

**SUPPORT THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE INITIATIVE**

**ADVOCACY TOOLS**

**E-MAIL TEMPLATE**

Dear Chairman Mendelson and D.C. Councilmembers:

I am reaching out voice support for funding the Access to Justice Initiative.

Civil justice will be an essential part of the District’s recovery from COVID-19. As you know, the Access to Justice Initiative is a long-standing public funding program that supports civil justice in the District. Every day, the District’s network of civil legal services providers helps low-income and vulnerable District residents maintain affordable housing, protect wages and jobs, stabilize credit, help children and families get healthy, guard against abuse, and protect District elders.

Public funding for the Access to Justice Initiative is essential. The need for civil legal help will only grow as the District emerges from the COVID-19 crisis and more and more District residents face civil legal problems – many for the first time in their lives. A failure to provide civil legal help impedes residents from accessing the rights and benefits they are entitled to and, in turn, further perpetuates inequalities within our city.

At a time when access to civil legal services was already strained, the funding in the Mayor’s budget to support the Access to Justice Initiative must be secured. Any cuts would be devastating to the District’s low-income and most vulnerable residents, as well as to justice. We thank the D.C. Council for its longstanding support of the Access to Justice Initiative and hope that funding will be maintained so that we can continue to meet the needs of our neighbors around the District.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

**SAMPLE TWEETS**

Please consider tagging Voices for Civil Justice (@JusticeVoices) and All Rise for Justice (@allrisejustice). You may also want to include other relevant hashtags (e.g., #LegalAidHelps, #InvestinJustice, #CivilJusticeSolutions, #justice, etc.) or ones related to a practice area you might want to reference (e.g., #foreclosure, #eviction, etc.)

***Example One:***

Civil legal services are essential to COVID-19 recovery efforts for District residents. Please join [me/our group] and the @DCATJComm in calling on @councilofdc to support the Access to Justice Initiative in the FY21 budget. Visit: <https://bit.ly/2XKeQyK>.

***Example Two:***

District residents need civil legal help to ensure they can access the rights they are entitled to. Please join [me/our group] and the @DCATJComm in calling on @councilofdc to support the Access to Justice Initiative in the FY21 budget. Visit <https://bit.ly/2XKeQyK> to learn more.

***Example Three:***

Good legal services are a right, not a privilege. Join [me/our group] and @DCATJComm in calling on @councilofdc to support the Access to Justice Initiative in the FY21 budget. Visit <https://bit.ly/2XKeQyK> to learn more.

***Example Four:***

RT if you believe in equal access to civil legal services, then join [me/our group] and @DCATJComm in calling on @councilofdc to support the Access to Justice Initiative in the FY21 budget. Visit <https://bit.ly/2XKeQyK> to learn more.

***Example Five:***

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, DC residents need civil legal services more than ever. [I/We] [am/are] joining @DCATJComm in calling on @councilofdc to support the Access to Justice Initiative in the FY21 budget. You should too. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/2XKeQyK>.

# **RELEVANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Title** | **Email** | **Additional Contacts to Copy on Email** | **Twitter** |
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