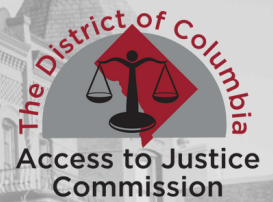


# IMPACT OF PROPOSED BUDGET CUT

## ACCESSING JUSTICE in D.C.



The proposed FY25 budget reduces the Access to Justice Initiative by 67% to **\$10.457 million**. This will have catastrophic consequences for the District's legal services providers and the almost 40,000 District residents who receive life-changing civil legal services through the program each year. It will also erase significant progress made in the past three fiscal years to address chronic justice gaps in high-need areas. We urge the D.C. Council to restore FY24 funding of **\$31.7M** to ensure services continue.

### *Potential consequences of the proposed 67% cut in funding:*

#### Increased Housing Instability

- A potential **loss of over \$10.8 million** dedicated to keeping District residents in their homes through eviction defense and prevention, foreclosure prevention, addressing unsafe housing conditions, and affordable housing preservation.
- Funding cuts would mean dramatically less outreach to tenants (6,858 door knocks and 5,609 outreach letters in FY23) - and **more District residents losing their homes**

#### Other Devastating Cuts

A 67% cut spread equally across currently funded projects would mean:

- Almost \$900,000 less for legal services for consumer issues, debt defense, predatory lending and fraud
- Almost \$500,000 less to support re-entering citizens
- Almost \$700,000 less for domestic violence legal services and almost \$1.5 million less for family law legal services
- \$700,000 less for immigration legal services
- Around \$600,000 less for probate and estate planning services to ensure the intergenerational transfer of wealth
- Almost \$900,000 less for public benefits matters and over \$900,000 for health and disability matters, which ensure financial stability and health care services for District residents
- Almost \$275,000 less for special education matters, at a time of skyrocketing student need

#### Critical loss of staffing

The proposed budget cut would force **deep staffing cuts which will greatly reduce the number of District residents helped.**

Cuts could mean:

- **The loss of 161 FTEs** - the equivalent of 67% of those currently funded through the Initiative
- The loss of 2/3 of staffing for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank (from 3 FTEs to 1) at a time when the Interpreter Bank is turning down requests due to underfunding
- Loss of non-legal support staff including social workers and outreach staff
- Many funded providers rely on Initiative funding for 30-50% of their total staffing organization-wide; over half of projects (35 projects across 12 providers) rely on the Initiative for 75% or more of their funding

#### Expanded Projects in Jeopardy

- Gutting recent expansions in the availability of future planning and probate legal services by four providers - despite longstanding unmet needs in this area in the community
- Dramatically shrinking family law services that offer stability and financial security for District families and children
- Jeopardizing expanded community partnerships and outreach, and **300+ fewer trainings** for community members
- Reductions in the number of remote and in-person legal clinics

**To learn more:** visit us at <https://dcaccesstojustice.org/access-public-funding/> or go to <https://www.dcbafoundation.org/>