



# 2025

## **IMPACT REPORT**

A BEACON OF HOPE

**TEXAS**  
**LEGAL**  
**SERVICES**  
**CENTER**

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

These are challenging times. This has been a year of uncertainty for thousands across Texas—and across America. From rising costs of living and unemployment, to the floods and the fires, it can feel like the ground beneath us shifts a little every day. At TLSC, we feel these uncertainties around our funding. Government and Foundation priorities have changed—jeopardizing many of the grants we rely on to fund our mission. Much of this is beyond our control. One foundation informed us that they plan to focus their efforts on Canada moving forward. This year we learned funding for our Housing and Impact Litigation programs, some of our Medical Legal Partnership funding, and almost half of our Crime Victims funding program is no longer available to us. These challenges will be felt most significantly by our clients, who desperately need our help. Last year, we answered 18,000 calls from people who were facing eviction. Without dedicated funding, we will try to help as many as we can—but no doubt many will be turned away.

There are many unknowns, but we will rise to the challenge and pivot when we find new opportunities to further our mission when it aligns with our funders' changing priorities. We have already taken this opportunity to grow our Veterans and Child Welfare programs—which are stronger than they have ever been!

We continue to boldly harness technology and innovation to maximize our resources for access to justice. In the short term, that means more clients receive help more quickly. In spite of our losses, I'm proud to share that—as the only generalist, statewide, legal aid organization—we are reaching Texans in rural areas that have no other legal options and we are streamlining our intake processes to reach even more. We've taken legal aid directly into the communities we serve, planting 45 TexasLawHelp.org legal kiosks around the state. Through the kiosk—and popular TexasLawHelp.org website—we're connecting Texans to legal help faster than ever, and responding directly to the communities' needs, creating local landing pages with local resources for sites who host the kiosks in their local libraries, shelters, community centers, and court houses. Additionally, we've created tools like Texas Family Help Link to streamline intake for families in child welfare cases. And we will use the website to launch the training program for new volunteers in the Community Justice Worker project—where we are collaborating with other legal aid programs like Disability Rights Texas, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, Lone Star Legal Aid, and Legal Aid of Northwest Texas—to multiply our efforts to meet our clients' needs.



*We continue to boldly harness technology and innovation to maximize our resources for access to justice.*

We are working to modernize our intake system to serve our clients better and create efficiencies that will make the most of our limited resources. We're building this new intake system with clients and referral partners at the center of our design. I envision this technology serving as the foundation for a coordinated effort to create a seamless client experience—ending the frustration of bouncing referrals from one legal aid organization to the next and back again—saving vulnerable Texans and legal aid partners' precious time.

As you look through the impact TLSC made on thousands of Texans this past year, know that these are more than numbers. It is proof that together we provide the stability that makes recovery possible. With the help of a strong community behind us, we will weather the storms that come our way and continue fighting for a more just Texas.

KAREN SPEED MILLER

# OUR MISSION

Our mission is to ensure equal justice for all Texans by educating, empowering, and representing vulnerable people while reshaping the greater legal system that impacts us all.

## Here's how we're doing it:

### LEGAL EDUCATION

Through TexasLawHelp.org and other programs, we empower Texans with education about the legal system and processes to make informed choices about how to seek justice.

### ADVOCACY

We advocate on behalf of the communities we serve to create a better future for all Texans.

### ADVICE

We provide quick legal advice through phone and chat services to guide clients on their legal issue.

### REPRESENTATION

Our attorneys represent clients with the same commitment and skill as private attorneys, often achieving superior results. Our team handles cases with professionalism and care, ensuring clients receive the legal support they need.

# 2025 AT A GLANCE

## 7,800

LEGAL PROBLEMS ADDRESSED AT THE LEGAL COUNSEL AND ADVICE LEVEL OR ABOVE

When Texans were not eligible for our services, we shared resources that could help them over **7,200 times**.

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## 215

TEXAS COUNTIES SERVED

TLSC is the only legal aid organization serving Texans statewide. This year, we reached Texans in **86% of all Texas counties**.

**60%** of these counties were in **rural areas**, often with limited or nonexistent access to legal services.

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## 2

AWARDS WON

Hispanic Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Texas recognized TLSC for the **Champion of Justice Award**.

Thurgood Marshall School of Law awarded TLSC the **Marcia Johnson Change Agent Award** for its history of impact and innovation.



**By investing in innovation,  
we're strengthening our mission.**  
Streamlining complex processes  
and building tools that meet  
people where they are helps us  
deliver help faster and expand  
access to justice for tens of  
thousands of Texans.

SEE HOW TECHNOLOGY IS  
TRANSFORMING WHAT'S POSSIBLE

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# LEADING LEGAL ACCESS INTO THE FUTURE



## AUTOMATING ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

We overhauled our screening process for callers and online applications to provide a better experience for our clients. Reducing manual processes frees our staff to help more Texans. Portions of this new system released this year, and the final phase completes next year.

## EMPOWERING NEIGHBORS TO HELP NEIGHBORS

Led by Disability Rights Texas, the **Community Justice Worker Program** expands access to legal services for low-income Texans using trained lay advocates to provide limited-scope civil legal services. We developed an online training portal to certify Community Justice Workers, our piece in this collaborative effort with five other Texas legal aid organizations. The project launches in January 2026.

## FASTER HELP FOR TEXAS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Early this year, **Texas Family Help Link**, a project with TLSC's Family Helpline, debuted on TexasLawHelp.org. In one application, families and children match with TLSC or other Texas legal aid organizations to get to the help they need more quickly. This tool reduces a time-consuming, frustrating cycle we have heard from many clients: filling out multiple applications, repeating their stories, and waiting weeks for answers.

"Our hope is this tool will not only transform access to legal aid for child welfare issues, but also serve as a model for expanding legal access in other civil matters."

KAREN SPEED MILLER

Since launch, 177 qualified individuals matched with a legal aid partner.



## LEGAL KIOSK EXPANSION

Our TexasLawHelp.org Legal Kiosk Program is evolving into one of the most promising access to justice innovations in Texas. What began during the pandemic as a lifeline for people without internet or devices has grown into a community-centered gateway to legal aid. Today, kiosks sit in libraries, homeless shelters, and other community hubs, meeting Texans where they are and giving them the tools, guidance, and confidence to understand and exercise their rights. Looking ahead, the network is poised to become an even more powerful statewide resource, integrating legal needs assessment, intake, guided legal forms, and new technology that will help more Texans resolve life-changing legal problems with dignity and clarity.

45 kiosks in the entire network covering 32 counties and counting.

“By combining the reach of the Texas Legal Services Center’s Kiosk Program with the grassroots advocacy of Community Justice Workers, we see an exciting opportunity to build a bridge between underserved communities and essential legal resources—empowering low-income Texans and persons with disabilities with increased access to justice.”

**SEAN JACKSON**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
DISABILITY RIGHTS  
TEXAS

## ADVANCING FEATURES ON TEXASLAWHELP.ORG

TLSC attorneys and staff power TexasLawHelp.org, the largest free legal resource for self-represented Texans to find plain language guides and articles for their civil legal issues along with court-ready forms. Last year, we brought language access to the forefront with continuous translation for both Spanish and Vietnamese.

### **This year brought two new features:**

Amigo, an A.I. bot built from the site’s content, launched to help Texans find the resources they need when attorneys are offline—like a digital librarian.

Next, Lone Star Legal Aid assisted us with adding Legal Aid Content Intelligence (LACI) software to the site. LACI tracks changes in laws and regulations, helping our team update content quickly so Texans can rely on timely, accurate guidance.



Amigo provided legal resources to visitors 26,000 times since January 2025.

## **Awareness drives action.**

When more Texans understand the need, more advocates and donors join us. Growing our community of supporters fuels the momentum needed to create a fairer legal system for everyone in our state.

# EXPANDING OUR REACH

## TLSC FILM NIGHTS

TLSC Film Night is a fundraiser and film series exploring themes of justice and the importance of doing the right thing. We began this series to raise awareness about TLSC and access to justice.

Over 80 attendees packed the theater during the premiere at Amplify Austin Day in Austin featuring *To Kill a Mockingbird*. We partnered with San Antonio Legal Services Association (SALSA) and SALawHelp for the San Antonio event with *Legally Blonde* in September. Themed cocktails and an inspiring talk from 2024 Austin Woman Magazine's "Woman to Watch", Leah Wise along with support from St. Mary's Law School and San Antonio Young Lawyers Association created a night to remember. Finally, we culminated the year honoring Texas Veterans for Texas Veterans Legal Aid Week in November featuring A Few Good Men. Lieutenant General Gwen Bingham regaled life lessons from her military experience and emphasized the critical nature of legal services for veterans.

Our sponsors made these events more special, and we are incredibly grateful for their support:



**Bluebonnet Fiber®**

ARMIN SALEK

THE CHRISTENSON  
GROUP

## LEGAL KIOSK PARTNERSHIPS

As network of legal kiosks expands, so does our partnerships with host sites, community leaders, and government officials. These partnerships enhance community engagement, expand services, and raise awareness of the critical need for access to justice.



**TLSC's programs touch  
nearly every civil legal issue  
low-income Texans face.**

And our education tools reach  
even more people who struggle  
to get legal help on their own.  
Your support made that  
reach possible.

SEE THE DIFFERENCE YOUR SUPPORT MADE THIS YEAR

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# EMPOWERING, EDUCATING AND SERVING TEXANS

<p><b>840</b> attendees received training from the Family Helpline.</p> <p><b>FAMILY HELPLINE</b></p>	<p><b>1,615</b> callers to Family Helpline, serving 1,341 adults and 2,493 children.</p> <p><b>FAMILY HELPLINE</b></p>	<p><b>110</b> kinship caregivers were assisted by Kincare Legal Assistance Project.</p> <p><b>FAMILY HELPLINE</b></p>
<p><i>TLSC are the people that can really cut through the red tape and find a way to help. I feel like they really care. Nicole, a TLSC attorney, saw a way to possibly get this streamlined quickly for my daughter's sake. I don't know what I would have done without TLSC.</i></p> <p><b>NANCY, CLIENT</b> <b>FAMILY HELPLINE'S KINCARE LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT</b></p>		<p><b>9</b> legal trainings to physicians, nurses, and other clinic staff to help patients engage in their legal rights.</p> <p><b>MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS</b></p>
<p><b>1,830+</b> seniors and medicare recipients received legal information and advice regarding health care, housing stability, estate planning and financial matters.</p> <p><b>LEGAL HOTLINE FOR TEXANS</b></p>	<p><i>God knew I was in danger. He sent me an angel, and it turned out to be Barbra [a TLSC attorney].</i></p> <p><b>JACK, SOMERVILLE, TX</b> <b>CLIENT, CRIME VICTIMS LEGAL SERVICES</b></p>	
	<p><b>\$32,450.31</b> recovered for clients with Crime Victims Compensation.</p> <p><b>CRIME VICTIMS</b></p>	<p><b>460+</b> legal problems addressed for patients of our health clinic partners, helping patients and their families to focus on treatment and wellness.</p> <p><b>MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS</b></p>

All statistics and data apply to the fiscal year September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025.



<p><b>514</b> legal problems addressed through advice, counsel, and/or representation.</p> <p><b>CRIME VICTIMS</b></p>	<p><b>\$1,125,651.38</b></p> <p>won for retirees facing lost pensions or recoupment.</p> <p><b>SOUTH CENTRAL PENSION RIGHTS</b></p>	
<p>Through a collaborative case review process, TLSC Managing Attorney Shelli Egger contributed to a policy change within a Austin-area sex crimes unit to reduce re-traumatization of survivors during investigative interviews. Bringing survivor voices to the table within local Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) is a critical way our staff help reshape the greater legal system to better serve survivors and increase their access to meaningful justice.</p> <p><b>LEGAL AID FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT</b></p>		<p><b>600+</b> legal problems addressed at the legal counsel and advice level or above.</p> <p><b>LEGAL AID FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT</b></p>
<p><b>208</b> legal questions answered during Summer of Service with Austin Young Lawyers.</p> <p><b>TEXAS FREE LEGAL ANSWERS</b></p>	<p><b>88</b> Benefit Counselors trained by TLSC. Benefit Counselors assist older people, their family members and caregivers to understand their rights and options.</p> <p><b>LEGAL HOTLINE FOR TEXANS</b></p>	
<p><b>650+</b> court-ready forms for self-represented litigants.</p> <p><b>TEXASLAWHELP.ORG</b></p>	<p><i>I was really scared as how to go about helping my Mother who is disabled. The person whom helped me was caring, and knew exactly what I needed to help my Mother. I am so grateful for finding this service.</i></p> <p><b>CHAT CLIENT, TEXASLAWHELP.ORG</b></p>	
<p><b>150</b> audience members learned about ways for veterans to engage in their legal rights from TLSC attorney presentations.</p> <p><b>VETERANS LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM</b></p>	<p><b>1,040+</b> veterans, spouses, surviving spouses, and eligible dependents received legal advice and assistance.</p> <p><b>VETERANS LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM</b></p>	<p><b>1,731</b> counsel and advice chat sessions between TLSC attorneys and qualified visitors.</p> <p><b>TEXASLAWHELP.ORG</b></p>

**3,400+** chats received  
by POLL from 132  
Texas counties.

**614** of those callers  
received legal advice. 2,008  
received legal information  
or referrals.

**PARENTING ORDER LEGAL  
LINE (POLL)**

**1,966** hours kiosk visitors  
spent at our network of  
legal kiosks.

**LEGAL KIOSK PROGRAM**

**3.7 million**

visitors

**TEXASLAWHELP.ORG**

**18,059** callers reached out  
to the Eviction Helpline.

**799** received help at the  
legal advice and counsel  
level or above. 17,260  
callers received free legal  
information and referrals.

**EVICTIION HELPLINE**

**11 million** page views.

**TEXASLAWHELP.ORG**

*The Legal Kiosk is a valuable resource for our community—a place where anyone can come to find reliable, up to date forms and information related to legal needs for free. The access to lawyers for quick questions is a great assurance to those who are trying to navigate a world that they often don't understand. Thank you for all you do.*

**ROBIN STAUBER,  
ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN  
PATRICK HEATH PUBLIC  
LIBRARY BOERNE**

*I am a family law judge in Fort Bend County. One-third to one-half of our cases each day are self-represented litigants; most of whom are using legal forms provided through TexasLawHelp.org. We regularly refer these parties to the Virtual Kiosk [now named Legal Kiosk] located in the law library in the courthouse where they can get legal questions answered if they have issues in their case that are preventing the case from moving forward. We have gotten a lot of positive feedback from the parties who have followed up with the referral. Our county does not have many resources for low-income parties who need free legal representation or advice.*

*In most of these self-represented cases, the parties just need a little help or legal advice and then they are able to complete the case on their own. The virtual kiosk helps fill that gap.*

**JUDGE JANET HEPPARD  
387TH DISTRICT COURT, FORT BEND COUNTY**

**Justice isn't a privilege:  
it's a fundamental right.**  
In times like these, it's easy to  
feel powerless against the chaos.  
But when you give to TLSC, you  
create real stability for people  
who need it most.

With your help, we aim to raise \$15,000 by December 31st—funds that will directly power legal services for Texans in crisis. Every donation made before December 31st is tax-deductible.

**DONATE NOW**

or visit [tlsc.org/donate](https://tlsc.org/donate).

## OTHER WAYS YOU CAN HELP

**Sponsor** | To learn about sponsorship opportunities, reach out to Jonathan Panzer, Director of Development at [jpanzer@tlsc.org](mailto:jpanzer@tlsc.org) or visit [tlsc.org/sponsor](https://tlsc.org/sponsor).

**Volunteer** | Find volunteer opportunities on our website. Visit [tlsc.org/volunteer](https://tlsc.org/volunteer).

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