



North Penn LEGAL SERVICES

2017 - 2018
ANNUAL REPORT

Unlocking Equal Justice





Unlocking Equal Justice

Barriers to equal justice are all too common. Whether it is missing knowledge about “the system” that denies disadvantaged people the services or rights they deserve, or the feeling that advocacy is beyond the reach of the economically challenged, the doors to civil legal representation appear to be not just closed, but locked. The mission of NPLS is to help remove these barriers and ensure equal access to justice to all.

NPLS is committed to unlocking equal justice.

What We Do

As a regional provider of civil legal aid for more than 50 years, North Penn Legal Services helps low-income people throughout 20 counties in Northeast Pennsylvania. NPLS has nine offices with a staff of 70, including 31 attorneys and 15 paralegals. The staff’s goal is to provide access to the justice system. Services include individual representation, information and advice, community legal education, and support for those clients who take direct responsibility for handling some or all aspects of their legal problem.



North Penn LEGAL SERVICES

Message from the

Executive Director

Throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania, individuals and families face hardship and hard choices when they are confronted with a legal problem. They may literally face a locked door after a foreclosure, a landlord tenant dispute, or a family disagreement. Over two million people live in our service area of twenty counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania, and of those, more than 330,000 are living in poverty, according to the US Census. Our work this year, and for the past fifty-four years, has been to provide the legal help our clients need to unlock the doors of equal justice and provide effective and compassionate advocacy.

This year, NPLS conducted a Needs Assessment Survey throughout the region and found that about 3 out of 4 people surveyed experienced at least one civil legal problem in the prior 18 months. On average, those who had a civil legal problem experienced at least 3 legal issues. Those problems not only affected their income, housing, or food security, but also impacted their physical and mental health.

The good news is that North Penn Legal Services helped 16,572 clients with a civil legal problem during the last fiscal year. We also spoke with small groups totaling more than 2,600 community members to explain the law and make sure that folks that needed legal help were directed to our services. We did this with a committed staff of lawyers and paralegals, intake workers and legal secretaries, managers, and administrators. We also had help from hundreds of dedicated lawyers and law firms who volunteered thousands of hours of pro bono assistance to ensure access to justice in our communities.

We had a year of transitions, with both our long-serving Executive Director and CFO leaving for other positions and a number of experienced staff retiring. In October, we mourned the untimely passing of our colleague and friend, Salvatore Nardozi, Jr., who had been managing and providing services to our clients in Wayne and parts of Pike County for fifteen years. We recognize the invaluable contributions of those who came before us and the passion for service and justice that they brought to our work.

As we look at the past year, here are some projects that we worked on that helped open doors. For those who had trouble getting paperwork filed in court, we expanded our clinics throughout the program area. We helped people overcome barriers to employment at expungement clinics in Pittston and outreaches in the Lehigh Valley. We worked within Lycoming County with the Court and Bar Association members to create a self-help law library, including updated materials and lots of helpful information. We measured the effectiveness of our Medical Legal Partnership in the Lehigh Valley, and found that the social return on investment was about \$7.57 for every \$1.00 spent. We believe this was an important investment in the health and well-being of the community, and thank our partners in this project as we look to expand this type of work to other locations in the coming years.

One thing is clear: it takes a tremendous team effort, both within our agency and across the many partnerships we have formed, to identify, reach, and help the many people who desperately need our services. We thank our amazing staff, donors, community partners, and volunteers, including all the pro bono attorneys, students, seniors, and our Board of Directors, for their many contributions this year. Looking forward to the year ahead, we are committed to unlocking equal justice for those living in poverty and to providing the legal assistance needed for themselves and for their communities.

Lori A. Molloy
Lori A. Molloy
Executive Director





UNLOCKING
Equal Justice Works
*in Tioga, Bradford, Clinton, Lycoming,
and Sullivan Counties*

Oliver was being overcharged for sewer service by the local municipality, and the water had been shut off for years as a result of pyramiding late fees and excessive penalties for nonpayment (in a home that he owned free and clear of any other liens). It had gotten to the point where 3/4 of his bill was fees and other charges. The NPLS attorney was able to convince the municipality's attorney that this violated consumer protection laws, and also threatened to oppose their claims in a Chapter 13 bankruptcy. The municipality agreed to waive more than \$15,000 of the debt and required the client to pay a much smaller amount to have water restored. Oliver was able to borrow the money, the water was restored, and he was finally able to move back into his home. As a result of this, the municipality has changed its policy and will only charge a late fee once for each monthly payment missed, and this will not be based upon the outstanding balance.



UNLOCKING Equal Justice Works

*in Union, Montour, Columbia, Snyder,
and Northumberland Counties*

Liam was a university student in his spring semester when he received a Notice to Quit, requiring him to leave his apartment by March 15, two months before the lease expired at the end of the semester. He owed \$600 in unpaid rent, and was threatened with attorney's fees and damages if he failed to leave. NPLS was able to negotiate with the landlord to allow Liam to remain in the apartment until the end of the semester with a promise to pay the back rent. The landlord then claimed late fees and sued Liam for more than \$4,000. The NPLS attorney was able to convince the Magistrate that the late fees were unenforceable punitive damages. Judgment was granted for the landlord as the back rent was due, but only \$1,000. Less than 9 hours of NPLS attorney time was able to save Liam more than \$3,000. Liam was able to stay for his finals and move when the semester completed.





UNLOCKING **Equal Justice**

**IN 2018, NPLS STRENGTHENED ITS PARTNERSHIPS
AND OPENED DOORS TO JUSTICE.**

The NPLS website received 128,730 page views. Visitors to northpennlegal.org accessed helpful information such as our Employment Handbook, Self-Help Handbook for Tenants, Family Law Handbook and custody videos.

2018 marked the seventh year of our annual Raise a Glass to Justice event, raising more than \$9,700 for legal aid.

One of our attorneys in Williamsport was elected President of the Lycoming Law Association starting in 2018.

NPLS participated in the 2018 Affordable Housing Summit at DeSales University, and also presented fair housing information throughout the Lehigh Valley at 17 events.

Northampton County Bar Association and Monroe County Bar Association made significant contributions to support advocacy in their counties.

NPLS reached more than 2,600 people at community outreach events during the 2017-2018 fiscal year.





THE POWER OF Pro Bono & Judicare*

Total number of attorneys who provided case services:

150 PRO BONO & 32 JUDICARE

Total number of cases accepted:

368 PRO BONO & 191 JUDICARE

Top three main benefits for 559 cases:

- 1. OBTAINED PROTECTIVE ORDERS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.**
- 2. PROVIDED INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATION.**
- 3. OBTAINED ADVICE, BRIEF SERVICES OR REFERRAL ON A FAMILY MATTER.**

Total number of pro bono hours provided:

678

Dollar value of pro bono services provided (valued at \$150/hour):

\$101,715

**Cases referred to private lawyers where staff is not available to help.
Lawyers are paid by NPLS.*



Financial Position

Year ended June 30, 2018
(with comparative totals for the year ended June 30, 2017)

ASSETS	2018	2017
Cash & cash equivalents	\$1,685,815	\$1,333,742
Client escrow funds	1,931	4,337
Accounts receivable:		
PLAN	120,538	105,304
Other	185,846	302,898
Prepaid expenses	138,889	114,014
Property & equipment, net	57,077	65,443
Total Assets	\$2,190,096	\$1,925,738

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	\$194,193	\$79,446
Accrued compensated absences	99,523	110,084
Client trust deposits	1,931	4,337
Total Liabilities	295,647	193,867
NET ASSETS:		
Unrestricted	1,309,633	1,268,365
Temporarily Unrestricted	584,816	463,506
Total Net Assets	1,894,449	1,731,871
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$2,190,096	\$1,925,738

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted 2018	Temporarily Restricted 2018	TOTAL 2018	TOTAL 2017
REVENUES & OTHER SUPPORT:				
Contracts & grants	\$5,879,521	\$123,297	\$6,002,818	\$5,872,262
Contributions:				
In-kind	101,715	—	101,715	127,275
Other	73,884	—	73,884	68,411
Interest income	923	—	923	875
Other income	20,033	—	20,033	4,220
Net assets released from restrictions	1,987	(1,987)	—	—
Total revenues & other support	6,078,063	121,310	6,199,373	6,073,043
EXPENSES:				
Program services	5,362,556	—	5,362,556	5,096,806
Management & general	663,808	—	663,808	636,283
Fundraising	10,431	—	10,431	29,621
Total expenses	6,036,795	—	6,036,795	5,762,710
Change in Net Assets	41,268	121,310	162,578	310,333
NET ASSETS:				
Beginning of year	1,268,365	463,506	1,731,871	1,421,538
End of year	\$1,309,633	\$584,816	\$1,894,449	\$1,731,871



STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

	2018	2017
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Change in net assets	\$162,578	\$310,333
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash and cash equivalents provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	24,197	49,483
(Increase) decrease in:		
Accounts receivable	101,818	41,941
Prepaid expenses	(24,875)	(18,653)
Increase (decrease) in:		
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	114,747	(84,986)
Accrued compensated absences	(10,561)	—
Net cash & cash equivalents provided by operating activities	367,904	298,118
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchases of equipment	(15,831)	(29,032)
Net cash & cash equivalents used in investing activities	(15,831)	(29,032)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Bank overdrafts	—	(140,169)
Net cash & cash equivalents used in financing activities	—	(140,169)
Net Increase in cash & cash equivalents	352,073	128,917
CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS:		
Beginning of year	1,333,742	1,204,825
End of year	\$1,685,815	\$1,333,742

STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

	Program Services 2018	Management & General 2018	Fundraising 2018	TOTAL 2018	TOTAL 2017
Salaries	\$3,124,006	\$353,414	\$1,591	\$3,479,011	\$3,390,206
Fringe benefits	1,214,956	142,739	700	1,358,395	1,128,406
Consultants & contractors	115,336	13,003	35	128,374	117,702
Travel	45,752	17,231	32	63,015	62,870
Space costs	345,289	40,379	202	385,870	407,875
Consumable supplies	55,497	54,833	58	110,388	112,662
Equipment repairs & maintenance	87,294	10,796	52	98,142	77,309
Other	355,672	25,970	7,761	389,403	416,197
Depreciation	18,754	5,443	—	24,197	49,483
Total expenses	\$5,362,556	\$663,808	\$10,431	\$6,036,795	\$5,762,710



NORTH PENN LEGAL SERVICES

Getting Results



\$4.1 MILLION

Awarded to our clients, primarily in disability cases in 2017-2018

16,572

People provided with direct services

10,007

Cases handled

7,422

Cases closed

4,476

Clients provided with counsel and advice or limited action

5,506

People with housing issues helped by NPLS staff

1,791

Cases litigated in court

594

Protection from abuse
orders obtained

440

Custody and visitation
orders obtained

244

Cases litigated in administrative tribunals

2,956

Online intakes received, a more than 100%
increase from the previous year

128,730

Online page views of NPLS' resource materials

368

Pro bono cases accepted
by 150 private attorneys

191

Cases accepted
by 32 judicare attorneys



UNLOCKING **Equal Justice Works**

*in Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming,
Luzerne, and Lackawanna Counties*

David contacted NPLS after the Housing Authority terminated his housing voucher due to a judgment being entered against him at the Magisterial District Court. The landlord claimed that the apartment was damaged by the tenant, but there was a clearly documented rodent infestation that pre-dated David's residency. The NPLS attorney was able to successfully appeal the Housing decision, which led to the landlord agreeing to let David remain in his rental unit and keep his Section 8 subsidy. David was able to avoid eviction and maintain his affordable housing.





UNLOCKING
Equal Justice Works
*in Carbon, Monroe, Pike, Lehigh,
and Northampton Counties*

Laura heard about our services while she was in nursing school. She knew that it could be difficult finding work as a registered nurse if she had a criminal record. She also knew that employers would check her background with the Pennsylvania State Police and FBI. She had a ten-year-old conviction in a case involving alcohol-related offenses. She wanted to get her record expunged in order to pursue her dream of a career in nursing. After investigating her case, NPLS filed an expungement petition which was eventually granted. Laura is now a registered nurse. She reported being so relieved that she doesn't need to worry anymore about this past mistake affecting her employment.



NORTH PENN LEGAL SERVICES

Locations

BRADFORD & SUSQUEHANNA COUNTIES

Towanda Office 213 Main Street, Ste. 1, Towanda, PA 18848
P: 877-515-7732 ♦ F: 570-534-0976

CARBON & LUZERNE COUNTIES

Hazleton Office 101 W. Broad St., Ste. 713, Hazleton, PA 18201
P: 570-455-9512 ♦ Toll Free: 877-515-7628 ♦ F: 570-455-3625

CLINTON, LYCOMING & TIOGA COUNTIES

Williamsport Office 25 W. 3rd St., Ste. 400, Williamsport, PA 17701
P: 570-323-8741 ♦ Toll Free: 800-326-7436 ♦ F: 570-323-5256

COLUMBIA & MONTOUR COUNTIES

Bloomsburg Office 168 E. 5th St., Bloomsburg, PA 17815
P: 570-784-8760 ♦ Toll Free: 877-515-7079 ♦ F: 570-784-4840

LACKAWANNA, LUZERNE, SULLIVAN & WYOMING COUNTIES

Pittston Office 33 N. Main St., Ste. 200, Pittston, PA 18640
P: 570-299-4100 ♦ Toll Free: 855-236-6405 ♦ F: 570-824-0001

LEHIGH & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

Bethlehem Office 559 Main St., Ste. 200, Bethlehem, PA 18018
P: 610-317-8757 ♦ F: 610-317-8778

MONROE & PIKE COUNTIES

Stroudsburg Office 10 N. 10th St., Stroudsburg, PA 18360
P: 570-424-5338 ♦ Toll Free: 800-532-8282 ♦ F: 570-754-8508

NORTHUMBERLAND, SNYDER & UNION COUNTIES

Sunbury Office 133 N. 2nd St., Sunbury, PA 17801
P: 570-286-5687 ♦ Toll Free: 877-515-7730 ♦ F: 570-286-2203

WAYNE COUNTY

Honesdale Office

Wayne County Courthouse, 925 Court St., Honesdale, PA 18431
P: 877-515-7465 ♦ F: 570-754-8510



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SERVING 20 COUNTIES IN Northeast Pennsylvania

Bradford ♦ Carbon ♦ Clinton ♦ Columbia ♦ Lackawanna
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North Penn
LEGAL SERVICES

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