

- The United States’ oldest and largest private not-for-profit organization providing free legal services to low-income individuals and families.
- Represents clients throughout New York City in more than 300,000 cases and matters annually, more than any other legal services organization in the country.
- Dedicated since 1876 to one simple but powerful belief: that no New Yorker should be denied access to justice because of poverty.
- Increases respect for law and order by securing equal justice for clients who cannot afford to pay a lawyer.
- Makes New York City a better place to live and work by helping change the lives of low-income New Yorkers and assisting community organizations and government agencies in doing their jobs.
- Enjoys a reputation for excellence in all aspects of its work both in New York and nationally.
- Is an indispensable component of the legal, social, and economic fabric of New York City — passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform.
- Consulted regularly by government officials, the courts, and the media on a wide range of issues.
- Has three major practices — Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Rights — and receives help from more than 3,000 volunteers from law firms, corporate law departments and others through its Pro Bono program, the largest in the country.
- Maintains an active docket of 40 law reform cases, which affect the lives of two million children and adults.
- Provides client services through a network of 26 borough, neighborhood, and courthouse offices in all five boroughs with a staff of 1,900; more than 1,100 lawyers and 700 social workers, investigators, paralegals, and support and administrative staff.
- Expenses for central administration equal less than 6.5% of total expenses — meaning that 93.5 cents of every dollar go directly to client services.
- Government supports the Criminal and Juvenile Rights Practices because they are constitutionally and legally mandated.
- While the Civil Practice receives some targeted government funding, it is largely dependent upon private contributions.
- Prominent law firms and corporate law departments are represented on the Society’s Board of Directors and Board of Advisers.

Civil Practice

- Provides civil legal assistance annually in more than 48,000 civil legal matters benefiting some 120,000 adults and children in New York City living at or below the poverty line, including more than 5,800 Sandy-related matters.
- Represents the most vulnerable New Yorkers, including senior citizens, children and adults with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence, immigrants, low-wage workers, persons living with HIV/AIDS, and homeless and imminently homeless children and adults.
- Provides law reform representation in 30 major cases.
- Operates through a network of 16 neighborhood and courthouse offices in all five boroughs and special citywide projects and initiatives.
- Offers the most comprehensive legal services in the New York area, including immigration.
- Forced to turn away substantial number of New Yorkers seeking civil legal assistance because of a lack of funding.

Programs to Address Essential Housing Needs:

- The Foreclosure Prevention and Home Equity Preservation Project
- The Homeless Rights Project
- The Housing Practice
- The Housing Development Unit
- The Housing Help Program

Programs to Address Essential Family Needs:

- The Family/Domestic Violence Practice
- The Immigration Law Unit

Programs to Address Essential Health Care and Education Needs:

- The Education Law Project
- The Health Law Unit

Programs to Address Essential Subsistence Income Needs:

- Access to Benefits Helpline
- The Community Development Project
- The Consumer Law Project
- The Disability Advocacy Practice
- The Employment Law Unit
- The Government Benefits Practice
- The Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic
- Project FAIR

Programs to Address Systemic Client Needs and Address Essential Needs of Vulnerable Populations:

- The Elder Law Practice
- The HIV/AIDS Representation Project
- The Immigration Law Unit
- The Law Reform Unit
- The Reentry Project
- The Prisoners’ Rights Project
- The Single Stop Program

Criminal Practice

- Represents clients in nearly 230,000 cases annually with a legal staff of more than 800 lawyers as the primary defender in New York City and the largest public defender program in the nation.
- Has been representing indigent defendants since the turn of the century, 50 years before the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Gideon decision mandated such representation.
- Represents clients in the trial courts in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island.
- Has significant impact on criminal law and procedure in New York and nationally through an appeals bureau that represents clients in direct appeals, post-conviction proceedings, and habeas corpus petitions in the Second Circuit.
- Represents clients released from prison who are charged with violating conditions of release through the Parole Revocation Defense Unit, the first such program in the nation.
- Initiates class action and other law reform litigation on civil rights issues affecting Criminal Practice clients through a special litigation unit.
- Pioneered many practices that are now routine in public defender offices such as social work intervention for clients.
- Addresses the special needs of juveniles who are prosecuted in criminal proceedings, survivors of human trafficking from prostitution charges, and mentally ill and chemically addicted clients through innovative programs, which studies have shown reduce rates of incarceration and repeat offenses thereby saving government millions of dollars.
- Operation of an innovative anti-gun violation unit.
- Provides liaison services between lawyers and clients through a paralegal program in the City's jails to assist in client representation.

Juvenile Rights Practice

- Represents 90 percent of the children who appear before the Family Courts in New York City as the primary provider of legal services for children with a legal staff of 200 lawyers.
- Provides representation in all five boroughs to more than 34,000 children annually on child protective, termination of parental rights, PINS (persons in need of supervision) and juvenile delinquency petitions.
- Has been providing representation to children since 1962, five years before the landmark In re: Gault decision mandated such representation.
- Provides representation in appellate cases and has literally "made the law" that governs juvenile court proceedings in New York.
- Initiates class action lawsuits and other litigation aimed at system-wide abuses within the juvenile justice, child welfare and educational systems.
- Pioneered the use of social workers in the representation of children.
- Provides specialized legal and social work assistance in domestic violence cases and cases requiring educational advocacy.



MAKING THE CASE FOR HUMANITY

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