

“Legal Remedies” to Address Social Determinants of Health:

How Can Legal Advocates Contribute to Collaborative Efforts to Enhance Access to Safe, Affordable Rental Housing?

Madlyn C. Morreale, JD, MPH
Medical-Legal Partnership Program
Legal Aid of North Carolina

Wake County Medical Society Community Health Foundation
Steering Committee Meeting
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Objectives

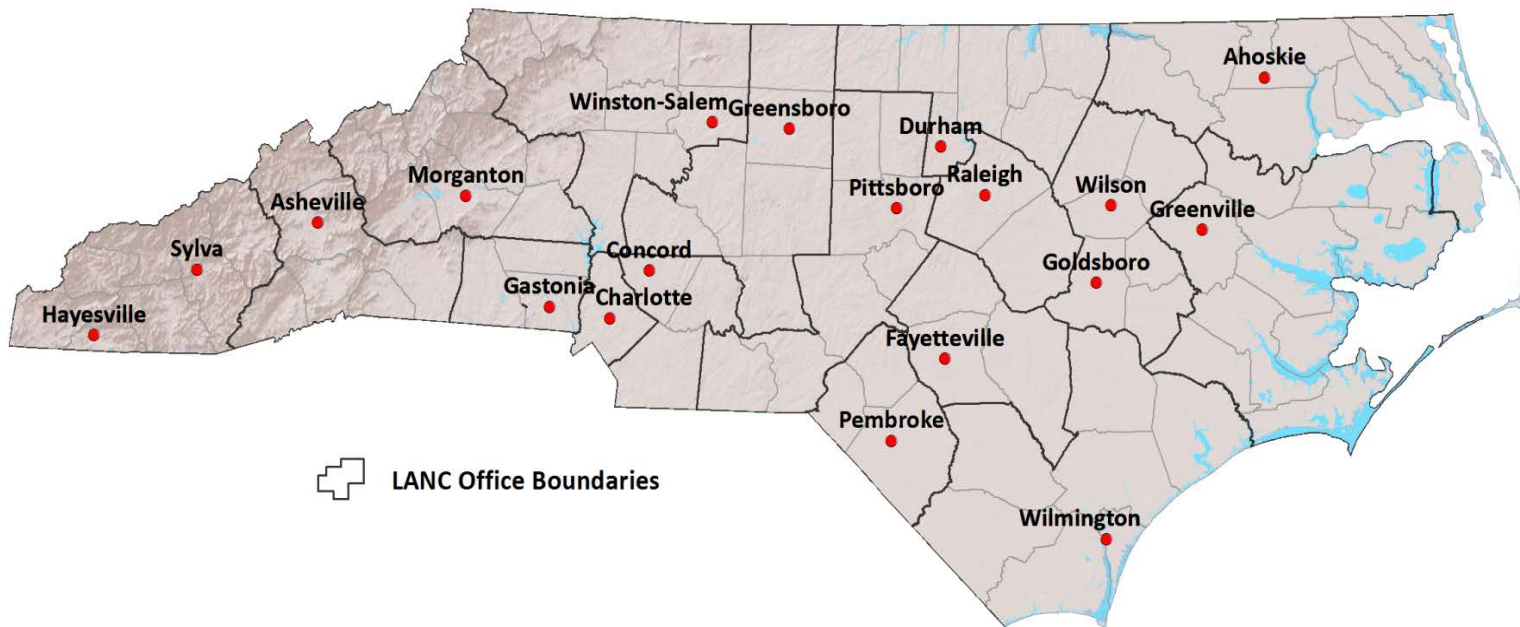
1. Offer a (very) quick introduction to Legal Aid of North Carolina
 - Mission, local offices, program areas, statewide projects
 - Eligibility criteria, how to apply for service
 - Information available from our website, know-your-rights classes, etc.
2. Describe potential roles that legal advocates can play in collaborative efforts to address social determinants of health
 - How does this relate to health equity?
3. Community collaboration – easy, right?
 - Framing collaborative work to address SDOH within the context of Medicaid transformation
 - What needs to be in place to enhance the potential for better outcomes?



Legal Aid of North Carolina

Mission

- A statewide, non-profit law firm that provides free legal assistance
- in civil matters to low-income people
- in order to ensure equal access to justice
- and to remove legal barriers to economic opportunity



Legal Aid of North Carolina



Program Areas

Housing

Domestic Violence

Public Benefits

Education

Consumer Law

Employment

Community Economic
Development

Examples of Statewide and Regional Projects

Medical-Legal Partnership Program

Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative, Battered Immigrant Project

Outreach & Enrollment for Coverage Under ACA

Farm Worker Unit, Human Trafficking Project

Advocates for Children's Services

Mortgage Foreclosure Project

Fair Housing Project

Senior Law Project

Veterans' Law Project

Community Economic Development, Disaster Relief and Recovery



Legal Aid of North Carolina



How to Apply for Assistance?

1. Legal Aid Help Line: Statewide, toll-free numbers
 - <http://www.legalaidnc.org/get-help/Pages/apply-for-help/Apply-by-Phone.aspx>
2. On-Line applications
 - <http://www.legalaidnc.org/get-help/Pages/apply-for-help/Apply-Online.aspx>
3. Direct referrals from specific, selected community partners to local LANC offices
 - Domestic violence agencies
 - Medical-Legal Partnership clinics and hospitals

Other Information, Resources for the General Population

- See our website for know-your-rights classes, videos, written materials, other information





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Toll-Free Helpline:
1-866-219-LANC



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Client Complaints

TENANT RIGHTS CLINIC

The Tenant Rights Clinic explains your rights as a tenant and what to do if your landlord will not make repairs. You will watch an instructional video and can ask general questions to a volunteer attorney. Specific advice is not provided at the clinic. You can request a callback from Legal Aid to see if you qualify for additional help. Clinics are located in many N.C. counties. If you do not see a clinic in your city or county, please check the surrounding counties in your area. If you cannot attend a clinic, you can call our Helpline at 1-866-219-5262 to see if you qualify for help. Legal Aid assists with some landlord/tenant issues. Legal Aid services are free of charge. [Read our FAQ to learn more.](#)

To Register

1. Wait for registration form to load below.
2. Click "select a date" and pick your date from the drop-down menu.
3. Find your desired location in the left column.
4. Use the 0-10 drop-down menu to the right of your location to select the number of seats you want to reserve.
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6. Complete your registration in the new window.

Registration

E



Now That You've Asked



Health Equity*



Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires:

- Removing obstacles to health, such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences [...]
- Including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

***Source: UCSF and RWJ: What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make? May 2017**



Legal Aid of North Carolina's Medical-Legal Partnership (MLP) Program



Brings together physicians, nurses, social workers, care managers, other health care professionals, attorneys, paralegals, and other community partners

To address the social and environmental conditions that influence patient and population health, including:

- Food, income, and housing insecurity;
- Improper denials of Medicaid and other public benefits;
- Substandard housing conditions;
- Domestic violence; and
- Failure to provide children with educational services to which they are entitled.



Social Determinants of Health → Examples of Legal Remedies



**Access to
safe,
affordable
housing**

- Prevent or stop illegal evictions and improper terminations of housing subsidies
- Prevent mortgage foreclosure
- Ensure that repairs and services are made to unsafe rental homes
- Challenge discrimination through fair housing claims

**Personal
safety and
family
stability**

- Domestic violence protective orders
- Custody for victims and children exposed to interpersonal violence
- Immigration assistance for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other violence

Social Determinants of Health → Examples of Legal Remedies



**Food
security**



- Appeal improper denials, terminations, reductions of SNAP/ Food Stamps

**Income
security**



- Remove barriers to employment and other services for persons with certain criminal records
- Appeal improper denials, terminations, reductions of income support programs
 - SSI for persons with disabilities
 - Veteran's benefits, discharge upgrades
 - Unemployment benefits
- Assist with certain tax matters
- Enforce consumer protection laws
- Protect children's rights to educational services

Collaboration with Community Partners



Potential Opportunities with NC Medicaid transformation

- Universal screening at plan level (and elsewhere)
 - Look at screening questions ...
 - What are underlying causes of [housing insecurity]?
 - What resources/services might be offered?
 - Utilities assistance? SSI? Criminal record expunction?
 - Eviction Diversion Pilot in Durham



Collaboration with Community Partners



Potential Opportunities with NC Medicaid transformation

- Universal screening at plan level (and elsewhere)
 - Look at screening questions ...
 - Assessment, Referral protocols, Follow up, Information sharing, Evaluation, Refinement
 - → Alignment of capacity and other resources to meet needs?
- Regional pilots → what capacity do potential partners bring to the table, what else is needed to ensure success?
 - Collaboration and Integration – Easy, Right?





Why Engage in Collaborative Work?

Strategic relationships with community partners can improve outcomes for individual patient/clients

- With limited resources, multiple disciplinary efforts help us focus on what we do best
- Value of integrated “service delivery model”

Provides an opportunity to focus on community-level priorities and “systemic impact”

- Use existing data about locally-defined needs to align resources for most important work → “Impact Work”

