

WINTER 2022-2023



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

JUSTICEGUIDE

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

MEET LEGAL AID NC'S NEW CEO

**Ashley Campbell, Passionate Advocate
for Equal Access to Justice** PAGE 7

Free Online Legal Clinics PAGES 4-5

Expunction/Second Chance PAGES 8-9

Affordable Health Insurance PAGE 11





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
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LEGALAIDNC.ORG

CONNECT

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

PRO BONO

LEGALAIDNC.ORG/PRO-BONO

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

- We are a statewide, nonprofit law firm.
- Legal Aid NC attorneys provide FREE legal services in civil matters to low-income people in our state.
- Our staff removes legal barriers to economic opportunity.
- We serve all 100 counties in North Carolina.
- We may be able to offer brief service and advice on your individual case.
- Extended services like representation in court may also be available.
- We provide a wide range of FREE self-help materials and information to the public.
- Take advantage of videos, written materials, and online clinics. For more detailed information, please turn the page.
- Self-help materials may give you the information you need to handle a basic legal issue without hiring an attorney.



Self-Help Clinic Materials

Visit legalaidnc.org/clinics

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 to apply for more extensive services.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Update

Legal Aid NC is deeply committed to integrating an understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues into all aspects of our work. To achieve this objective, our DEI Officer Tonia D. Trammell, MEd, JD spearheads a variety of activities on an ongoing basis.

Trammell completed culturally competency training for Legal Aid's Managing Attorneys in fall 2022. "This year-long training series began in October 2021," she says. "It covered an array of different DEI topics, from gender inclusivity and pronouns to Equal Employment Laws and Interviewing." Trammell plans to start the next round of training with a different staff cohort in spring 2023.



Mervin Named 2022 Power 100 Honoree with the CBC

Congratulations to Larissa Mervin! A supervising attorney in our Pro Bono Unit, Mervin was named a 2022 Power 100 Honoree with the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). She was recently recognized in Washington, DC.

Legal Aid NC Live! Free Legal Clinics for the Public



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.

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

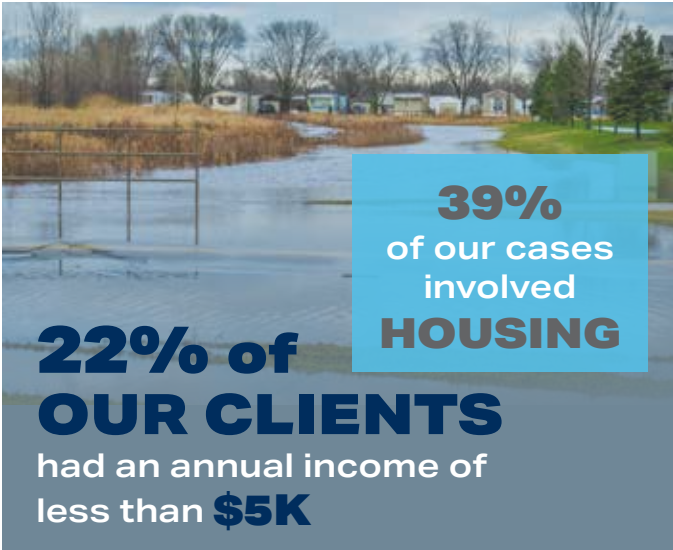
Also available in the library is **"A Guide to Small Claims Court,"** a 57-page downloadable booklet that explains how to fill out the right forms, prepare for trial, handle the trial, and follow through on the judge's decision.



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

**LANC
AT A
GLANCE**

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



32% OF OUR CASES
were related to
FAMILY, EDUCATION, & JUVENILE



**2,655
OF OUR CASES**
involved a client with
a special need

We have continuously served all 100 NC COUNTIES since 2002

Statistics are for 2021

Legal Aid NC Welcomes Ashley Campbell as Our New CEO

Our new CEO Ashley Campbell brings more than 20 years of legal expertise and leadership skills to her new role. She has a wide range of work experience that includes being a legal services attorney, a commercial litigator, an assistant clinical professor, and the director of the Blanchard Community Law Clinic.



"I am thrilled to be the next leader of Legal Aid North Carolina," said Campbell. "I look forward to supporting the extraordinary lawyers and staff who provide critical legal services to the citizens of our state. We do this work because we are passionately committed to the idea that all people are entitled to fair representation in our courts."

"Ashley started her legal career as a staff attorney with Legal Aid North Carolina in 2003 and has been a valued volunteer and legal services advocate ever since," explained Gonzalo Frias, managing counsel with Wells Fargo's legal department and chair of Legal Aid North Carolina's board of directors. "She has built a distinguished career and impressive track record of increasing access to justice in various leadership roles. We are honored to have her as this organization's next CEO."

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GONZALO FRIAS, BOARD CHAIR

Campbell's many accomplishments include:

- With Ted Fillette, bringing an appeal to the NC Court of Appeals that resulted in a decision that reaffirmed the rights of residential tenants to safe and habitable housing. The case (Dean v. Hill, 171 N.C. App. 479, July 2005) has since been cited by the North Carolina appellate courts more than a dozen times.
- Working at the NC General Assembly as a non-partisan staff attorney in the Bill Drafting division and committee counsel to the House Finance Committee.
- Managing complex real estate and commercial litigation for clients at Ragsdale Liggett, LLC.
- Serving as director of the Blanchard Community Law Clinic at Campbell Law School.
- Being honored for her work by NC Bar Association, NC Association of Women Attorneys, NC Lawyers Weekly, and Triangle Business Journal.

Do You Need a Second Chance?

If you or someone you love has a criminal record that contains even just a charge or minor offense conviction, you know it can be much harder to find a job, further your education, or secure a home to rent or buy. Individuals can create a better life for themselves and their families once charges and low-level misdemeanor and nonviolent felony convictions have been removed—but the expunction process can be complicated and costly. Legal Aid NC provides free legal services to low-income individuals to help them expunge charges and convictions from their record and restore their driver's license.



What you need to know:

- Expunction is the destruction of a criminal record by court order. The expunction (also called an expungement) of a criminal record restores the individual, in the view of the law, to the status he or she occupied before the criminal record existed. With rare exception, an individual who is granted an expunction can truthfully and without committing perjury or false statement deny or refuse to acknowledge that the criminal incident ever occurred. The primary exception to this is federal immigration.
- You can attend one of Legal Aid NC's free self-help clinics for more information. Visit legalaidnc.org/criminalrecordexpunction to register.
- Clinics provide general legal info and guidance only. If you need specific advice about your case or would like to find out if you're eligible for expunction services, call our helpline: 1.866.219.LANC.
- You may be able to ask the courts to expunge records on your own. Review this page of our website for detailed information: legalaidnc.org/expunctionclinic. Because expungement can be complicated, we strongly recommend that individuals speak with an attorney about the process.

Legal Aid's Second Chance Team intakes clients, offers criminal record analysis, and drafts expunction petitions for *pro se* filing in all 100 North Carolina counties. The Expunction Team also partners with law schools and community groups from across the state to offer mass relief clinics and monthly educational presentations.

North Carolina residents can apply online at legalaidnc.org/apply or call 1.866.219.LANC (toll-free) to find out if they are eligible for services.

Opportunities for Expunction Relief Have Expanded Significantly

In recent years, North Carolina legislators have significantly expanded the opportunities for expunction relief. As of December 1, 2021, criminal records eligible for expunction in our state fall primarily into the following categories:

- Up to 3 “non-violent” felony convictions.*
- Multiple “non-violent” misdemeanor convictions.
- First-time conviction of certain offenses committed before age 18 or 22.*
- Certain convictions committed before age 18 that occurred before December 1, 2019.*
- Dismissed and “not guilty” charges.
- A conviction that was the result of being the victim of human trafficking.

* These are generalizations. For information about their specific case, individuals should contact Legal Aid or a private attorney.



Spotlight on Wilmington Second Chance Project

The Wilmington Second Chance Project is a new Legal Aid NC expunction office funded by New Hanover County. Local government, community leaders, and Legal Aid staff are partnering to create and implement massive relief efforts and provide direct representation in expunction cases for the county’s residents.



Because unpaid fees, fines, and tickets for low-level traffic offenses often keep people from regaining a license that has been suspended or revoked, the staff of the Wilmington Second Chance Project will also provide advice and assistance with driver’s license restoration. With the assistance of a social worker, Legal Aid NC is offering other services to county residents from this new office as well.

Ayana Robinson, Legal Aid NC’s Second Chance Practice Group Manager, is leading our expansion effort in New Hanover County. She says, “Because expunction and driver’s license restoration work is so critical to breaking the cycle of poverty, we are thrilled to be a part of the solution in New Hanover county.”

She continues, “Because the law has changed so significantly in recent years, we encourage individuals we were unable to help previously to contact us again. We may be able to help now.” Ayana adds that Legal Aid NC is extremely thankful for the support of New Hanover county officials, local agencies, and attorneys who are partnering with Second Chance to provide assistance to people in need.

The Second Chance Wilmington Project is located in the Harrelson Center, 20 N. 4th Street, Ste. 211, Wilmington. Phone: 866.219.5262 x2659. See client story at bottom of page 13.

Know Your Rights: Housing

The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on a person's race (*any* race), color (*any* color), religion (*any* religion or *no* religion), national origin (*any* nationality), sex (including gender identity), disability (handicap), or familial status (presence of children under 18 in the family, pregnancy, or adults attempting to secure custody of children).



Conduct by housing providers that is prohibited by law includes:

- Refusing to rent or sell to a person due to any of the factors listed above.
- Charging more or offering different terms to someone due to any of the factors listed above.
- Making discriminatory statements or publishing discriminatory advertising.
- Making false statements about the availability of a property.
- Refusing reasonable accommodations to rules or policies for people with disabilities so that they can become residents. If needed because of their disability, disabled people can also make reasonable modifications to a rental property such as installing a ramp or grab bars.

For brochures, videos, and more info about services, visit fairhousingnc.org.
Some materials are available in Spanish.

Harassing someone or retaliating against or interfering with someone trying to exercise their fair housing rights is also prohibited by the federal Fair Housing Act. **Our Fair Housing Project played a leading role in reaching a record-breaking \$2.7 million settlement** agreement for 16 victims of a sexual extortion scheme perpetrated by gatekeepers of a federal housing subsidy program in Scotland County. Two

employees of the organization demanded sex from the 16 women in exchange for adding them to the waitlist, passing their homes for inspection, and other tasks associated with the women's participation in the program. Kelly Clarke, Legal Aid's lead attorney in the case, received the Deborah Greenblatt Outstanding Legal Services Attorney Award from the North Carolina Bar Association in 2016.

If you need help, contact **Legal Aid NC's Fair Housing Project**. Our attorneys provide information concerning the rights of individuals under the federal Fair Housing Act. If you think you or someone you love is the victim of housing discrimination, **call the Fair Housing Project: 1.855.797.3247**.

FREE Assistance Signing Up for Affordable Health Insurance

What Is More Important Than Your Health?



The many options for health insurance coverage can be confusing and overwhelming. Legal Aid North Carolina's Healthcare Navigator Project helps people identify the health insurance plan that's best for them and their family. You may be surprised that quality healthcare coverage can be as inexpensive as \$10 per month or less. Most North Carolinians who choose a plan with the help of a navigator receive help paying for their plan.



Earlier this year, the US Dept. of Health & Human Services awarded Legal Aid NC's project the second largest single Navigator grant in the US; the amount was \$6.4 million. The department refers to the project as the "most cutting-edge Navigator Program in the country."

What this means for people who need affordable health insurance:

- Increased outreach efforts to identify and educate uninsured and underinsured North Carolinians about their coverage options.
- More staff to provide high-level health insurance enrollment assistance across the state.
- Expanded marketing and advertising efforts that include a TV commercial that airs statewide on multiple networks. The commercial airs daily in English and Spanish.
- Marketplace health plan enrollment services for a program that provides 100% premium coverage for HIV/AIDS patients with an annual income under a certain amount (through our agreement with NC DHHS).

We look forward to another year of providing high-quality services to Legal Aid NC clients and other North Carolina residents!

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE TODAY FOR DETAILS: [NCNavigator.net](https://www.ncnavigator.net)

**Open enrollment ends
DECEMBER 15,
2022
for coverage
starting
JANUARY 1,
2023.**

You may qualify
for a Special
Enrollment Period.

You'll find a wealth of information in an easy to use, accessible format on our new site.

Schedule an appointment with a Navigator who can answer your questions about healthcare coverage.

Appointments are available in-person, by phone, and by Zoom.

Regardless of age or health status, anyone can become sick or injured at any time. Protect yourself and your family!

Our Navigators are available to assist you with your questions 12 months a year.

Do You Need Legal Assistance as a Result of a Natural Disaster?

If you're a survivor of a natural disaster in North Carolina, the staff of our Disaster Relief Project may be able to provide you with legal assistance and education. We help vulnerable households prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural disasters. Our efforts support economic development and equitable long-term recovery and resiliency in affected communities.

Disaster victims may be able to receive legal help with problems related to housing, benefits, consumer issues, insurance, and more. You can visit legalaidnc.org/disaster for detailed information on the services we provide, as well as numerous free resources. Our self-help library contains more than 50 videos on topics such as "Disaster Unemployment Assistance," "Important Documents to Protect During a Natural Disaster," and "Common Mistakes to Avoid When Applying for FEMA Benefits."

Planning ahead can go a long way to help with disaster recovery. Recommended steps include making a disaster kit and a plan, as well as completing your estate planning and clearing the title to your land. Our website has a checklist of important documents to keep in a secure location like a safe or lockbox that is waterproof and fireproof. Examples of these documents include birth certificates and social security cards for members of your household. Visit legalaidnc.org/disaster-preparation for more info.



If you need help, call our helpline at **1.866.219.5262, ext. 2657** or visit legalaidnc.org/disaster for additional details. *Assistance and written materials may be available in Spanish.*

Legal Aid North Carolina Receives \$4.35 Million to Help Victims of Natural Disasters

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) recently awarded a \$4.35 million grant to Legal Aid North Carolina to help us provide legal services to low-income people impacted by severe weather events in our state in 2020 and 2021. Storms causing damage in North Carolina during this time include Hurricane Isaias, Tropical Storm Eta, and Tropical Storm Fred.

LSC noted that survivors of natural disasters often need immediate legal assistance to file for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance. They may also need the help of a legal professional to file for insurance benefits and address evictions, unemployment, and document replacement needs caused by disasters.

Former Legal Aid Client Advocates for Others in Need

Kristen Sellers began her relationship with Legal Aid North Carolina as a client. In 2012, she was one of the named plaintiffs in a lawsuit exposing sexual harassment against Section 8 applicants in Laurinburg, NC. With the assistance of Hensel Law, Legal Aid North Carolina's Fair Housing Project, and the United States Department of Justice, the case was settled. The lawsuit opened the door for many other women who had been harassed and discriminated against to speak out about their experiences. See the bottom of page 10 for more details.



Since 2012, Sellers has connected victims of abuse, discrimination, and harassment to attorneys who can help them. She overcame a number of challenges, including poverty, and built a stable life for her family. A single mother, she has survived homelessness, incarceration, and harassment. She now draws inspiration from her experiences to help others find hope and justice. Media coverage of her courageous life story includes a segment on the weekly public radio program *This American Life*.

Sellers received the North Carolina Fair Housing Justice Award in 2016, and three years later she joined Legal Aid North Carolina's Board of Directors and Client Council. She currently resides in Greensboro, where she has been building a network to support those in need in her community. Legal Aid is grateful for her courage, insight, and leadership.

Legal Aid NC Helps Client Begin a New Life

In 1998, Reginald "Scottie" Paige, was accused of first degree murder and armed robbery. The charges were dismissed after he spent 18 months in jail awaiting trial. According to newspaper reporting at the time, a death penalty murder trial was just weeks away when investigators found evidence exonerating him.

These dismissed charges severely affected Scottie's job opportunities, housing options, and overall quality of life. He had these charges and others expunged with help from our Second Chance Wilmington office. With this massive weight and reminder of injustice removed, Scottie has created many new

opportunities for himself. He is a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate & Recovery Coach; the goal of his organization Roc Wit Me is to help and



support with rebuilding communities. Visit rocwitme.org and click on the "Visionary CEO & Founder" tab to learn more about Scottie.

See pages 8 and 9 for more information about how our expunction/second chance programs may be able to help you or someone you care about.



LEGAL AID
OF NORTH CAROLINA

20TH ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN

YOU CAN HELP US
INCREASE ACCESS
TO JUSTICE

LEGAL AID NC has provided life-changing legal services to those in poverty for **20 years**. We are the only civil legal services nonprofit with statewide reach. Our staff handled more than **26,000 cases** in all **100 counties** of North Carolina in 2021, yet millions of our neighbors are still in desperate need of help with a civil legal issue.



"Had it not been for
Legal Aid,
I would be homeless."

71% of people
living in poverty have at least one
unmet civil legal need each year.



Please see the
facing page for details
about how you can
**VOLUNTEER
& DONATE**

In America, equal justice is a right, not a privilege. When you invest in Legal Aid, you invest in democracy. If you are in a position to help, please make a donation today.

YOUR GIFT WILL HELP US TO:

- Increase the number of people we serve.
- Make critical investments in infrastructure.
- Offer adequate staff compensation to support retention.
- Maintain a reserve of emergency operating expenses.
- Engage more legal professionals in pro bono work.

According to a 2014 report, for every **\$1 spent on legal services, \$2.08 flows into our state economy—a 108% return on investment.**

Last year, our work generated over **\$18.7 million in benefits awards and savings for clients, and less than 10% of our budget went towards administrative costs.**

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 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.

PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES

legalaidnc.org/pro-bono

Harnessing the Private Bar's Spirit of Service for the Greater Good



We have pro bono programs to fit all schedules, levels of experience, and interests in different areas of law.



Visit our website to learn more about our programs, meet our Pro Bono team, sign up for our email list, and fill out our Pro Bono Interest Form.



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