

# Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation ...funding legal aid for the poor.

## **The Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation**

In 1984, the Supreme Court of Texas created the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, to administer funding for civil legal aid for poor and low-income Texans. The Foundation is committed to the vision that all Texans will have equal access to justice, regardless of their income.

In its first grant year, 1987-1988, the Foundation granted approximately \$500,000 to nonprofit organizations that provide free civil legal assistance to those who cannot afford it. Today, the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation is the largest Texas-based funding source for civil legal aid in the state, granting approximately \$12 million each year to nonprofit legal aid organizations throughout the state.

## **How We are Funded**

On behalf of the Supreme Court of Texas, the Foundation administers both Court- and state-mandated funds.

We also receive private donations from individuals and organizations that support access to justice for all Texans, regardless of income. To donate, please visit [www.teajf.org](http://www.teajf.org), or call 512.320.0099.

## **Grants**

To be eligible for a grant from the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, an organization must have 501(c)(3) status with the Internal Revenue Service and have as a primary purpose the delivery of civil legal services to low-income Texans. The Foundation does not grant funds to individuals. Each funding source administered by the Foundation has several additional requirements that grantees must meet. Foundation staff manage the grants process and ensure the integrity of fund usage and compliance with grant requirements.

The Foundation's Board of Directors makes grant decisions based on reviews of administrative and programmatic aspects of applicant organizations. In allocating funds, the Board considers the scope of legal services provided, the geographic area served, the poverty population of the organization's service area, and whether funds would be used to duplicate a service already offered by another entity or in a place where other funds are available for the same purpose.

Grant applications and deadlines are posted at [www.teajf.org](http://www.teajf.org).

## **The Work of Foundation Grantees**

Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation grants millions of dollars to legal aid organizations statewide for their day-to-day operations. Legal aid providers rely on grants and donations to maintain staff and facilities, hold legal clinics, and improve technology to assist additional clients.

Foundation grantees endeavor, on limited budgets, to effectively and efficiently guide low-income Texans through the complicated legal system. They assist abused women in obtaining protective orders against their abusers; they help the elderly gain access to public benefits they deserve to pay for food and medication; and they help families live in safe and affordable housing.

Safety, shelter, peace of mind...everyone deserves these things. Legal aid makes them happen, giving hope to tens of thousands of Texans each year.

*To help more low-income Texans obtain justice and fairness in civil legal matters, please donate to the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation at [www.teajf.org](http://www.teajf.org).*



Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation \* P.O. Box 12886 \* Austin, Texas 78711  
Phone: (512) 320-0099, or (800) 252-3401\* Fax: (512) 469-0112

[www.teajf.org](http://www.teajf.org)  
[www.TexasLawHelp.org](http://www.TexasLawHelp.org)

# Legal Aid in Texas 2004

What happens when an elderly man on a fixed income is wrongfully evicted from his home? When a victim of a violent crime cannot afford mounting medical bills for her injuries? Or when a child is barred from a public education because he has a physical disability?

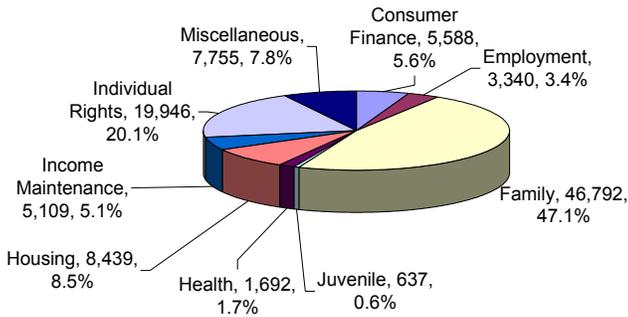
Most people would seek recourse in the legal system. But many Texans cannot afford to hire an attorney when faced with legal problems such as those mentioned above. And unlike the criminal justice system, Texans with civil legal problems are not guaranteed legal representation.

All Texans, regardless of income, deserve access to our civil justice system. So what can Texans of limited means do to ensure that their rights are protected?

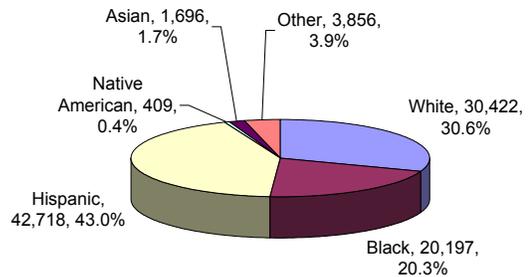
They can find help at legal aid.

Legal aid addresses low-income Texans' basic critical legal needs in civil matters, such as protection from violence, consumer issues and public benefits. At legal aid, attorneys and legal advocates work tirelessly to ensure fairness and justice for our state's most vulnerable residents. Below is an overview of the work of legal aid organizations in 2004.

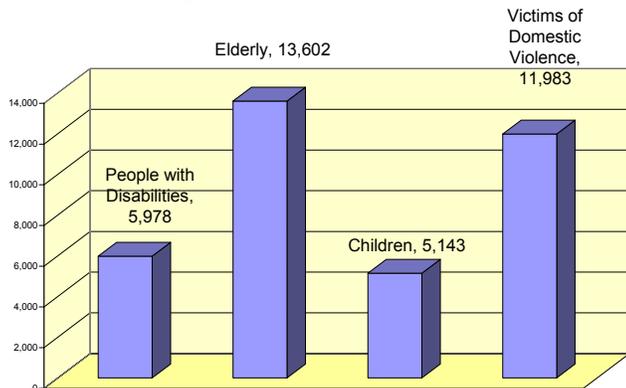
**2004 Legal Aid Closed Cases by Category**  
Total: 99,298



**2004 Legal Aid Closed Cases-Ethnic Breakdown**  
Total: 99,298



**2004 Legal Aid Closed Cases-Special Populations**



## Monetary Benefits

In 2004, legal aid organizations secured significant monetary benefits for their clients, including \$19,379,919 in back awards and \$2,008,488 in monthly benefits. Categories include child support, unpaid wages and disability.

## Voluntary Contributions

Through TEAJF-funded legal aid organizations, 6,991 attorneys and 975 paralegals donated their time and expertise on pro bono cases in 2004. Texas attorneys contributed 116,602 hours in pro bono work and, at the statewide level, donated \$596,000 for legal aid.