

THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE INITIATIVE PROMOTES HOUSING JUSTICE

Housing stability remains a critical area of need among District residents

- As of mid-March 2022, 17% of DC tenants were not current in their rent payments, approximately 28,000 households. 90% of these households are headed by a Black or Latinx tenant.
- With the end of the filing moratorium, new eviction cases are increasing. 60% more cases were filed in March 2022 compared to January and February, nearly 10 times more than in November 2021.
- Legal services providers are seeing increased demand as a result. Calls to the Landlord Tenant Legal Assistance Network have increased almost 70% in the first three months of 2022 compared to 2021.

The Initiative's expanded investments in housing produce real results

- More than half of Initiative funds target keeping District residents in their homes, through eviction defense and diversion; foreclosure prevention; and affordable housing preservation.
- Legal services providers have expanded their service model to use in-person outreach to reach more tenants and offer both legal and social services, in partnership with community-based organizations.
- Every tenant with an eviction scheduled since September 2021 has been contacted by a canvasser to connect the tenant with legal and social services, including rental assistance.
- This intensive, in-person outreach works; collaboration between canvassers, rental assistance providers, and legal services providers has stopped 70% of scheduled evictions for nonpayment, 44% of other evictions, and overall 65% of all evictions – unprecedented levels of success.
- This same model now is being used to reach tenants before their first court date and offer a range of services, including connections to legal services, social services, rental assistance, public benefits.
- Tenants who receive legal representation through the Initiative have [better outcomes](#); 74% retained possession of the unit, and for many tenants who did not stay they still reached a favorable settlement and avoided the entry of a formal judgment.

New eviction diversion approach fosters strategic, collaborative, community-informed solutions

- By partnering with community-based organizations and canvassers on the ground, legal services providers will have an even stronger community presence. One strategy of this intensive outreach model is to identify, support, and train community leaders, creating strong partnerships across DC.
- Initiative grantees also are serving as co-leads on the DC Eviction Prevention Working Group, helping to build an overall framework for eviction prevention with government agencies, rental assistance providers, and the Court. Initiative funding will help to implement this overall vision and framework.

Increased FY23 Eviction diversion funds will allow us to continue this important work

- The DC Council has doubled the funds dedicated to eviction diversion in FY23, from \$1.5M to \$3M.
- The DC Council has also increased the Mayor's proposed budget for eviction-related legal representation from \$8M to a total of \$11M for FY23.

To learn more, [contact the D.C. Access to Justice Commission](#) or visit <https://dcaccesstojustice.org/access-public-funding/> or <https://www.dctbarfoundation.org/>