



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABILITY PRE-RTC EVICTION DEFENSE SERVICES

The Washington State Legislature has appropriated \$2M in funding for FY 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) to provide civil legal information, advice, and representation to tenants at risk of eviction and against whom an unlawful detainer action has not yet been commenced.

By this Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA), the Office of Civil Legal Aid seeks proposals from qualified tenant-defense or civil legal aid organizations to establish and/or expand dedicated pre-commencement tenant defense services for low-income tenants who are at risk of displacement and not yet eligible for appointed counsel for Right to Counsel (RTC) eviction defense services. The goal of these funds is to stabilize housing for tenants most at risk of displacement and to serve tenants who experience barriers that make them less able to effectively access RTC services.

Priority will be given to proposals that target and prioritize services to and collaboration with community-based organizations that serve low-income tenants who (a) identify as members of communities that disproportionately experience high rates of eviction (formal and informal), and (b) are at greatest risk of eviction, and (c) experience disparate lack of access to existing legal aid and related services due to race/ethnicity, culture, language, immigration status, sexual orientation or gender identity, disability, or other barriers. Priority will be given to proposals designed to reduce or prevent unlawful detainer default rates (including ‘self- or landlord-coerced evictions’).

Proposals are not limited to any geographic area. They may target services locally, regionally, or on a statewide basis.

The maximum individual contract award for the fiscal year period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 is \$200,000. Subject to future legislative extension, this is one-time funding.

I. Project Requirements

Qualifying proposals must:

- Identify the target geographical area(s) and communities intended to benefit from proposed services
- Outline the services (including non-legal support services) that will be provided including, but not limited to (a) development and dissemination of self-advocacy resources and tools, (b) individualized legal assistance for members of the target community(ies), and (c) community legal education and outreach to target/priority populations
- Explain how the proposed services will complement and not duplicate existing RTC

- eviction defense services
- Incorporate a Tenant Legal Aid Advisory Group principally composed of members of priority tenant community(ies)
- Identify the metrics that will allow for meaningful assessment of impacts in relation to stated project goals and objectives

II. Minimum Organizational Criteria

Minimum organizational criteria include:

- Must be a non-profit organization with the demonstrated capability to host, ethically oversee, and operate a dedicated legal aid program staffed with attorneys licensed to practice in the state of Washington
- Must have a demonstrated history and competence in providing legal assistance and housing advocacy
- Must be eligible to contract with the State of Washington
- Must not have been debarred from contracting with the federal government in the past five years

III. Components of Response to Notice of Funding Availability

Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Availability shall be organized as follows:

- Introduction and Statement of Organizational Purpose.
- List of the organization’s staff leadership and staff members who will be involved in the project
- A description of the Tenant Legal Aid Advisory Group that will help guide and oversee the project including strategies for recruitment, training, and compensation of members
- A project narrative explaining how the proposal will address each of the components outlined in Section I of this NOFA
- A 12-month project budget form
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IV. Deadline for Submission of Proposals

To be considered, proposals must be submitted on or before COB May 23, 2022. Proposals must be submitted electronically to:

Office of Civil Legal Aid
evictiondefense@ocla.wa.gov

Questions related to this Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) may be sent to:
evictiondefense@ocla.wa.gov.

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4/30/2022

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OCLA reserves the prerogative to withdraw or revise this NOFA or decline to issue an award and issue a new NOFA in the event that, in its exclusive judgment, it determines that insufficiently responsive applications were submitted.