

SUMMER/FALL 2022



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

JUSTICEGUIDE

How to obtain **FREE** civil legal services & information

DO YOU RECEIVE MEDICAID?

Info on Healthy Opportunities Pilots
(HOP) & other benefits PAGES 8-9

Free Online Legal Clinics PAGES 4-5

Elizabeth City Office Opens PAGE 12

Disaster Relief & Preparedness PAGE 13



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

LEGAL AID NC

Our services are **FREE** to low-income people. To find out if you qualify, call our helpline or apply on the web.

We can help you with **civil legal issues related to**

**Housing | Consumer | Employment | Public Benefits
Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault**

We do not handle criminal cases.

GET LEGAL HELP



Toll-Free HELPLINE
1.866.219.LANC (5262)



APPLY ONLINE
legalaidnc.org/apply

**Facebook Live Streams
& Zoom Clinics**

See pages 4 & 5 for more information
on our **FREE**, online legal clinics.

Some videos, materials, and online events are available in Spanish.

CONTACT

PO BOX 28741
RALEIGH, NC 27611
DEVELOPMENT
& DONATIONS
(P) 919.856.2138
(F) 919.856.2120
LEGALAIDNC.ORG

CONNECT

FACEBOOK.COM/LEGALAIDNC
 TWITTER.COM/LEGALAIDNC
 YOUTUBE.COM/LEGALAIDNC
 INSTAGRAM.COM/LEGALAIDNC
 [LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/
LEGAL-AID-OF-NORTH-CAROLINA](https://LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/LEGAL-AID-OF-NORTH-CAROLINA)

VOLUNTEER

LEGALAIDNC.ORG/VOLUNTEER

GIVE

LEGALAIDNC.ORG/DONATE



Your gift allows us to provide essential legal services to our clients throughout the state. As an LSC-funded organization, all grants and contributions made to us are subject to the Legal Services Corporation Act, 42 U.S.C. 2996 et seq. and LSC's appropriations. These regulations have been followed by our program since 1976 and ensure that all our funding will be used to meet the most critical legal needs of the most vulnerable North Carolinians.

Please contact us for more information. See lsc.gov.

Overview of Legal Aid NC Services

Legal Aid NC is a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity. We provide services to citizens of all 100 North Carolina counties. Throughout the pandemic, we've remained fully operational.

Visit legalaidnc.org/get-help or call 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to find out if you're eligible for services such as advice and brief consultations or extended services like court representation.



Self-Help Clinic Materials

Visit legalaidnc.org/clinics

Our free self-help materials are available to the public in the form of videos, written materials, and online clinics. Self-help materials may give you the information you need to handle a basic legal issue without hiring an attorney. For more detailed information, please turn the page.

Visit legalaidnc.org/get-help or call 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to apply for brief service and advice on your individual case, as well as extended services like representation in court.

Legal Aid NC Offers Continuing Legal Education (CLE) for Attorneys

We routinely sponsor free or low-cost continuing legal education (CLE) sessions for attorneys who want to learn more about public interest law or become a pro bono volunteer.

Titles of recent offerings include "Wipe Out: Handing Expunctions the Easy Way"; "National Origin Discrimination, the Fair Housing Act, and Enforcement"; and "Long-Term Care for All: Identifying & Reducing Inequities in Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Access."

Most CLEs are currently offered by webinar. Costs range from free for Legal Aid NC staff and volunteers to \$65 or more. We encourage lawyers not currently on the Legal Aid NC staff to utilize our CLE program to learn more about public interest law.



Visit legalaidnc.org/give-help/cle-calendar for the most updated information on upcoming CLEs.



FACEBOOK LIVE STREAMS & ZOOM CLINICS

[Facebook.com/LegalAidNC](https://www.facebook.com/LegalAidNC)

Detailed information on Facebook Live streams and Zoom clinics on the topics of interest to you.

[Facebook.com/LegalAidNC/live](https://www.facebook.com/LegalAidNC/live)

Recordings of past Facebook Live clinics.

[Facebook.com/LegalAidNC/events](https://www.facebook.com/LegalAidNC/events)

Info on upcoming Facebook Live clinics.

For the safety of all, Legal Aid NC and pro bono attorneys are covering the topics listed below using Facebook and Zoom.

Pandemic-specific legal info may be provided.

Regularly Scheduled Topics for Online Legal Clinics Held on Specific TUES/THURS, 2:30-4:00 PM



- Child Custody & Visitation
- Criminal Record Expunction
- Employee Rights
- Medicaid Transformation
- Simple Divorce
- Social Security Disability
- Tenant Rights
- Health Care Powers of Attorney & Living Wills

Intermittent Topics for Online Clinics DAYS/TIMES VARY



- Domestic Violence
- Housing
- Disaster Relief
- Unemployment Benefits
- Remote Notarization
- Education Rights
- And More!

Clinics provide you with the guidance and paperwork necessary to handle certain basic legal issues without hiring an attorney. Clinics provide general information only.

If you need help specific to your case, call us toll-free at 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to apply for services.

Access Legal Information Whenever Convenient for You

100+ VIDEOS ON LEGAL TOPICS AVAILABLE

Our videos are maintained in two archives:

[YouTube.com/LegalAidNC](https://www.youtube.com/LegalAidNC)

Find playlists of videos on certain topics.

[LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library](https://www.LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library)

Access an alphabetical list of the legal topics on which detailed information is available.

In addition to our online clinics, we offer more than 100 videos on a wide variety of legal topics, such as foreclosure and consumer rights.

Some information is available in Spanish.

[YouTube.com/LegalAidNC](https://www.youtube.com/LegalAidNC)



Videos of online presentations are posted to our YouTube Channel, so you can view them 24/7. Videos provide information on both your legal rights and Legal Aid NC services. You can access 20 videos on housing alone; other topics include the following:

- Senior Law
- Tribal Law
- Motor Vehicle Law
- CDC Eviction Moratorium
- COVID-19
- Racial Inequality

Some videos are available in Spanish.

[LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library](https://www.LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library)



The library provides access to self-help videos with extensive information on the following topics:

- Advance Child Tax Credit Payments
- Consumer Rights
- Criminal Record Expunction
- Disaster Relief
- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Education
- Employment
- Health Insurance
- Housing

Also available in the library is **"A Guide to Small Claims Court,"** a 57-page downloadable booklet that explains how to fill out the right forms, prepare for trial, handle the trial, and follow through on the judge's decision.



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

**LANC
AT A
GLANCE**

**LEGAL AID NC
IS THE 3RD LARGEST LAW FIRM
IN NORTH CAROLINA**

500 Legal Aid NC staff serve 70K people
— **INCLUDING 30K CHILDREN** —
EVERY YEAR



We have continuously served all 100 NC COUNTIES since 2002



Legal Aid NC has

25+ OFFICES

across the state



**In 75% of
CIVIL CASES,**
one side isn't represented
by an attorney



**ALMOST
25%**
of our state's
population
struggle to
make ends meet

Legal Aid NC Founding President and Executive Director, George R. Hausen, Jr., Retires

After 20 years of service, George R. Hausen, Jr., recently retired. "Leaving Legal Aid is truly bittersweet for me," he said. "My 20 years here have been the most meaningful of my career. The passion, dedication, and tirelessness of my colleagues—not to mention the resiliency and courage of our clients—inspire me daily."



"The passion, dedication, and tirelessness of my colleagues—not to mention the resiliency and courage of our clients—inspire me daily," Hausen said.

Under Hausen's visionary leadership, Legal Aid NC's staff grew from 220 to 475. The operating budget almost tripled and now stands at \$38 million. We're one of the largest human service nonprofits in the state, the third largest law firm, and one of the biggest civil legal aid organizations in the country. Legal Aid NC staff has served hundreds of thousands of households since our inception in 2002.

During Hausen's tenure, we launched numerous innovative projects and strategies to provide holistic services to clients. These include the NC Navigator Consortium, which helps enroll North Carolinians in affordable health insurance on HealthCare.gov, and the Disaster Relief Project (see p. 13 for detailed info).

We also established our Central Intake Unit to standardize client intake across the state and launched a statewide client helpline and online intake application. We're using the latest technology to provide free legal education and self-help materials.

"It's hard to imagine Legal Aid of North Carolina without George," said Gonzalo E. Frias, Chair of Legal Aid NC's Board of Directors. "Heading into our 20th anniversary year, the organization is the strongest it has ever been—and that is due in large part to George's steady, tireless, and innovative leadership."

20th
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
& CAMPAIGN



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Legal Aid NC celebrated our 20th anniversary of service on July 1.

We represent victims of abuse, families on the brink of homelessness, and others in crisis so they receive the justice they deserve. Though our impact is great, the demand for our services surpasses our capacity to help. In honor of the organization's two decades of service, we encourage every North Carolina resident who can to donate, volunteer, or get involved in the fight for justice.

Learn how you can make a positive impact at www.legalaidnc.org

Introducing HOP (Healthy Opportunities Pilots)

HOP is one aspect of the transition of Medicaid in North Carolina from a fee-for-service model to a managed care model. Under this new model, most Medicaid beneficiaries in our state now receive services through NC Medicaid Managed Care Health Plans. Medicaid recipients are also now required to be provided with more holistic services. That's where HOP comes in.

If problems related to housing, food insecurity, transportation, or interpersonal violence are identified, Medicaid managed care beneficiaries may be offered a referral to additional services to address these issues. Care managers and care providers may refer people who are eligible. You can also refer yourself to HOP.



Legal Aid NC is a HOP referral partner for people experiencing difficulty with housing and interpersonal safety. We may be able to help you with legal remedies to health injustices.

How do you know if you may be eligible for free HOP services?

- You must be enrolled in Medicaid Managed Care and live in one of the 33 North Carolina counties in which the pilot program is currently operating. [Visit \[ncdhhs.gov/media/14070/download?attachment\]\(https://www.ncdhhs.gov/media/14070/download?attachment\) to see if your county is on the list.](https://www.ncdhhs.gov/media/14070/download?attachment)
- You must have at least one qualifying physical or behavioral health condition. Examples include being an adult with two or more qualifying chronic conditions such as diabetes or being a neonatal intensive care unit graduate who is younger than age 3.
- You must have at least one qualifying social risk factor such as food insecurity, being homeless or at risk of losing housing, lacking transportation to access basic needs and services, or being at risk of witnessing or experiencing interpersonal violence.

What kinds of help can you get through HOP using your Medicaid health plan?

If eligible, you can receive help in the four categories of housing, food, transportation, and interpersonal safety. Specific examples of help available in each category include:

Housing: One-time payment for security deposit and first month's rent.

Food: Healthy food boxes and medically-tailored meal delivery.

Transportation: Bus passes and taxi vouchers.

Interpersonal safety: Case management/advocacy for victims of violence.

Medicaid Managed Care News!

If you're in Medicaid managed care and live in one of the HOP counties, how do you ask for help?

To begin the eligibility assessment, contact Member Services for your Medicaid managed care health plan. This number is located on the back of your Medicaid card. The numbers also are as follows:

WellCare of NC: 1-866-799-5318

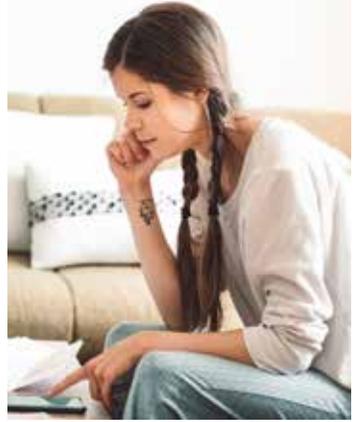
AmeriHealth Caritas: 1-855-375-8811

Blue Cross Blue Shield/Healthy Blue: 1-844-594-5070

United Healthcare: 1-800-349-1855

Carolina Complete Health: 1-833-552-3876

MORE INFO: ncdhs.gov/about/department-initiatives/healthy-opportunities/healthy-opportunities-pilots



Are You a NC Medicaid Beneficiary? Update Your Contact Information Today!

It's important to update your contact info by contacting your local DSS. This helps ensure DSS can reach you with important updates about your NC Medicaid benefits during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). To stay up-to-date, confirm your contact information with your local DSS now!

1. Find your local DSS office here: ncdhs.gov/localdss.
2. Call or visit your local DSS office.
3. Confirm your mailing address, phone number, and email address with DSS.
4. Check your mail for updates and notices about your benefits.

If you have any difficulty contacting your local Department of Social Services (DSS) office to update your information, contact the **NC Medicaid Ombudsman** for assistance.

MEDICAID PATIENTS QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS?

I have been denied the care I need

I have been discriminated against

I am having issues with my plan



NC MEDICAID
OMBUDSMAN

877-201-3750 • ncmedicaidombudsman.org



OUR VISION

Legal Aid of North Carolina is an innovative, creative, progressive, and efficient civil legal service provider to the poor, working toward an inclusive justice system of equal access. All voices are valued, heard, and respected.



Legal Aid NC Strategic Framework Contains Multiple DEI Components

In the Strategic Framework adopted by our board last year, we set forth many objectives and action steps in support of our mission and vision. One of our primary strategic objectives as an organization is to integrate an understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues into all aspects of our work.

One of our primary strategic objectives as an organization is to integrate an understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion issues into all aspects of our work.

To support this objective, we've pledged to improve cultural humility and competency among our staff, Board, and volunteers. Legal Aid NC staff are also committed to evaluating program opportunities through a diversity, equity, and inclusion impact lens. In 2021, we hired our first DEI officer, Tonia D. Trammell to spearhead our efforts to achieve this two-pronged approach. She brings more than 10 years of DEI experience and a passion for equity to the position.

When Trammell conducted a DEI assessment with Legal Aid NC staff, she found they generally feel that their work environment is supportive and inclusive. Cultural competency trainings, as well as Town Hall meetings, are provided as we strive for continual improvement in the area of DEI and seek to expand our capacity to serve clients. Trammell also sends an e-newsletter to staff called Inclusive that provides key local and national news regarding DEI.

Ensuring that the Legal Aid NC staff is diverse and culturally competent is foundational to cultivating professional excellence. In addition to providing DEI training, we continue to hire outstanding staff who reflect the diversity of our clients and our community.

Legal Aid NC Stands Up for Students and Their Families

The Right to Education Project (REP) is a statewide effort focusing on protecting the rights of children in public schools. Among other related issues, REP cases address suspension, expulsion, bullying, and discrimination on the basis of sex, race, disability, or national origin.



In addition to providing direct legal services to clients, REP offers community education in the form of publications, presentations, trainings, and media outreach. Free videos and toolkits available online provide detailed information on a wide range of topics related to the education rights of students. Visit legallaidnc.org/REP for info such as:

- Tips for parents and guardians about being an effective advocate for your student at school.
- Form letter for requesting student records.
- Tips for exercising your rights, filing formal complaints, and appealing decisions you think were wrong.
- How to enroll a child at a public school in North Carolina.
- How to get formal help for a student struggling with behavior.
- How to determine if your student qualifies for special education services.
- Definitions of common education terms, acronyms, and abbreviations.

Legal Aid NC Files Federal Complaint for Black Student Against Davidson Co. Schools

In March 2022, REP filed a federal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights on behalf of a 14-year-old Black student and her family against Davidson County Schools (DCS). The complaint highlights a pervasive pattern of racial discrimination and harassment experienced by the student while attending Oak Grove High School during the 2021–2022 school year.

Multiple incidents over the course of three months included failing to discipline a group of white students for openly discussing pronunciation of the word "n*gger" in our client's presence and then calling her "a n*gger" and failing to aid our client or allow her to call her mother while she suffered an extended anxiety attack caused by discriminatory treatment.

The remedies Legal Aid NC seeks on behalf of the student include a comprehensive investigation by the Office for Civil Rights of all the incidents we documented in the complaint and appropriate and timely discipline of all DCS administrators, faculty, and staff members who violated the student's rights, DCS policies, and DCS expectations of employee conduct.

Announcing New Legal Aid NC Office in Pasquotank County

Elizabeth City Office Opened January 2022

Sheriff's deputies shot and killed Andrew Brown Jr. in his car in 2021, and his death sparked days of protest in Elizabeth City. As local residents continued to cope with this tragedy, Legal Aid NC opened an office as a signal of our commitment to help provide justice to a community badly in need of it.

"This community has experienced turmoil," said Reynald Williams, senior managing attorney of our Ahoskie office, which serves Pasquotank and 10 other counties in northeastern North Carolina. "Half of Elizabeth City residents and a third of Pasquotank County residents are African American."

Williams continued, "City leaders invited us to open this office in hopes that the justice we provide to those impacted by poverty can help with the healing process. Our presence here wouldn't be possible without the support of Mayor Parker and the City Council, and two generous donations from anonymous donors."

Two attorneys and one paralegal staff the new office, which is a satellite of our Ahoskie location. While Legal Aid NC has always served residents of Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County, Legal Aid NC staff can now work more closely with community leaders and partner more effectively with other service organizations. Local residents can much more easily access the new location at 524 S. Road St.



"We want to be a strand in the fabric that holds this community together," said Max Baker, one of two attorneys in the office. "Everyone in Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County should know that we are here for them. If you're struggling with eviction or other housing issues, domestic violence, public benefits, consumer issues and more, come to us for help."

Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County residents who need legal help can call our Helpline at **1.866.219.5262** or apply online at legalaidnc.org/apply.

Our website also hosts a robust collection of free legal education and self-help resources at legalaidnc.org/get-help. Due to COVID restrictions, residents should avoid visiting the office in person unless they have an appointment.

Are You the Survivor of a Natural Disaster in NC?

Our Disaster Relief Project helps vulnerable households prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters. If you're a survivor, we may be able to provide you with legal assistance and education. This project supports community economic development and equitable long-term recovery and resiliency in disaster-impacted communities. We also assist North Carolinians with disaster preparedness. If you need help, call our helpline at 1.866.219.5262, ext. 2657. You can visit legallaidnc.org/disaster for detailed information on the services we provide.



Also accessible from our disaster relief web page is our self-help library of more than 50 videos. Topics include hurricane preparedness, flood recovery, tenant rights, food benefits, property insurance, heir property/clear title issues, FEMA benefits, consumer scams, replacing important government documents, estate planning, and more.

Legal Aid NC is helping those recovering from Tropical Storm Fred

We may be able to assist you with:

- Securing FEMA and other benefits available to disaster survivors.
- Life, medical, and property insurance claims.
- Contractor fraud.
- Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster.
- Consumer protection matters, remedies, and procedures.
- Landlord/tenant problems.

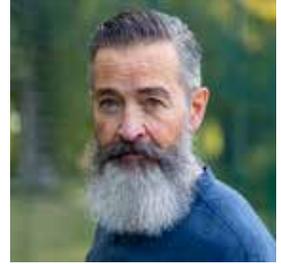


The 2022 Atlantic hurricane season began on June 1 and ends on November 30. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts above-average hurricane activity for the seventh year in a row. Planning ahead can go a long way in helping with disaster recovery. Recommended steps include making a disaster kit and a plan, as well as estate planning and clearing the title to your land. Visit legallaidnc.org/disaster-preparation for details.

Client Stories

Legal Aid NC helps Veteran Obtain Benefits

While on temporary Army duty in California in the 1970s, our client witnessed—and believed he caused—the death of a fellow soldier. His mental health suffered as a result. He filed for compensation in 2012 but was denied due to lack of evidence of the triggering event. The client couldn't remember the name or any identifying information regarding the dead soldier, and his military records contained no reference to the event. Nobody, including VA personnel, believed his story.



A Legal Aid NC advocate conducted significant research into the claim and eventually located a back-page article from a defunct newspaper on microfiche in a public library. We assembled evidence, and the VA reopened the claim and granted service-connected compensation. The client's estimated tax-free benefits over the next 10 years will exceed \$118,000, including more than \$45,000 in back payments.

If you're a legal professional interested in volunteering to help vulnerable North Carolinians with life-changing legal issues, [visit legalaidnc.org/pro-bono](https://www.legalaidnc.org/pro-bono).

Do you need legal assistance? Visit [legalaidnc.org/get-help](https://www.legalaidnc.org/get-help) or call **1.866.219.LANC (5262)** to apply for brief service and advice on your individual case, as well as extended services like representation in court.

Legal Aid NC Protects and Support Victims of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is one of Legal Aid NC's largest practice areas, and 75% of our clients are women. When Alicia came to us, she was working hard to provide for her children while feeling trapped in a violent relationship. She tried to file for a Domestic Violence Protective Order on her own but wasn't successful.

A Legal Aid NC advocate helped her secure an order and then assisted her with clearing her name from false claims her abuser had filed against her. Alicia needed access to other crucial services to create a stable life for herself and her kids, and a Legal Aid NC team from our Battered Immigrant Project



For clients like Alicia, fast legal action can prevent financial instability and provide protection from escalating violence.

stepped up. They provided her with the support she needed to secure employment, housing, and medical treatment for her children. Now, she and her family are safe, happy, and healthier than ever.

WE NEED YOU!
LEGALAIDNC.ORG/DONATE

GIVE THE GIFT OF JUSTICE!

Make your tax-deductible year-end donation today.

If you have the means to support our work during this time of crisis, please visit [LEGALAIDNC.ORG/DONATE](https://legalaidnc.org/donate) to make a one-time or monthly donation securely online.

Or, make your check out to
Legal Aid NC
and mail it to:

Development Officer
Legal Aid NC
PO Box 28741, Raleigh, NC 27611

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

Visit doublethedonation.com/legalaidofnorthcarolina

to find out if your employer matches volunteer time or donations.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

Additional options for giving include donor-advised funds, matching gifts, endowment gifts, Amazon Smile, and *cy pres* funds. For more information, visit [LEGALAIDNC.ORG/DONATE](https://legalaidnc.org/donate) or email our Director of Development, Megan Milner, at MeganW@legalaidnc.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Visit legalaidnc.org/volunteer for details
about the many ways you can help the most vulnerable among us:

Lawyer on the Line (LOTL)

Self-Help Clinic Volunteer Program

Volunteer Lawyers Project

(providing extended representation and litigation services to Legal Aid NC clients)

AND MORE!

We offer pro bono options for lawyers, law students, paralegals, and others who want to donate their time and talents to serve North Carolinians in need.

Necesitamos abogados que hablen español.



IF YOU NEED LEGAL ASSISTANCE with one of the following, Legal Aid NC may be able to help:

Eviction | Utilities | Food Stamps |
Unemployment Benefits | Domestic Violence |
Mortgages and Foreclosure |
Health Insurance Enrollment |

NEED LEGAL HELP?

If you need help, call us toll-free:
1.866.219.LANC (5262)
legalaidnc.org

SUPPORT OUR WORK

If you are in a position to support
our work, please visit:
legalaidnc.org/donate

Legal Aid NC
PO Box 28741
Raleigh, NC 27611