<b>Child custody/visitation</b>	<b>4,234</b>	<b>18%</b>
Received information/referral/advice only (49% of child custody/visitation)		
Court decision (19%)		
Received brief services only (12%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (11%)		
Victim withdrew (6%)		
Other result (2%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (<1%)		
Administrative decision (<1%)		
<b>Divorce</b>	<b>3,843</b>	<b>16%</b>
Received information/referral/advice only (50% of divorce)		
Court decision (16%)		
Received brief services only (15%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (9%)		
Victim withdrew (7%)		
Other result (2%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (<1%)		

<sup>8</sup> 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 in the following table.

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

<b>Child/spousal support</b>	<b>2,169</b>	<b>9%</b>
Received information/referral/advice only (47% of child/spousal support)		
Court decision (23%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (13%)		
Received brief services only (9%)		
Victim withdrew (6%)		
Other result (2%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (1%)		
Administrative decision (<1%)		
<b>Immigration matters<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>1,992</b>	<b>8%</b>
Received information/referral/advice only (44% of immigration matters)		
Administrative decision (28%)		
Received brief services only (14%)		
Other result (7%)		
Victim withdrew (3%)		
Negotiated resolution/filed action (1%)		
Court decision (1%)		
Negotiated resolution/no filed action (1%)		

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