

The Legislature of Rockland County



PHILIP SOSKIN
LEGISLATOR-DISTRICT 7
CHAIR, MULTI-SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES
MULTI-SERVICES COMMITTEE
TUESDAY OCTOBER 14, 2014
6:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT:
LEG. P. SOSKIN, CHAIR
LEG. T. EARL, VICE CHAIR
LEG. A. PAUL 2ND VICE CHAIR
LEG. D. JOBSON
LEG. P. MORONEY

MEMBERS ABSENT:
LEG. B. KANTROWITZ
LEG. A. WIEDER

OTHERS PRESENT:
LEG. N. LOW-HOGAN
R. MCKAY, ESQ
B. FINKELSTEIN, ESQ
A. CEMBER, ESQ
S. POWERS
DR. C. WOOD
L. FALCO
R. HANSEN

CHAIR SOSKIN CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:10 PM.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 08, 2014 MEETING.

MOTION TO ADOPT:
JOBSON/PAUL

UNAN

1. REF.# 9173

APPROVING AN INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE VILLAGE OF SPRING VALLEY TO IMPLEMENT POLICE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO REACH THE GOALS OF HEALTHIER COMMUNITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CREATING HEALTHY PLACES TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY INITIATIVE WHICH IS FUNDED BY THE NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$8,013 FOR THE PERIOD FROM APRIL 1, 2014 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2015 AND AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO EXECUTE THE INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT [DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH] (\$8,013)
(PATRICIA SCHNABEL RUPPERT, COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT)
DL#: 2014-03741

MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/MORONEY, PAUL

TRANSFERRED TO B & F 10/14/14
UNAN

ADDED SPONSORS:LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, JOBSON, MORONEY

Deputy Health Commissioner Ron Hansen stated that this is the final year of the grant and .A small portion in the amount of \$8,013.00 left. The goal is to have in place a healthier community creating healthy places to live, improving the quality of food for healthy eating and ensuring streets are clean and safe.

Chair Soskin asked if there were any possibilities of getting a similar contract for future years?
Mr. Hansen reply was that he doesn't expect this contract to be renewed.

Chair Soskin asked how many police are involve in this program? Mr. Hansen replied 3 Police Officers are involved in this program.

Chair Soskin express concerns and questioned what were to happen to the Police Officers if the contract if not renewed?
Mr. Hansen explained that at this time the program has a Spanish and Creole-speaking officer. The Department of Health will have to figure out if they can keep them or fund them.

Leg. Paul asked for how many years has the Village of Spring Valley been a recipient of this grant? He said for a period of 4 years and this is the 4th years.

2. REF.# 2870 RATIYING EXTENSION OF EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN DR.
CLIFF L. WOOD, AS PRESIDENT OF ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOR THE
PERIOD JULY 1, 2015 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2017[ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE]
(DR. CLIFF L. WOOD, PRESIDENT OF ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE)
DL#: 2014-04288

MOTION TO APPROVE:
SOSKIN/EARL, PAUL, JOBSON, MORONEY

TRANSFERRED TO B & F 10/14/14
UNAN

ADDED SPONSORRS:LEGS. SOSKIN, EARL, PAUL, JOBSON, MORONEY, LOW-HOGAN

Chair Soskin said it is with pleasure that he recommends Dr. Cliff L. Wood for another term as President of Rockland Community College.

Dr. Wood emphasized the fact that his salary had not been increases for the last 2 years and that with the extension of this employment he will be again getting the same salary.

Leg. Paul expressed her appreciation for Dr. Wood services to the College and his professional managerial skills.

3. REF.# 9193 DISCUSSION ITEM-ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE REVIEW OF EMERGENCY
INCIDENT (BOMB THREAT)
(HON. PHILIP SOSKIN, HON. JAY HOOD JR. LEGISLATURE)

DISCUSSED

Chair Soskin explained that Sheriff Falco is here to advise the Committee on the emergency incident, Bomb Threat, which occurred at Rockland Community College and how the Sheriff Department plans on dealing with these kinds of issues.

Sheriff Falco stated that on October 2nd there were four emails received in reference to a direct bomb threat to the College. His office was notified immediately. They worked together with the Westchester County Bomb Squad, the Fire Department and the Ramapo Police Department to evacuate the college. It took them about 3hours with our bomb Dogs and the Westchester Bomb Squad Dog with negative results; there were no bombs on campus.

Sheriff Falco complimented Dr. Wood for his regular and security staff that worked together with the Sheriff Department on the evacuation process. The incident at the other college was a dispute between two roommates and a social media post stating that he was going to do some harm. As a precautionary measure they called the Sheriff Department.

Chair Soskin asked if there were any possibilities of a tie between these two incidents? Sheriff Falco said no.

Chair Soskin asked what was in place for the future? Dr. Wood replied that at this time they are working on a funding mechanisms for a safety grant program. Dr. Wood thanked the Sheriff Department.

4 REF. #6760

DISCUSSION: ITEM-LEGAL SERVICES OF THE HUDSON VALLEY
(HON. ALDEN H. WOLFE LEGISLATURE)

DISCUSSED

Chief Executive Office Barbara Finkelstein, stated that the extent of their services. They cover seven counties and have 8 officers with a total of 110 employees. They have a very active Board of Directors with 24 members. They opened their offices in Spring Valley 15 months ago and have handle about 400 cases. There is a great demand in Rockland County as 90,000 people in this County are eligible for the services provided by their office.

They are looking to expand their services by bringing other resources to Rockland County. They are looking to expand through outreach, where people would come for services, and change people lives by providing civil legal services that impacts every aspect of someone's life.

Leg. Moroney asked where the funding come from? Mrs. Finkelstein explained that they get funding through the Federal Legal Services, New York Office, IOLA funding.

Leg. Moroney asked how they help in Immigration matters. Mrs. Finkelstein explained they help people in getting new Visa and offer different remedies to get legalized.

Chair Soskin asked if they had to translators. She said yes, they have access to a paid services language line that give them access to 300 languages.

(See Attached)

**MOTION TO ADJOURN: 6:45 PM.
MORONEY/EARL**

UNAN

Respectfully Submitted,

**Lesly Senatus
Committee Clerk**

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Legal Services
of the Hudson Valley

Protecting Rights
Promoting Justice

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

2013 BY THE NUMBERS

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579,930

Hudson Valley residents
eligible for our assistance



104

Staff members including

52 & **18**
attorneys & paralegals



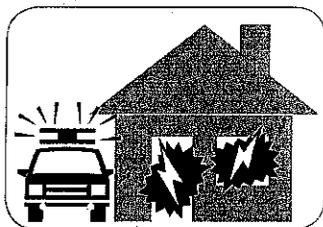
Cases handled

12,328

for clients including

1,610
seniors

6,803
women



1,226

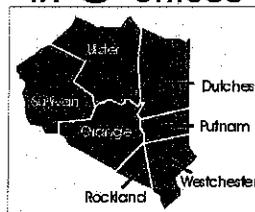
Domestic Violence survivors

including

451

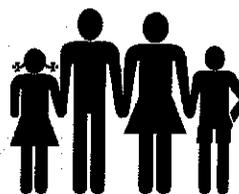
Orders of Protection

in **8** offices



across the Hudson Valley

impacting



24,480

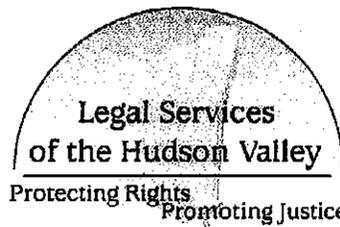
Total number of people in
all households served

including



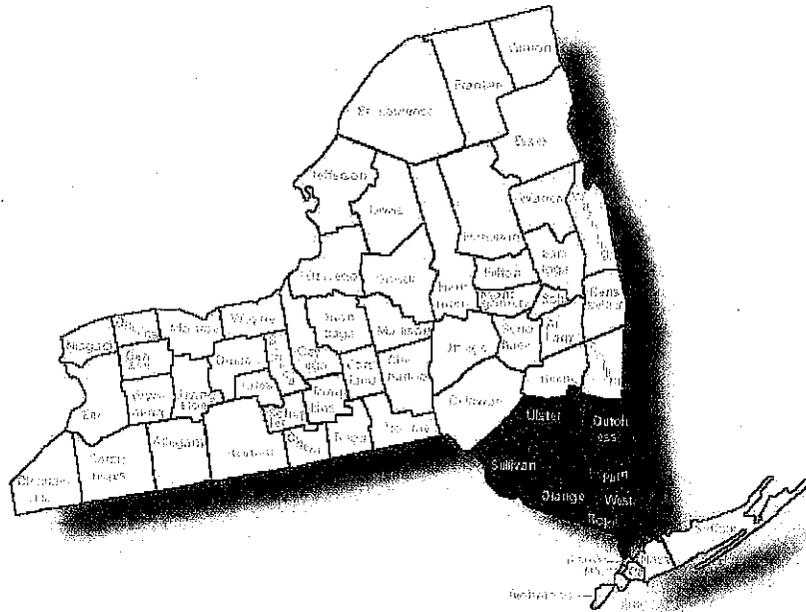
8,990

children



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90 Maple Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601
(914) 949-1305

YONKERS

30 South Broadway, 6th Floor
Yonkers, NY 10701
(914) 376-3757

MOUNT VERNON

100 East First Street
8th Floor, Suite 810
Mt. Vernon, NY 10550
(914) 813-6880

PEEKSKILL

One Park Place, Suite 303
Peekskill, NY 10566
(914) 949-1305 ext. 159
Office hours are:
Mon.-Thur., 9am-5pm

Dutchess County NY

POUGHKEEPSIE
147 Union Street, Suite 101
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
(845) 471-0058

Ulster County NY

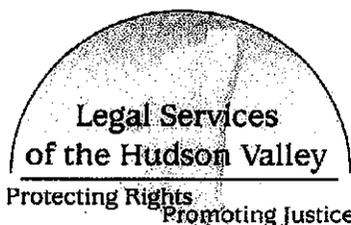
KINGSTON
101 Hurley Avenue, Suite 3
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 331-9373

Orange County NY

NEWBURGH
1 Corwin Court, Suite 102
Newburgh, NY 12550
(845) 569-9110

Rockland County NY

SPRING VALLEY
7A Perlman Drive, 2nd Floor
Spring Valley NY 10977
(914) 949-1305 ext. 145



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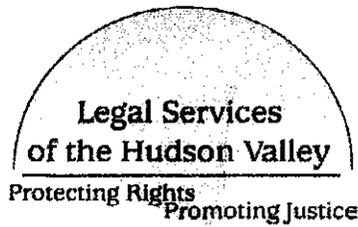
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May 2014

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ACCESS - VR (Adult Career & Continuing Education Services -Vocational Rehabilitation) – Spring Valley, NY

ASSEMBLYWOMAN ELLEN JAFFEE's OFFICE – Pearl River, NY

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF ROCKLAND COUNTY – New City, NY

CHILDCARE RESOURCES OF ROCKLAND COUNTY – Spring Valley, NY

COMMUNITY AWARENESS NETWORK FOR A DRUG-FREE LIFE & ENVIRONMENT (CANDLE) – New City, NY

EAST RAMAPO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – Spring Valley, NY

HACSO – HAITIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION – Spring Valley, NY

HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES – Spring Valley, NY

INFORMATION ROCKLAND (Info-Rock) – Pomona, NY

KONBIT NEG LAKAY, INC. – Spring Valley, NY

MARTIN LUTHER KING MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER – Spring Valley, NY

MEALS ON WHEELS PROGRAMS & SERVICES OF ROCKLAND, INC. – Nanuet, NY

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (MHA) OF ROCKLAND – Valley Cottage, NY

- Children's Division
- Parent Partners Program

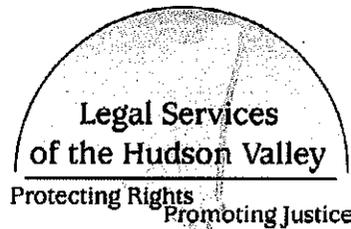
PLANNED PARENTHOOD SPRING VALLEY CENTER – Spring Valley, NY

ROCKLAND 21ST CENTURY COLLABORATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH – West Nyack, NY

ROCKLAND COUNTY YOUTHFEST, Rockland Community College – Suffern, NY

ROCKLAND COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION – New City, NY
ROCKLAND COUNTY BOCES CONSORTIUM – West Nyack, NY
ROCKLAND COUNTY OFFICE OF THE AGING – Pomona, NY
ROCKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE – New City, NY
ROCKLAND COUNTY YOUTH BUREAU – New City, NY
ROCKLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH – New City, NY
ROCKLAND DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES – Pomona, NY
ROCKLAND INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER – New City, NY
ROCKLAND JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE – West Nyack, NY
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August, 2014

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Barbara Finkelstein, Chief Executive Officer

Cynthia Knox, Deputy Executive Director

Rachel Chazin Halperin, Deputy Director

Thomas Cochran, Chief Financial Officer

BIOS:

Barbara Finkelstein **Chief Executive Officer**

Barbara Finkelstein oversees every aspect of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV), the largest provider of free civil legal services to more than 500,000 poor and low-income individuals in Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. Since Ms. Finkelstein became Executive Director in 1995 and now CEO, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley has increased its budget fivefold and has grown to a 100-person staff with an \$11 million-dollar budget and eight offices. She is the first woman to lead the organization.

Ms. Finkelstein's accomplishments on behalf of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley are many. Under her leadership LSHV has made great strides in securing funding from public and private sources to increase services to low income residents of the Hudson Valley facing civil legal problems affecting the basic necessities of life. Motivated by a desire to make justice a promise for every member of society, Ms. Finkelstein created partnerships with governments, community-based organizations, and law schools to ensure solutions to the problems facing the low income population. Most recently, she started a Veterans and Military Families Advocacy Project to provide legal assistance to returning veterans and their families. In 1996, she started the Domestic Violence Unit, which has provided legal assistance to more than 15,000 survivors of domestic violence. In 1999, Ms. Finkelstein started a Children's Advocacy Unit, and in 2002 a Family Law Unit, both supported exclusively by private funds raised through an individual donor and foundation fundraising program. Before joining Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, Ms. Finkelstein was the Assistant Project Director at Queens Legal Services where she directed services to clients and assisted with overall program operations.

Ms. Finkelstein is a member of Chief Justice Jonathan Lippman's Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services in New York, the New York State Bar Association's President's Committee on Access to Justice and the Board of Directors for Nonprofit Westchester.

Ms. Finkelstein received her J.D. from Rutgers School of Law – Newark, and her B.A. from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

Related Experience

Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services in New York

New York State Task Force on Pro Bono Scholars

New York State Bar Association's President's Committee on Access to Justice

New York State Bar Association's Committee on Legal Aid

Board of Directors, Nonprofit Westchester



Rockland County

FACT SHEET

LEGAL SERVICES OF THE HUDSON VALLEY ROCKLAND OFFICE:

7 Periman Drive • Spring Valley NY 10977 • (845) 476-3831

Seeking legal advice is out of reach for tens of thousands of people in Rockland County, but many find themselves confronting challenges that require civil legal services in order to protect their rights.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley is the only provider of FREE, comprehensive civil legal services to all seven counties of the lower Hudson Valley (Rockland, Westchester, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Ulster and Sullivan). OUR MISSION is to provide free, high quality counsel in civil matters for those who cannot afford an attorney where basic human needs are at stake.

The work we do each day provides justice to thousands of our neighbors who have nowhere else to turn, including saving children from neglect; protecting women from domestic violence; defending seniors against abuse; serving veterans on the homefront; supporting the rights of the disabled; and keeping families in their homes.

Housing

To prevent homelessness, we provide representation and counsel to individuals and families facing the threat of eviction or foreclosure, preserving their rights as homeowners and tenants and helping families to keep a roof over their heads.

Children's Advocacy

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley protects the rights of children by representing them in disability, education, health and family matters. Our work ensures that poor and low-income children receive access to education and other services regardless of their family's income.

Our Children's Advocacy attorneys provide both direct representation of children and community education to provide families with the tools to advocate on behalf of their own children.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley: Rockland County

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley is making a major push to expand, enhance and build awareness of the high-quality, comprehensive, free civil legal services we are providing in Rockland County. Last year, we opened a 1,200 square foot storefront office at Pascack Plaza in Spring Valley, and by January 2014, had staffed the office with three full-time attorneys.

We chose the Periman Drive/Pascack Plaza location because it is centrally located, convenient to public transportation, and co-located with partnering service providers NYS Office of Children and Family Services, Tomorrow's Workplace Center for Employment and Training, and Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR). To date, we have seen a good deal of cases involving housing, Social Security, subsistence benefits, Unemployment Insurance Benefits, consumer, special education, wage claim, child support, discrimination, advance planning and other civil matters involving clients who are elderly or disabled.

Elder Law

As older citizens retire from a lifetime of contributing to society, many must live on fixed incomes and rely on assistance programs. We provide advocacy and representation to seniors in the areas of Social Security, healthcare, housing, consumer rights and simple estate planning.

Seniors are often targeted for identity theft and scams. We provide advocacy to seniors who have been exploited by fraud.

Subsistence Benefits

We provide legal assistance and advocacy to those who have been unjustly denied or terminated from subsistence benefits that provide them with the essentials of life, including food, shelter and healthcare.

STATISTICS: ROCKLAND CO.

- Population: 320,803;
- Unemployment rate: 6%;
- Poverty rate: 15.7% (50,366);
- 26.1% (23,886) of Rockland's children live in poverty. (NYS 22%)
- There are 86,338 persons eligible for our services in Rockland (living at or below 200% of Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG));
- Rockland has seen a sharp rise in immigration: 22% of residents are foreign born (27% Caribbean; 17% Central & South America);
- There are more than 42,000 persons in Rockland over age 65; more than 7% of them live in poverty;
- A Rockland elder living at the federal poverty level can only cover 29% - 42% of their living expenses;
- 25.4% of families with a female head of household and children are living in poverty.

(U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), December 2012; New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc.: "Rockland County Seniors Living on the Edge.")

RESULTS

Jan. - May 2014

ROCKLAND COUNTY

Our Rockland office has 3 full-time attorneys;

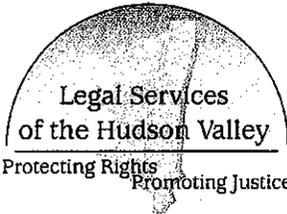
In 2014, we have already handled 140 cases in Rockland County;

We serve a diverse client mix: 36% Black, 16% Hispanic, and 6% Asian. Women comprise 57% of those served, while 20% of our clients are disabled;

The most common legal issues are: Housing (36%), Subsistence Benefits (19%); Disability Law (13%); Child Advocacy (13%); and Elder Law (7%).

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SERVING SEVEN HUDSON VALLEY COUNTIES: ROCKLAND • WESTCHESTER • PUTNAM • ORANGE • DUTCHESS • ULSTER • SULLIVAN



Children's Advocacy Unit

FACT SHEET

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Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) protects the rights of children by representing them in education, health, family and benefits matters. Our Children's Advocacy Unit ensures that poor and low-income children receive access to education and other services regardless of their family's income.

The Children's Advocacy Unit provides both direct representation of children in administrative and court proceedings, and community education which provides families with the tools they need to advocate on behalf of their own children.

Advocacy for Disabled Children & Special Education

Every child has the right to a free and appropriate public education. Legal Services of the Hudson Valley represents children in all areas of education law to ensure that they are provided the services they require to remain in school and succeed. Our attorneys attend Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings on behalf of students and represent students in due process hearings to obtain appropriate special education, behavioral support and therapeutic services.

Children in Foster Care & Homeless Children

Children in foster care, transitional housing and homeless children are at great risk of interruptions in their

education. We work to assure they receive continuous, quality education.

Housing

For children, adequate housing can make the difference between success and failure. We represent children to make certain they live in appropriate housing situations.

Guardianships and Custody

All children should live with families who can love and care for them. Our advocacy ensures that children are placed with the guardians or caregivers who best meet their needs.

For children with disabilities, we assist parents to obtain legal guardianship of children over 18 who are unable to make decisions for themselves.

STATISTICS

- According to 2013 Census data, 22% (950,921) of New York State's children under age 18 live in poverty.

In Westchester 12% (27,064) of children live in poverty.

20% (16,886) of children in Rockland Co. live in poverty.

19% (18,731) of children in Orange Co. live in poverty.

11% (7,089) of children in Dutchess Co. live in poverty.

- Poor children are at least twice as likely to be kept back in school.
- 2 out of 3 poor children in the United States live in a working family.
- Children are the poorest age group in the U.S. and are two-and-a-half times as likely to be poor as senior citizens.

(U.S. Census Bureau; Center for Disease Control; The Children's Defense Fund: "The State of America's Children 2011," Child Poverty in America"; New York State Community Action Association.)

From Our Files

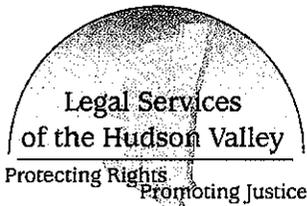
Jane is a student at New Rochelle High School who suffers from Cerebral Palsy, is unable to walk and uses a wheelchair. Her family battled with the New Rochelle School District to put accommodations in place so that she could safely access and navigate the school facility. Of particular concern was the fact that the district did not have a plan in place detailing how Jane, whose classes were on the third floor, would be evacuated in case of emergency.

In November 2012, there was a small fire at New Rochelle High School and Jane was left on the third floor of the building with her aide while the rest of the students and staff evacuated. She was terrified during the experience and suffered post-traumatic stress symptoms thereafter. The young woman was afraid to go to school, had nightmares and broke into tears frequently.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley's Children's Advocacy Unit utilized special education laws to successfully represent Jane and her family in compelling the school district to establish a safety/evacuation plan, train staff in evacuation procedures, prepare evacuation instructions to be prominently displayed throughout the school, provide school-based counseling services to address the post-traumatic stress that Jane experienced, and of greatest significance, move all of her classes to the first floor of the high school. Jane no longer fears for her safety.

Impact Litigation:

- Our Children's Advocacy Unit engages in high-impact, change-oriented advocacy by filing affirmative litigation cases in federal and state courts. These cases help us address systemic violations affecting larger groups, such as the denial of special education services to disabled children.



Domestic Violence

FACT SHEET

90 Maple Avenue, White Plains, NY 10601 • Tel. (914) 949-1305 • www.lshv.org

At Legal Services for the Hudson Valley (LSHV), we are committed to ensuring the safety of women and children. We work with survivors of domestic violence in civil legal proceedings in local family courts, including family offense, custody, visitation, child support and divorce proceedings.

Legal representation

Many low-income families are unable to secure the legal assistance necessary to resolve critical family issues. We advocate for and represent survivors of domestic violence in family offense proceedings and help them to obtain orders of protection, custody of their children, child/spousal support and other essentials involving safety and survival.

Referrals and Counseling

Domestic violence and other family conflict is traumatic to children as well as adults. To address domestic abuse from the perspective of the entire family, our advocacy services include referrals to a network of community service providers, including shelters and counselors equipped to meet the needs of both survivors and witnesses.

From Our Files

When Alice came to Legal Services of the Hudson Valley, she was desperate and feared for her safety. Not only was her husband physically and mentally abusing her, he was also abusing their children.

If her children attempted to interfere, their father would yank them by the limbs, throw them in their room and lock the door. On one occasion, her husband beat Alice against their son's bedroom door while the child screamed and vomited inside. On another occasion, he grabbed her by the throat and suspended her, choking, in the air. He constantly berated and demeaned Alice, and even threatened to kill her, saying he would cut her body up into pieces and mail them to her parents.

Alice initially filed for a Family Court Order of Protection. When the police went to serve the order, they discovered a huge arsenal of illegal weapons in his possession, including automatic weapons, handguns and silencers. He was arrested and ultimately criminally convicted, but served no jail time.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley represented Alice in her family offense and custody matters. Though her husband consented to a final order of protection, the matter of custody was pending. Soon he violated the order of protection by sending her threatening emails. Eventually, as his behavior deteriorated, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley successfully filed a petition to cease all communication between them and finally, to suspend all visitation.

At the final court appearance, Alice was awarded sole custody of her children. Her abuser is not permitted to communicate with her or the children and has no visitation at this time. Alice is feeling stronger and finally in control of her life. She is incredibly grateful to Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and her LSHV attorney.

STATISTICS

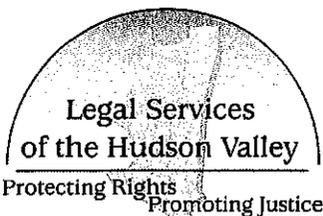
- Permanent orders of protection are associated with an 80% decrease in partner violence against women.
- More than 25% of women report they were physically assaulted by a spouse, partner or date at some time in their lifetime.
- Batterers who commit intimate partner violence are 7 times more likely to abuse their children.
- Of female murder victims in New York State in 2010, 44% were killed by a husband or boyfriend.
- Women report only one-quarter to one-half of their assaults to police.
- In 2012, 5,935 cases of domestic violence were reported in the Hudson Valley.
- Economically disadvantaged women are more than twice as likely to be victims of domestic violence than non-disadvantaged women.

(National Institute of Justice; FBI, "Crime in the United States, 2010"; US Dept. of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services; New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Uniform Crime Reporting System; Center for Disease Control; US Nat'l Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health - Pediatrics; "The Batterer as Parent," Lundy Bancroft, Court Review 2002 (Vol. 36, No. 2, 44-49).

2013 Results

The attorneys and staff of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley:

- Handled 1,156 cases relating to domestic violence;
- Assisted 1,226 Domestic Violence survivors;
- Assisted in 451 cases seeking orders of protection;



Housing

FACT SHEET

STATISTICS

90 Maple Avenue, White Plains, NY 10601 • Tel. (914) 949-1305 • www.lshv.org

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) plays a critical role in protecting the rights of residents by providing high-quality legal representation to tenants and homeowners, preventing homelessness for the families we serve across seven counties.

Each year we keep thousands of low-income families in their homes, mostly households with children. Our attorneys provide free legal assistance to prevent foreclosures and halt evictions, preserving the most basic necessity of life – shelter – for as many families and individuals as possible.

Eviction Prevention

We provide preventive and early intervention services that help keep cases out of court by informing tenants about their legal rights. Effective strategies also include educating tenants on the "Warranty of Habitability" which requires landlords to keep apartment buildings safe and livable.

Foreclosure Prevention

The foreclosure crisis continues to have devastating effects on communities throughout New York's Hudson Valley. Abandoned homes create neighborhood blight, negatively impacting communities as a whole and leaving municipalities with reduced revenues. The services provided by Legal Services of the Hudson Valley's Foreclosure Prevention Unit are essential to preserving our region's

economic security and recovery.

Housing

Large numbers of low-income renters cannot find decent, affordable housing. As housing and rental costs continue to rise, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley helps qualifying individuals and families retain housing that is affordable, protected and/or subsidized. Our staff attorneys provide advocacy and representation to maintain housing assistance for eligible individuals.

Foreclosure and Eviction Prevention Partnerships

Our foreclosure and eviction prevention services partner with leading housing counseling agencies in each county that screen and refer cases, which enables us to focus our staff time for maximum impact.

- Two of the 10 counties with the highest foreclosure rates in New York State – Westchester and Orange – are located in our service area;
- New York is the 6th most expensive state in the country, requiring a wage of \$24.87/hr. to afford a 2-BR apartment;
- The Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a 2-BR apartment in Westchester County in 2014 is \$1,449/mo., requiring a \$27.87/hr. wage. The mean renter earns \$17.29/hr., and can afford \$899/mo. – thus 60% of renters can't afford a 2-BR apartment;
- Children experiencing homelessness are at least twice as likely to be kept back in school and/or drop out;
- In 2014, more than 3 minimum-wage jobs are needed to afford a Fair Market Rent for a 2-BR apartment in New York State with enough left over for food and utilities;
- Nearly 100,000 New York State public school students were homeless in 2011-12, 120% more than before the recession;
- In 2013, the NY State Attorney General announced that over 13,500 Hudson Valley homes were in foreclosure and 11,000 more were late on mortgage payments.

From Our Files

In 2013, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and the law firm of DeBello Donnellan Weingarten Wise & Wiederkehr LLP filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of disabled and elderly minority tenants in Yonkers NY, against the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") and New York State Homes and Community Renewal ("NYS HCR"). This affirmative litigation was filed in response to the government's failure to protect the vulnerable residents from eviction.

The suit concerns the implementation of sub-metered electricity charges at a 343-unit subsidized housing complex in Yonkers. In particular, it concerns the landlord's attempts to evict low-income tenants for nonpayment of sub-metered electricity under a lease that NYS HCR directed their landlords to use, in violation of federal law.

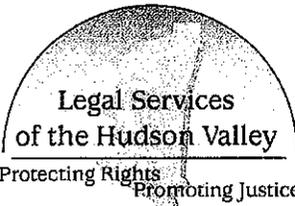
HUD and NY State took no steps to intervene when the landlord – who receives federal assistance – tried to pass off monthly electricity charges, ranging from \$300 to \$600, to low-income tenants, and then attempted to evict them when they could not pay the exorbitant fees. Some of the disabled and elderly tenants had even tried to shut off the heat in their apartments in the middle of winter to halt the mounting charges.

(New York State Campaign to Save Foreclosure Prevention Services; National Low Income Housing Coalition, "Out of Reach 2014"; NYS Office of the Attorney General; The Children's Defense Fund; "The State of America's Children 2014"; New York State Community Action Association; Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project.)

2013 Results

The attorneys and staff of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley:

- Handled 4,961 housing cases impacting 14,458 family members
- Advocated to prevent homelessness in a full 42% of all cases handled



Elder Law

FACT SHEET

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As the aging population continues to rise, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) strives to protect the rights of vulnerable seniors. We combine legal representation and advocacy to help seniors in our service area get the legal assistance and benefits they deserve.

Legal representation

As older citizens retire from a lifetime of contribution to society, many must live on fixed incomes and rely on government assistance programs. We provide legal advocacy and representation for seniors in the areas of Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Unemployment Insurance, grandparent custody/guardianship and visitation, other public benefits, housing, bankruptcy, consumer rights, advanced directives and simple estate planning.

Home Healthcare Issues

Many seniors experience a decline in their health but prefer to remain in their homes, rather than in nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Legal Services of the Hudson Valley advocates before social services agencies to obtain assistance from

home healthcare workers and homemaker services for these elderly clients.

Elder abuse

Unfortunately, some seniors are taken advantage of financially, emotionally, psychologically and/or physically – often by family members. We are committed to preserving the rights of seniors through advocacy, legal representation and assisting seniors in obtaining orders of protection if needed.

Fraud

Seniors are often targeted for identity theft, telemarketing, sweepstakes, home improvement and, increasingly, online scams. Our attorneys provide advocacy and advice to seniors who have been exploited by criminal fraud and scams.

From Our Files

A 70-year-old woman on a fixed income, living in her apartment for more than 30 years, found herself in danger of eviction for not renewing her lease. The landlord had sent her a renewal lease by certified mail, but the elderly woman had misplaced her notice of certified mail and was unable to obtain it from the post office without presenting the notice. Although she tried obtaining a second copy of the lease directly from her landlord, he refused to provide it and instead began the eviction process.

Shortly afterwards, the elderly woman found herself before a judge who ordered her to vacate her home. At risk of being homeless, she sought the help of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley. Working on her behalf, our attorney explained the woman's situation and successfully argued before the same judge for another opportunity to renew her lease and the judge ordered the landlord to provide a new document. Though the landlord twice appealed the decision, our attorney successfully defended the elderly woman's rights in both instances, in both courts.

Today, the client is comfortably residing in the same apartment she has occupied for more than three decades.

STATISTICS

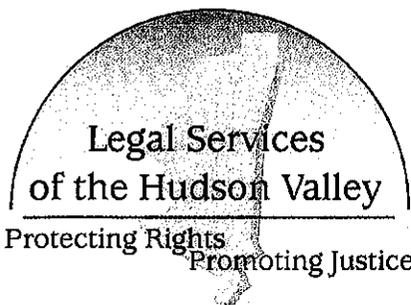
- 65% of older Americans receive at least half their income from Social Security benefits.
- In the Hudson Valley, there are an estimated 30,735 cases of elder abuse annually.
- Only 1 in 24 cases of elder abuse in New York State is actually reported to the authorities, one of the lowest reporting rates in the nation.
- In almost 90% of elder abuse incidents the perpetrator is a family member, and two-thirds of the perpetrators are children or spouses.
- Elder abuse incidents have increased by 150% in the last 10 years; a recent G.A.O. study revealed that 14% of older adults are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation every year.
- A 2010 MetLife study found seniors lost \$2.9 billion to financial abuse – up 12% from 2008.

(National Council on Aging; National Center for Victims of Crime; US Social Security Administration; and Lifespan's "New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study," 2011)

2013 Results

The attorneys and staff of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley:

- Handled 1,965 cases relating to seniors;
- Prevented 235 seniors from becoming homeless, impacting 353 household members;
- Managed 134 cases involving powers of attorney, healthcare proxies, and living wills.



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LEGAL SERVICES OF THE HUDSON VALLEY OVERVIEW

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) is a not-for-profit law firm providing assistance and representation to those who cannot afford an attorney, in civil (non-criminal) cases. There is no charge for our services. We believe everyone has the right to equal justice regardless of the ability to pay.

Areas of Expertise:

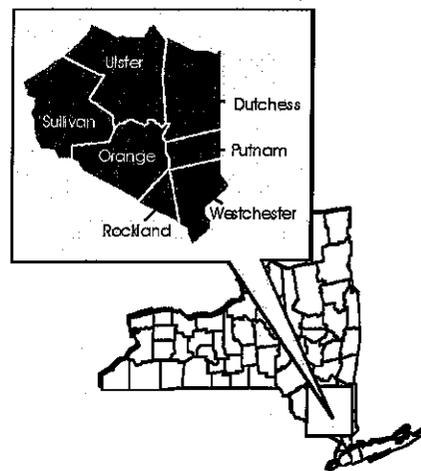
- Domestic Violence
- Children's Advocacy
- Elder Law
- Veterans & Military Families
- Family Law
- Disabilities Law
- Homelessness Prevention
- Benefits

In order to access most of our services, a family's income must be at or below 200% of the poverty level (\$47,700 for a family of four).

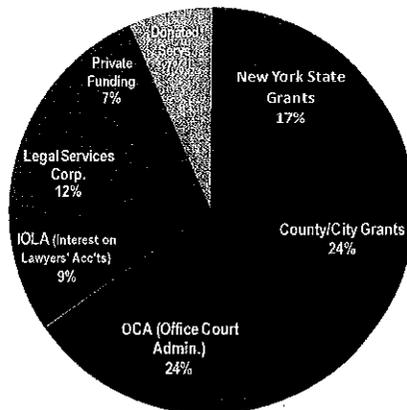
Founded in 1967, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley now has eight offices (White Plains, Yonkers, Mount Vernon, Peekskill, Spring Valley, Newburgh, Kingston, Poughkeepsie) serving seven counties (Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange, Ulster, Dutchess and Sullivan) in southeastern New York State.

There are **579,930** persons eligible for our services in New York's Hudson Valley.

Agency-wide, we have **102 staff**, including **65 attorneys** and **17 paralegals**.



Funding Sources



Assistance We Provide:

Full Representation - an attorney or legal advocate in court or at a hearing at an official agency;

Advice & Counsel - consultation in person or by phone;

Community Legal Education - education about legal rights and responsibilities;

In 2013, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley handled **12,328 cases**, benefiting **24,480 people** including **8,990 children**.

We generated **\$17,993,743 in taxpayer savings**.

The mission of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley is to provide free, high quality counsel in civil matters for individuals and families who cannot afford to pay an attorney where basic human needs are at stake.