



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

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NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABILITY COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT PLAN

Consistent with [The Washington State Supreme Court's June 4, 2020 Statement to the Legal Community](#), OCLA acknowledges that it and its contracted civil legal aid providers operate in a law and justice system historically grounded in racism and that time and again has administered justice differentially depending on the racial identities of those involved. OCLA was an initial subscriber to the [Washington Race Equity and Justice Acknowledgments and Commitments](#). As outlined in its Race Equity and Justice Statement of Purpose ([link here](#)), OCLA is committed to being an active partner in carrying out the Washington State judicial branch's commitment to ensuring equity and justice for people and communities throughout our state. It does this by ensuring contractors are aligned, in policy and practice, and provide race equity-driven civil legal services for low-income individuals and communities in Washington State, focusing on those most affected by poverty and systemic injustices.

The Community Reinvestment Plan (CRP) was developed in response to legislative directive to develop a range of strategies to redress the harms of the war on drugs and its disproportionate impact on communities of color. The CRP will be underwritten with a 2-year \$200,000,000 investment from the Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF) created by the Washington State Legislature in 2022. The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) has been tasked with administering and overseeing an \$8,000,000 investment in civil legal services directed at redressing harms from the war on drugs.

Reentry-Related Civil Justice Initiatives:

OCLA will support a range of reentry-focused civil justice initiatives, carefully designed to redress the harm inflicted by the war on drugs on the most impacted communities. Active involvement by members of the impacted communities is essential to identifying primary areas of focus, steering client service priorities and objectives, setting benchmarks, and outlining the anticipated outcomes of the initiatives.

To this end, OCLA invites proposals for reentry legal aid projects that embody a spirit of collaboration, driven directly by community-based organizations. OCLA encourages proposals from community-based organizations eager to incorporate an attorney into their team(s), with the aim of enhancing the delivery of their reentry-related legal services. OCLA also invites proposals from established non-profit legal aid organizations willing to expand their team(s) to embed attorneys with local reentry-focused or by and for organizations, or those willing to provide a

similar community-directed model of reentry legal aid delivery. For non-legal organizations interested in adding legal capacity, OCLA invites proposals for placement and funding of one of two reentry attorney fellows. For established civil legal aid organizations, OCLA invites proposals to establish one or more hubs for training, capacity-building, and support for reentry service providers.

OCLA is also soliciting applications from public defense providers or organizations closely associated with the provision of public defense services, to enhance their capacity in addressing civil consequences of criminal convictions that serve as barriers to successful reentry into civil society. Specifically, OCLA intends to underwrite proposals to embed reentry-related civil consequences attorneys or advocates within public defender offices with the objective of demonstrating the value of a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to reentry support.

In pursuit of these reentry initiatives, OCLA invites proposals including one or more of the following elements:

I. Project Scope

- Develop a targeted plan for the provision of reentry-related legal services, including identifying service delivery model, areas of focus, and desired outcomes. This plan should go beyond the expansion of currently available general reentry legal services, with a focus on enhancing legal reentry capacity within community-based organizations, by and for organizations, and existing legal aid providers or Public Defender Offices.
- Developing a system to track and report on program performance, demographics of individuals receiving services, relationship between recipients of services and impacts of the “war on drugs” and other racialized systemic policies/practices, client service objectives, and intended outcomes
- Foster partnerships with trusted entities, such as by and for organizations, to provide accessible, culturally competent, and trauma-informed legal services.
- Involve formerly incarcerated individuals in meaningful ways to ensure the services are designed and remain responsive and adaptive to their needs. This involvement should be consistent throughout the program's design, operations, and accountability measures.
- Collaborate closely with public defense attorneys or by and for organizations and clients to identify relief and mitigate collateral consequences, focusing on vacatur, legal financial obligation (LFO) remission, and re-licensure (including professional and driver's licenses).
- Maintain active engagement with a Community Advisory Board (CAB) comprised of individuals with relevant lived experience and representatives from by and for organizations. This CAB will ensure transparency and accountability by providing regular updates on progress and key performance outcomes.

II. Minimum Organizational Criteria

Minimum organizational criteria for any entity proposing a Statewide Reentry Legal Aid Project include:

- 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.
- Must have an independent annual financial audit.
- Must be capable of providing reentry related legal aid services.

III. Components of Response to Notice of Funding Availability

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

1. Introduction and Statement of Organizational Purpose.
2. List of the organization's staff leadership and staff members who will be involved in the project.
3. List of formerly incarcerated individuals engaged in the project either as staff or in an advisory capacity.
4. Project narrative, including how the project will address the identified components outlined in Section I of this Notice, and strategies for consistent engagement of formerly incarcerated persons in program design, operations, and accountability.
5. A project budget using the attached budget form.

IV. Deadline for Submission of Proposals and Project Start Date

To be considered, proposals must be submitted on or before July 15, 2023. Selection will occur and the approved project notified by August 7, 2023.

Proposals shall be submitted electronically to:

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

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

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