

## ACCESSING JUSTICE in D.C.



### Civil Legal Services : Helping Ward 5 Residents Build Better Lives

- More than 3,900 Ward 5 residents were served by Access to Justice Initiative-funded civil legal services providers in 2022
- With a poverty rate of 15%,\* many Ward 5 residents who experience civil legal problems - housing instability, family issues, domestic violence or economic insecurity - cannot afford legal help
- Having legal representation leads to better outcomes - more stable families, secure incomes, livable housing - and supports safe, thriving communities
- The need for civil legal help - already at crisis level - surged during the pandemic & continues to grow

Source: DC Kids Count

### How the Access to Justice Initiative Helps



#### Safe, Affordable Housing

Gentrification has pushed up rents and displaced longtime residents across DC. In Ward 5, 38% of households report a high housing cost burden. Initiative grantees prevent foreclosures, help preserve affordable housing, and use an intensive, in-person outreach model to stop evictions citywide.

Source: DC Kids Count



#### Financial Security

With a 5.8% unemployment rate and a 15% poverty rate,\* many Ward 5 residents struggle to pay bills and meet their families' needs. Initiative grantees help residents secure public benefits, fight illegal debt collection, and protect their rights in employment matters.

Source: DC Health Matters, DC Kids Count



#### Family Stability

More than 16,700\* children live in Ward 5. Initiative grantees assist District families with resolving custody disputes, securing child support, and undertaking long-term care and estate planning to help families manage unforeseen circumstances.

Source: DC Health Matters

#### Initiative-funded Legal Service Providers Work in Communities Throughout Ward 5

##### Did You Know?

- A **free monthly walk-in clinic** at Woodridge Library offered by one Initiative grantee provides legal help with public benefits, unemployment, student loans, and more
- In 2022, Initiative grantees provided legal assistance to **336 tenants facing eviction** in Ward 5
- A Brief Services Unit run by a Ward 5 - based legal service provider offers **legal information, advice, and brief assistance** to clients with a range of legal issues
- An Initiative grantee offers legal services in partnership with a Ward 5 **Children's National site focused on adolescents**

To learn more: visit us at

<https://dcaccesstojustice.org> or go to

<https://www.dcbarfoundation.org/>

