

# CLASS ACTION RESIDUAL FUNDS – Enhancing Access to Justice

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*Learn how you can help increase funding for civil legal services for  
poor and low-income Marylanders*

*A TOOLKIT FOR MARYLAND LAWYERS*

## Attorneys Make a Difference: You Can Support Legal Services for the Poor with Class Action Residual Awards



**Maryland's Civil Legal Services System Remains Sparse.** In Maryland, few low-income individuals can find affordable legal help when they face a legal problem. In our state, approximately 531,166 individuals (9.2%) are living below the federal poverty level. Over 77,000 Maryland families live in poverty. In Maryland it is estimated that only about 22% of civil legal needs of low-income and poor residents are being met with the help of an attorney. While many Maryland attorneys provide *pro bono* assistance, only 0.7% of Maryland lawyers are employed by a legal services organization that serves low-income individuals.

During the last several years, an increasing number of individuals have qualified for legal help based on their income; at the same time, that funding for civil legal services has declined.

**As a Litigator, You Can Help.** *Using the cy pres doctrine to award undistributed class action funds could go a long way toward helping Maryland meet the need for legal services.* Directing class action residuals to individual legal aid programs, or to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC), a non-profit entity that funds civil legal aid in our State, is consistent with the purpose of class action lawsuits. Unnamed members of the class in a class action often have the same characteristics as legal aid clients. It is therefore particularly appropriate to direct residual funds to an organization whose mission is to protect a similar class of persons. *Legal services organizations are appropriate recipients of class action funds.*

**Take Action.** As a litigator, you are in a unique position to direct class action residuals to MLSC or a specific legal services program. You can:

- Review these materials.
- Look for opportunities in your class action cases to apply the *cy pres* doctrine to benefit civil legal aid in Maryland.
- Talk with opposing counsel and your colleagues about class action residuals and their application to civil legal aid organizations.
- Look for opportunities to help us spread information about class action residuals in local and specialty bar publications and other legal publications.
- Contact the Maryland Access to Justice Commission if you have questions. Call (410) 260-1258, or visit [mdcourts.gov/mdatjc](http://mdcourts.gov/mdatjc).

Thank you for all you do to help us increase access to justice for all in Maryland.

Hon. Irma S. Raker  
Maryland Court of Appeals (ret'd)  
Chair, Maryland Access to Justice Commission

## Class Action Residuals

At the conclusion of a class action lawsuit, there are often unclaimed funds that, for one reason or another, cannot be distributed to the designated class. It may be the class members cannot be located, or may decline to submit a claim. In some class actions, the amount due to each individual member of the class may be so small that the cost of notifying class members, and disbursing and administering the fund would exhaust the fund. In these cases, the court may order that the funds be redirected rather than distributed to individual class members.

These undisbursed monies become a “class action residual fund.” In some instances, the unclaimed funds can be significant. Class action residual funds can often be made available for another use.

### Who Determines How to Distribute Class Action Residuals?

In negotiating a settlement, the parties and their counsel can negotiate how class action residual funds will be disbursed.

If the parties do not address the distribution of class action residuals, or if the matter is resolved at trial, the court will determine how unclaimed funds are to be handled.

### Cy Pres Doctrine: When Courts Determine the Use of Class Action Residuals

Courts rely on their general equity power, or the doctrine of *cy pres* to justify the distribution of class action residual funds. The *cy pres* doctrine, borrowed from the estates and trust context, refers to the French phrase, “*cy pres comme possible*,” which means “as near as possible.” Under this equitable doctrine, a court may reform a gift or trust, which would otherwise fail, by redirecting funds to another beneficiary to fulfill, “as nearly as possible,” the donor’s original intent. In the class action context, the doctrine is used to distribute unclaimed portions of a class action judgment or settlement fund to a charitable entity that will advance the interests of the class.

Courts retain significant discretion under their equitable powers to determine the “next best use. Parties and their counsel can also play a significant role by directing in the settlement how unclaimed funds will be disbursed.

### Why Shouldn’t Unclaimed Funds Revert to the Defendant?

One goal of a class action award is to deter behavior that is harmful to the public. By redirecting class action residual funds, a *cy pres* award ensures that the deterrent goals of the law are fulfilled. It also ensures that the defendant is not unjustly enriched. The defendant still assumes full liability for the harm, regardless of whether or not all class members assert their claim. When residual funds are distributed to a nonprofit entity that serves the public, individuals who did not assert their claim still benefit as members of the community at large.

## Class Action Residual Funds Can Support Non-Profits that Provide Legal Help to the Poor in Maryland

Class action lawsuits are often brought on behalf of consumers, low-income individuals and others with small claims who, acting on their own, would be unable to assert a claim effectively against large, institutional defendants. When those class actions are successful, the benefit to each individual may be small, although the benefit to the public at large is significant. *Consider directing unclaimed funds from such cases to one of Maryland's non-profit organizations that provide legal help to the poor.*

Non-profit legal services organizations fulfill a purpose close to the goal of most class action lawsuits – to assert claims and provide a voice for low- and moderate-income Marylanders who would otherwise be unrepresented in dealing with large, institutional defendants. Maryland's legal services providers represent aggrieved individuals, and work for systemic change to support vulnerable individuals, families and communities. They are experts on the types of issues facing low-income people, including consumer issues, public benefits, institutionalized persons, elder law, housing, protection from violence, child welfare, and family law.

## Making the Connection: Legal Services Organizations Can Be the “Next Best Use” of Class Action Funds

Courts have found legal services programs to be appropriate recipients of class action residual funds for two basic reasons:

- Legal aid programs commonly represent the next best use of unclaimed funds to indirectly benefit members of a class under the *cy pres* doctrine.
- The underlying mission of legal aid programs for the poor is consistent with the purpose of class action lawsuits and Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Rule 23 recognizes the need to protect the legal rights of those who, because of their economic position, would otherwise be unrepresented.

### Nexus

In relying on the *cy pres* doctrine, it is important to identify the “nexus” between the underlying litigation and the recipient and use of a *cy pres* award. For example, if funds remain after litigation over health insurance premiums, class action residual funds might be used to fund positions at non-profit legal services organization that provides healthcare advocacy for low-income clients.

An argument may be made for a broader nexus, for example, between underlying litigation that serves the community at large and access to justice. Class action litigation that has a larger public benefit can be seen as advancing access to justice and might justify the award of residual funds to legal services providers that work to improve the lives of individuals and families in low-income communities.

## Access to Justice

The justice system offers individuals a peaceful method of resolving disputes. The justice system depends, in turn, on the willingness of individuals to mediate disputes through the courts. As long as courts are perceived as neutral, fair and accessible, individuals will participate in that system, submitting to its rulings to address disputes. If individuals perceive that system as overly complex, impenetrable, or its outcomes predetermined, they will go elsewhere.

The public must feel they can be effectively heard – either because they are armed to handle their own case effectively, or because they have the benefit of counsel. Only then will individuals consent to rely on the justice system to observe its rulings. It is upon this fragile consensus that our civil society depends. Non-profit legal services organizations support the rule of law and enhance our just and civil society by providing a voice to the vulnerable, aid to the self-represented, and legal representation to those whose cases require the aid of counsel.

It is appropriate for funds created through the use of the tax-subsidized judicial system to be distributed in part for the purpose of providing access to that system by indigent Marylanders.

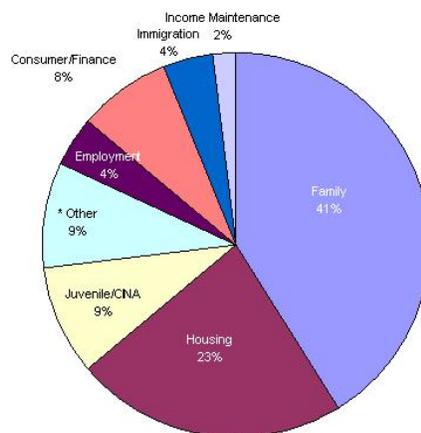
## Special Populations

Legal services programs have special projects serving many identifiable populations including: persons over 60 years of age, children, abuse victims, persons with disabilities, public assistance recipients, veterans, migrant workers, immigrants and refugees, low-wage workers, children with special educational needs and low-income persons in general. Some programs target specific case types including: foreclosure, housing, consumer issues, domestic violence.

## Scope of Services

Legal aid programs provide a broad range of services, addressing a wide sweep of societal problems.

*Types of Cases Handled by Non-Profit Legal Providers in Maryland*

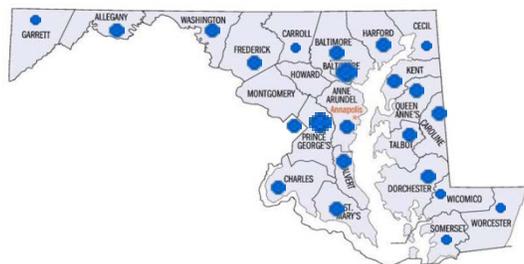


\*Includes education, health, individual rights, estates and trusts.

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## Geographic Scope

### *Location and Service Areas of Non-Profit Legal Services in Maryland*



Non-profit legal services organizations have a presence in all regions in Maryland. Some serve residents statewide; others focus on a single jurisdiction or region. Maryland's non-profit legal aid providers serve every population and geographic region in the state. A class action residual fund award to legal aid providers can be structured to impact the desired group or locale.

### For More Information

Kevin M. Forde, *What Can a Court Do with Leftover Class Action Funds? Almost Anything!*, 35 JUDGES' JOURNAL 19 (Summer 1996).

Bob Glaves, *What Would You Do with a Million Dollars? How to Seek Cy Pres Awards*, BAR LEADER 24 (September/October 2007).

## Examples of Class Action Residual Fund Awards

### Awards in Maryland to Non-Profit Legal Services

- In 2010, Maryland Legal Aid received \$1.2 million in *cy pres* awards.
- CASA de Maryland received \$25,000 as the result of a settlement reached in federal court in Maryland from a national collective action lawsuit in which janitors claimed they had been denied overtime pay in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act. CASA de Maryland, which serves low-income Latino immigrants, used the funds to help others affected by wage theft.
- Maryland Legal Aid was awarded \$30,000 in 2004. The residual fund award was the result of a suit against a car dealership which plaintiffs claim had been overcharging for taxes, title and registration fees. Legal Aid was recognized for its work on behalf of consumers in Maryland to safeguard them from predatory lenders.
- In 2003, thanks to the efforts of Connie Kratovil-Lavelle, co-counsel for plaintiffs in partnerships with Washington, DC firm, Beins, Goldberg & Gleiberman, several legal services providers received a total of \$495,000. Class action residual funds were distributed to Maryland Legal Services Corporation, and bar foundations in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, the result of a class action against cable TV companies alleged to have overcharged fees.
- Maryland Legal Aid and the Public Justice Center each received \$200,000 in 2003 from leftover settlement funds in a class action against a storage company.
- A national class action filed in 1999 resulted in a \$106,000 *cy pres* award to Maryland Legal Aid, the residuals of a settlement between Chevy Chase Bank and plaintiffs who alleged the bank had overcharged fees.

### Examples Across the Country

- **Georgia:** Georgia Legal Services Program and Atlanta Legal Aid Society collectively received more than \$3 million from court awards in three lawsuits.
- **Illinois:** Legal Aid Foundation of Metro Chicago and Land of Lincoln Legal Assistance Foundation collectively received \$824,000 from 19 court awards.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota Legal Aid Foundation received \$3.2 million in two court awards.
- **Texas:** An Austin attorney was instrumental in designating more than \$2.6 million in court awards to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation and five of its grantees to support civil legal services to persons with disabilities.
- **Washington, DC:** One legal aid program and three law school clinical programs received more than \$10 million from court awards resulting from a single lawsuit.

## Practice Points & Tips

### *1. Raise the topic of residual provisions early*

Raising the issue of a class action residual provision relatively early in settlement negotiations can have a positive impact on the process. Some defendants may find the prospect of paying money to settle a case more palatable when they consider that some of the money may benefit a good cause.

### *2. Always consider whether there are funds that can be made available*

Counsel should always consider whether there are funds that can be made available for court awards to legal aid. The decision to make a court award in a class action settlement most often comes during the settlement process.

### *3. Consider setting aside a fixed amount or percentage for charitable purposes*

The most common use of class action residuals is the case where a settlement provides that unclaimed or leftover funds will be used for the awards. However, you may negotiate to set aside a fixed percentage of the settlement fund or a certain amount for charitable purposes, including legal aid, even where settlement funds are to be distributed to identifiable plaintiffs.

### *4. Consider whether publicity would be appropriate*

The driving force for class action residual awards to legal aid programs is often the plaintiffs' counsel, but defense counsel frequently welcome the award as a way for their client to resolve a case and obtain some positive publicity from the settlement. On the other hand, both parties may prefer to keep the settlement confidential. It is important to be sensitive to the desires of both parties when deciding whether or not to publicize an award.

## Samples Settlement Provision Designating a Cy Pres Distribution

### 6. COMMON FUND

6.1 There shall be a Common Fund established.

6.2 The Defendants shall pay \$\_\_\_\_\_ into the Common Fund. The fund shall be deposited with Class Counsel within 90 days of an order preliminarily approving the class settlement. The funds will be held in an escrow account established by [Law Firm]. In the event that the settlement class does not receive final approval, the funds shall be returned to the Defendants, less any expenses and costs incurred to administer notice to the class pursuant to the order(s) of the Court and terms of the Agreement, unless otherwise agreed by the parties.

6.3 The Defendant shall have no financial responsibilities to the Plaintiffs, the Maryland Class Members, or the Class Counsel beyond the payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_ except that Defendants will return any payments received on or after the date the Preliminary Approval Order is entered.

6.4 The Class Counsel shall administer the Common Fund, either directly or through a third-party administrator.

6.5 Subject to final approval by the Court, the following shall be paid from the Common Fund:

6.5.1 The administrative costs of administering the Agreement, notices required by the Agreement, and fully administrating the Common Fund;

6.5.2 Payments to Plaintiffs as required by [Relevant Section].

6.5.3 Payments to Maryland Class members, after approval of Maryland Class Members' claims, as required by [Relevant Section]; and

6.5.4 Payment of attorney fees and cost as required by [Relevant Section] and approved by the Court.

6.5.5 Excess funds remaining in the Common Fund after payments required above shall be paid as a *cy pres* award to an organization nominated by the Plaintiffs, subject to objection by the Defendants and final approval by the Court.

## Sample Order: Approving Settlement Agreement

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MARYLAND  
(BALTIMORE DIVISION)

Plaintiffs

Case No.

v.

Defendants

### FINAL ORDER AND JUDGMENT

Upon consideration of the parties' request and motion for final certification of the settlement class under Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(3) and final approval of the proposed class action settlement, and upon consideration of the Agreement, the Final Approval Motion, and the record,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

1. The Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the lawsuit and over all settling parties hereto.
2. CLASS MEMBERS — Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(b)(3), the Lawsuit is hereby finally certified as a class action on behalf of the following Maryland Class Members:

[Definition of Class]

3. CLASS REPRESENTATIVE AND CLASS COUNSEL APPOINTMENT - Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 23, the Court finally certifies Plaintiffs as the Class Representatives and [ATTORNEY] of the [FIRM NAME] law firm as Class Counsel. The Court, in appointing Class Counsel, has reviewed the factors set forth in Rule 23(g) and appoints Class Counsel based on the review of the criteria set forth therein.

4. NOTICES — Pursuant to the Court's Preliminary Approval Order, the approved class action notices were mailed to the Maryland Class Members. The form and method for notifying the Maryland Class Members of the settlement and its terms and conditions was in conformity with this Court's preliminary approval order and satisfied the requirements of Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(c)(2)(b) and due process, and constituted the best notice practicable under the circumstances. The Court finds that the proposed notices were clearly designed to advise the class members of their rights.

5. FINAL CLASS CERTIFICATION — The Court finds that the Lawsuit satisfies the applicable prerequisites for class action treatment under Fed. R. Civ. P. 23, namely:

5.1. The Maryland Class Members are so numerous that joinder of all of them in the Lawsuit is impracticable;

5.2. There are questions of law and fact common to the Maryland Class Members, which predominate over any individual questions;

5.3. Plaintiffs' claims are typical of the claims of the Maryland Class Members;

5.4. Plaintiffs and Class Counsel have fairly and adequately represented and Protected the interests of all of the Maryland Class Members; and

5.5. Class treatment of these claims will be efficient and manageable, thereby achieving an appreciable measure of judicial economy, and a class action is superior to other available methods for a fair and efficient adjudication of this controversy.

6. The Court finds that the settlement of the Lawsuit, on the terms and conditions set forth in the Agreement, is in all respects fundamentally fair, reasonable, adequate, and in the best interests of the settling class members, especially in light of the benefits to the settling class members; the strength of the Plaintiffs' case; the complexity, expense, and probable duration of further litigation; the risk and delay inherent in possible appeals; the risk of collecting any judgment obtained on behalf of the Maryland class; and the limited amount of any potential total recovery for the class.

7. The Court finds that the total sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be paid to the Class Representatives pursuant to the terms of the Agreement is a fair and reasonable amount to be paid to them and hereby approves and directs the payments be made from the Common Fund.

8. The Court finds the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to Class Counsel for attorneys' fees and costs is fair and reasonable amount based and hereby approves and directs the payments be made from the Common Fund.

9. All payments to members of the Class who elected to receive their share of the Common Fund shall receive the payment required as set forth in the Settlement Agreement.

10. The Court further finds that any residue of the Common Fund shall be contributed as *cy pres* in percentages indicated below to the following non-profit organizations:

- \_\_\_% to [NON-PROFIT LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDER].
- \_\_\_% to [NON-PROFIT LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDER OR OTHER NON-PROFIT].

11. SETTLEMENT TERMS — The Agreement, which shall be deemed incorporated herein, and the proposed settlement are finally approved and shall be consummated in accordance with the terms and provisions thereof, except as amended by any order issued by this Court. The parties are hereby directed to perform the terms of the Agreement.

12. OBJECTIONS AND EXCLUSIONS — The Maryland Class Members were given an opportunity to object to the settlement. No Maryland Class Member objected to the settlement. The Maryland Class Members who made valid and timely requests for exclusion are excluded from the class and settlement and are not bound by this order. The identities of such persons are set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto. This order is binding on all Maryland Class Members, except those individuals identified in Exhibit A.

13. RELEASE OF CLAIMS AND DISMISSAL OF LAWSUIT — Plaintiffs, the Maryland Class Members, and their successors and assigns fully, finally, and forever settle, release, and discharge the "Released Parties" (as defined in the Agreement) from the "Released Claims" (as defined in the Agreement), and are forever barred and enjoined from asserting any of the Released Claims in any court or forum whatsoever as set forth in the Agreement. Pursuant to the release contained in the agreement, the released claims are compromised, settled, released, discharged, and dismissed

with prejudice by virtue of these proceedings and this order.

14. The Lawsuit is hereby dismissed with prejudice in all respects.

15. This order shall not be construed as an admission by Defendants of any liability or wrongdoing in this or in any other proceeding.

16. The Court hereby retains continuing and exclusive jurisdiction over the Parties and all matters relating to the Lawsuit and Agreement, including the administration, interpretation, construction, effectuation, enforcement, and consummation of the settlement and this order.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Honorable [NAME OF JUDGE]  
United States District Judge

## Tips for Preparing an Affidavit in Support of Cy Pres Award

Non-profit legal services organizations may want to submit an affidavit in support of a potential class action residual fund or *cy pres* award. Some suggestions for how to prepare that affidavit follow:

- Provide information about your organization's history, background and mission, making a clear link between the work your organization does and the purpose of the lawsuit.
- Tie your organization's work directly to the type of activities the lawsuit is intended to redress. Be specific about the types of legal work your organization undertakes.
- Explain why your organization is well-suited to receive and administer the funds to the intended beneficiaries of the lawsuit.
- Make it clear that your organization is a not-for-profit, private law firm that provides free civil legal assistance to low-income Maryland residents. Clarify how your organization is funded, and provide more detail on the jurisdictions served, especially if you want to highlight the overlap between your organization's clients and the intended beneficiaries of the lawsuit.
- Be specific about the types of benefits you are able to achieve for your organization's clients and how that work benefits the state as a whole.
- Tie the benefits you provide your organization's clients to their larger problems, noting the broader impact such work may have. For example, the credit card debt and other financial difficulties of clients has a detrimental impact on many areas of their lives and often results in loss of housing (through foreclosure or eviction), garnishment of wages or attachment of bank accounts. The negative credit status created by financial problems often impacts a client's ability to obtain affordable subsidized housing, insurance and employment.
- Give specific examples of the types of activities your organization undertakes that may impact clients. This may include direct legal representation as well as assistance with forms, consultations, support, outreach and public education, workshops or seminars, among others.
- Use evaluations and statistical information about the impact of civil legal aid generally in Maryland. You may want to use the Media Kit available from the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, available at <http://mdcourts.gov/mdatjc/pdfs/mediakit.pdf>.

## Non-Profit Legal Service Providers in Maryland

### **Allegany Law Foundation, Inc.**

Executive Director: Marcia Conrad, Esq.  
110 Greene Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
Phone: (301) 722-3390 Fax: (301) 722-3393  
Email: [alleganylaw@wirefire.com](mailto:alleganylaw@wirefire.com)  
Website: [alleganylaw.com](http://alleganylaw.com)

Allegany Law Foundation serves low-income clients through the efforts of a small in-house staff and a panel of attorneys handling cases on a pro bono or reduced-fee basis.

### **Alternative Directions, Inc.**

Executive Director: Michelle Kelly  
2505 N. Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
Phone: (410) 889-5072 Fax: (410) 889-5092  
Email: [adi.legal@verizon.net](mailto:adi.legal@verizon.net)  
Website: [alternativedirectionsinc.org](http://alternativedirectionsinc.org)

Alternative Directions provides free legal assistance, primarily family and domestic legal issues, to persons in prison or recently released from incarceration. The program also provides monthly workshops to prisoners on legal rights and responsibilities.

### **Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center**

Executive Director: Zenobia Lai, Esq.  
1012 14th St., NW Suite 450  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (202) 393-3572 Fax: (202) 393-0995  
Email: [zenobia.lai@apalrc.org](mailto:zenobia.lai@apalrc.org)  
Website: [apalrc.org](http://apalrc.org)

The Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center addresses the legal needs of low-income, limited English proficient Asian Americans in Maryland and represents low-wage workers and victims of domestic violence in Maryland.

### **Baltimore Bar Foundation Senior Legal Services**

Executive Director: Katherine Sanzone  
111 North Calvert Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Phone: (410) 396-5277 Fax: (410) 332-8468  
Email: [info@baltimorebar.org](mailto:info@baltimorebar.org)  
Website: [baltimorebar.org](http://baltimorebar.org)

The Baltimore Bar Foundation's Senior Legal Services program provides free legal representation and advice to Baltimore City residents 60 years and older.

### **Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc.**

Interim Executive Director: Fatima Wilson  
2530 North Charles Street, Suite 200  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
Phone: (410) 243-4400 Fax: (410) 889-8653  
Email: [fwilson@bni-maryland.org](mailto:fwilson@bni-maryland.org)  
Website: [bni-maryland.org](http://bni-maryland.org)

BNI operates a statewide landlord/tenant counseling hotline.

### **CASA de Maryland**

Executive Director: Gustavo Torres  
8151 15th Avenue  
Hyattsville, MD 20783  
Phone: (301) 270-0419 Fax: (301) 270-8659  
Email: [gtorres@casamd.org](mailto:gtorres@casamd.org)  
Website: [casademaryland.org](http://casademaryland.org)

CASA operates an Employment Rights Project, which assists Latin Americans and other day laborers in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties and Baltimore City with employment-related legal issues.

### **CASA, Inc. (Citizens Assisting and Sheltering the Abused)**

Executive Director: Vicki A. Sadehvandi  
116 W. Baltimore Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
Phone: (301) 739-4990 Fax: (301) 790-0064  
Email: [casa.incorp@myactv.net](mailto:casa.incorp@myactv.net)  
Website: [casainc.org](http://casainc.org)

CASA operates a Legal Services Program which provides legal assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Washington County.

### **Catholic Charities of Baltimore**

Director: Valerie Twanmoh, Esq.  
430 S. Broadway  
Baltimore, MD 21231  
Phone: (410) 534-8015 Fax: (410) 675-1451  
Email: [imlserv@catholiccharities-md.org](mailto:imlserv@catholiccharities-md.org)  
Website: [catholiccharities-md.org](http://catholiccharities-md.org)

Catholic Charities of Baltimore Immigration Legal Services Project provides client screening, counseling and legal representation for low-income persons with immigration problems in the Baltimore metropolitan area in a wide array of immigration matters.

**Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington**

Executive Director: Ed Orzechowski  
Project Director: Jeanne Atkinson, Esq.  
924 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
Phone: (202) 526-4100 Fax: (202) 526-1829  
Email: [jeanne.atkinson@catholiccharitiesdc.org](mailto:jeanne.atkinson@catholiccharitiesdc.org)  
Website: [catholiccharitiesdc.org](http://catholiccharitiesdc.org)

Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington Immigration Legal Services provides legal assistance and representation to low-income persons with immigration problems residing primarily in Prince George's and Montgomery counties.

**Community Law Center**

Executive Director: Kristine Dunkerton, Esq.  
3355 Keswick Road, Suite 200  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
Phone: (410) 366-0922 Fax: (410) 366-7763  
Email: [kristined@communitylaw.org](mailto:kristined@communitylaw.org)  
Website: [communitylaw.org](http://communitylaw.org)

CLC provides legal counsel and representation to nonprofit organizations that represent issues of low-income people and are unable to afford private counsel.

**Community Legal Services of Prince George's County**

Executive Director: Neal Conway  
6301 Ivy Lane, Suite 720  
Greenbelt, MD 20770  
Phone: (240) 391-6370 Fax: (240) 391-6356  
Email: [conway@clspgc.org](mailto:conway@clspgc.org)  
Website: [clspgc.org](http://clspgc.org)

Community Legal Services of Prince George's County provides civil legal assistance to low-income persons of Prince George's County through a panel of pro bono and reduced-fee attorneys.

**Domestic Violence Center of Howard County**

Executive Director: Jennifer Pollitt Hill  
5457 Twin Knolls Road, Suite 310  
Columbia, MD 21046  
Phone: (410) 997-0304 Fax: (410) 997-1397  
Email: [jpollithill@dvcenter.org](mailto:jpollithill@dvcenter.org)  
Website: [dvcenter.org](http://dvcenter.org)

The Domestic Violence Center of Howard County operates a legal services project, which serves low-income domestic violence victims.

**Harford County Bar Foundation**

Executive Director: Cynthia A. Lewis  
Harford County Circuit Court Building  
20 W. Courtland Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
Phone: (410) 836-0123 Fax: (410) 836-7117  
Email: [clewishcbf@verizon.net](mailto:clewishcbf@verizon.net)  
Website: [marylandlaw.net/harford/brochure.htm](http://marylandlaw.net/harford/brochure.htm)

The Harford County Bar Foundation operates a pro bono and reduced-fee legal services program, providing intake and referral services to low-income persons with civil legal problems.

**Heartly House, Inc.**

Chief Executive Officer: Roberta Geidner  
P.O. Box 857  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Phone: (301) 662-8800 Fax: (301) 663-4334  
Email: [ceo@heartlyhouse.org](mailto:ceo@heartlyhouse.org)  
Website: [heartlyhouse.org](http://heartlyhouse.org)

Heartly House is a private nonprofit agency serving victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault in Frederick County.

**Homeless Persons Representation Project**

Executive Director: Antonia Fasanelli, Esq.  
201 North Charles Street, Suite 1104  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 685-6589 Fax: (410) 625-0361  
Email: [afasanelli@hprplaw.org](mailto:afasanelli@hprplaw.org)  
Website: [hprplaw.org](http://hprplaw.org)

Homeless Persons Representation Project provides staff and pro bono assistance in a range of housing and other legal matters to clients in and at risk for homelessness as well as to those in homeless shelters in Maryland.

**House of Ruth of Maryland**

Executive Director: Sandi Timmins  
Legal Clinic Director: Dorothy Lennig, Esq.  
2201 Argonne Drive Baltimore, MD 21218  
Phone: (410) 889-0840 Fax: (410) 889-9347  
Email: [dlennig@hruthmd.org](mailto:dlennig@hruthmd.org)  
Website: [hruth.org](http://hruth.org)

House of Ruth's Domestic Violence Legal Clinic provides legal assistance to low-income victims of domestic violence from offices in Baltimore City and Prince George's and Montgomery counties. The clinic also provides technical assistance and training to spouse abuse centers and interested community organizations statewide.

**Legal Aid Bureau, Inc.**

Executive Director: Wilhelm H. Joseph, Jr., Esq.  
500 E. Lexington Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
Phone: (410) 951-7777 Fax: (410) 951-7778  
Website: [mdlab.org](http://mdlab.org)

Established in 1911, LAB is Maryland's primary provider of civil legal services to low-income persons and operates at locations across the state.

**Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education**

Co-Director: Selene Almazan, Esq.  
Co-Director: Carol Quirk  
7484 Candlewood Road, Suite R  
Hanover, MD 21076  
Phone: (410) 859-5400 Fax: (410) 859-1509  
Email: [mcie@mcie.org](mailto:mcie@mcie.org)  
Website: [mcie.org](http://mcie.org)

The Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education provides representation to disabled children throughout Maryland seeking to be educated in the least restrictive environment.

**Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center, Inc.**

Executive Director: Russell Butler, Esq.  
1001 Prince George's Boulevard, Suite 750  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774  
Phone: (301) 952-0063 Fax: (301) 952-2319  
Email: [rbutler@mdcrimevictims.org](mailto:rbutler@mdcrimevictims.org)  
Website: [mdcrimevictims.org](http://mdcrimevictims.org)

Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center, Inc. is a statewide victims' rights organization. The organization disseminates information on victims' rights to all Marylanders and provides specialized legal services to indigent crime victims.

**Maryland Disability Law Center**

Executive Director: Virginia Knowlton  
1500 Union Avenue, Suite 2000  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
Phone: (410) 727-6352 Fax: (410) 727-6389  
Email: [mdlcbalto@mdlcbalto.org](mailto:mdlcbalto@mdlcbalto.org)  
Website: [mdlcbalto.org](http://mdlcbalto.org)

MDLC provides free representation for disabled children and adults statewide with legal problems related to their disabilities.

**Maryland Legal Services Corporation**

Executive Director: Susan Erlichman  
15 Charles Plaza, Suite 102  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 576-9494  
Email: [serlichman@mlsc.org](mailto:serlichman@mlsc.org)  
Website: [mlsc.org](http://mlsc.org)

The Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) is the primary state-based funding source for the provision of civil legal services in Maryland. MLSC administers a variety of funding sources earmarked to support nonprofit legal services providers throughout Maryland. It is statutorily charged with making grants in a manner that best ensures low-income people throughout the state have access to quality legal assistance in an effective and efficient manner. MLSC provides ongoing compliance and monitoring reviews to ensure adherence to grant requirements and agreements and to ensure fiscal oversight and programmatic accountability and transparency. It has administered Maryland's Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program for thirty years. Thirty-four nonprofits rely on funding from MLSC to serve more than 150,000 clients annually with a broad array of civil legal problems including home foreclosure, domestic violence, veterans benefits, nursing home issues and other serious legal problems.

**Maryland Public Interest Law Project**

Co-Presidents: Melissa Scheffkind and Cristina Sproul  
Advisor: Teresa Schmiedeler, Esq.  
University of Maryland Law School  
500 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 706-8393 Fax: (410) 706-4045  
Email: [mpilp@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:mpilp@law.umaryland.edu)  
Website: [law.umaryland.edu/studentorg/mpilp](http://law.umaryland.edu/studentorg/mpilp)

MPILP, located at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, encourages law students to enter public interest law practice and offers law students from the University of Maryland and the University of Baltimore paid summer internships at public interest organizations of their choice.

**Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service**

Executive Director: Bonnie Sullivan, Esq.  
One North Charles Street, Suite 222  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 539-6800 Fax: (410) 837-0431  
Email: [info@mvlslaw.org](mailto:info@mvlslaw.org)  
Website: [mvlslaw.org](http://mvlslaw.org)

MVLS is a statewide program that serves low-income persons with a variety of civil legal problems through a referral program that places clients with volunteer or reduced-fee attorneys.

**Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, Inc.**

Executive Director: Jeanne Yeager  
P.O. Box 5  
Denton, MD 21629  
Phone: (410) 479-1149 Fax: (410) 479-2064  
Email: [jyeager@mscfv.org](mailto:jyeager@mscfv.org)  
Website: [mscfv.org](http://mscfv.org)

The Mid-Shore Council operates a reduced-fee legal services program for low-income victims of domestic violence in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties.

**Mid-Shore Pro Bono, Inc.**

Executive Director: Sandy Brown  
216 East Dover Street, Bldg. 300  
Easton, MD 21601-3072  
Phone: (410) 690-8128 Fax: (443) 385-0210  
Email: [sabrown@midshoreprobono.org](mailto:sabrown@midshoreprobono.org)  
Website: [midshoreprobono.org](http://midshoreprobono.org)

Mid-Shore Pro Bono provides pro bono and reduced-fee services in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties.

**Montgomery County Bar Foundation**

Executive Director: Julie Peterson  
27 W. Jefferson Street  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Phone: (301) 424-7651 (intake) Fax: (301) 217-9327  
Website: [montbar.org](http://montbar.org)

The Montgomery County Bar Foundation operates pro bono and reduced-fee programs in which attorneys are recruited to take pro bono cases in their area of expertise. The Foundation also conducts community outreach to Montgomery County's growing immigrant population.

**Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland**

Executive Director: Sharon Goldsmith, Esq.  
520 West Fayette Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 837-9379 Fax: (410) 385-2616  
Email: [sgoldsmith@probonomd.org](mailto:sgoldsmith@probonomd.org)  
Website: [probonomd.org](http://probonomd.org)

PBRC is a statewide pro bono support center that coordinates pro bono training and activities, maximizes volunteer attorney services to low-income Maryland residents and provides support for pro bono programs throughout the state. PBRC also administers a litigation expense fund for other pro bono and reduced-fee programs throughout Maryland. PBRC coordinates limited pro bono services in foreclosure prevention, consumer protection and family mediation.

**Public Justice Center**

Executive Director: John Nethercut, Esq.  
One North Charles Street, Suite 200  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 625-9409 Fax: (410) 625-9423  
Email: [nethercutj@publicjustice.org](mailto:nethercutj@publicjustice.org)  
Website: [publicjustice.org](http://publicjustice.org)

PJC provides legal representation to low-income tenants, workers, and students who are homeless or in foster care; advocates to protect and expand Medicaid and for a civil right to counsel; and provides appellate advocacy on a wide range of poverty law and discrimination issues.

**SARC (Sexual Assault/Sexual Abuse Resource Center)**

Executive Director: Luisa Caiazzo-Nutter  
Project Director: Gwendolyn Tate, Esq.  
P.O. Box 1207  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
Phone: (410) 836-8431 Fax: (410) 838-9484  
Email: [lcn@sarc-maryland.org](mailto:lcn@sarc-maryland.org)  
Website: [sarc-maryland.org](http://sarc-maryland.org)

The SARC Legal Services Program provides legal services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Harford County.

**St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center, Inc.**

Executive Director: Gerard J. Joab  
321 E. 25th Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
Phone: (410) 235-5770 Fax: (410) 255-8795  
Email: [gerardj@stambros.org](mailto:gerardj@stambros.org)  
Website: [stambros.org](http://stambros.org)

St. Ambrose Legal Services Program, a project of St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center, Inc., provides free legal assistance to low-income homeowners who are in danger of losing their homes.

**Sexual Assault Legal Institute**

Executive Director: Jennie Boden  
Project Director: Lisae C. Jordan, Esq.  
P.O. Box 8782  
Silver Spring, MD 20907  
Phone: (301) 565-2277 Fax: (301) 565-3619  
Email: [lcjordan@mcasa.org](mailto:lcjordan@mcasa.org)  
Website: [mcasa.org](http://mcasa.org)

The Sexual Assault Legal Institute is part of the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault and provides comprehensive legal assistance to victims of sexual assault throughout the state.

**Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy**

Executive Director: Laura Joyce  
P.O. Box 760  
Hollywood, MD 20636  
Phone: (301) 373-4141 Fax: (301) 373-4147  
Email: [lauraj@smcfa.net](mailto:lauraj@smcfa.net)  
Website: [smcfa.net](http://smcfa.net)

The Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy provides legal services to low-income clients of St. Mary's, Calvert, and Charles counties, primarily in the area of domestic violence.

**University of Maryland****Health Care Delivery and Child Welfare Legal Clinic**

Clinical Director: Michael Pinard, Esq.  
Contact: Sara Gold, Esq.  
500 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
Phone: (410) 706-8340 Fax: (410) 706-5856  
Email: [sgold@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:sgold@law.umaryland.edu)

The University of Maryland Clinical Law Office operates an HIV Legal Representation Project, in which law students provide legal services to persons with AIDS and HIV infection in Baltimore City.

**Whitman-Walker Health Legal Services Program**

Executive Director: Don Blanchon  
Program Director: Daniel Bruner, Esq.  
1701 14th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: (202) 939-7627 Fax: (202) 939-7651  
Email: [dbruner@wwc.org](mailto:dbruner@wwc.org)  
Website: [wwc.org](http://wwc.org)

The Whitman-Walker Health's Legal Services Program provides pro bono legal assistance to persons living with HIV/AIDS. MLSC funding supports services to residents of Montgomery, Prince George's, Frederick, Charles, and Calvert counties.

**Women's Law Center, Inc.**

Executive Director: L. Tracy Brown, Esq.  
305 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 201  
Towson, MD 21204  
Phone: (410) 321-8761 Fax: (410) 321-0462  
Email: [tbrown@wlcmd.org](mailto:tbrown@wlcmd.org)  
Website: [wlcmd.org](http://wlcmd.org)

The Women's Law Center was established in 1971 to meet the special legal needs of women. The program operates a statewide Family Law Hotline, an Employment Law Hotline that includes a lawyer referral panel, domestic violence representation projects, and a Judicare project that matches private attorneys with low-income individuals seeking representation in contested custody and other contested family law matters.

**YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County**

Executive Director: Molly Knipe  
1517 Ritchie Highway, Suite 201  
Arnold, MD 21012  
Phone: (410) 626-7800 Fax: (410) 626-7312  
Email: [mknipe@ywcaaac.org](mailto:mknipe@ywcaaac.org)  
Website: [annapolisywca.org](http://annapolisywca.org)

The YWCA legal services program provides representation in domestic violence matters, and administers a Judicare project, matching private attorneys with low-income individuals seeking representation in contested child custody matters.