

# Law Line Priorities 2017

Priority	Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcomes
Help families and individuals facing loss of their housing.	Keep people in their homes, increase family stability, help families transition to new housing	Eviction cases	Protect 500 individuals and families from disruption caused by eviction through advice, referral, and representation
		Community education for lay advocates	Train 75 lay advocates on housing issues at Guen Gifford training
		Community education through vtlawhelp.org	Provide information to 1000 web inquiries through vtlawhelp.org
		Work with the courts to advocate for more support for pro se litigants, better court forms, plain language, court services	Through the Access to Justice and Self-Represented Litigants groups, work with the courts to provide more and better information and assistance to tenants who are being evicted, including forms, instructions, services, and referrals

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	Mobile home cases	Protect 40 individuals and families from disruption caused by eviction and preserve their mobile home leases through advice, referral, and representation
	Foreclosure cases	Delay foreclosure for 30 individuals and families through advice, referral, and representation
	In-Court clinics	Provide on-site representation services through volunteer attorney-staffed on-site clinics at rent escrow hearings in several counties
	Subsidized housing cases	Protect housing subsidies for 75 individuals and families through advice, referral, and representation
Support housing-related financial stability for families		
	Eviction cases	Money judgments will be prevented for 200 families
	Foreclosure cases	Money judgments will be prevented for 30 families

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Improve housing quality	Safer, better housing for low income people	Connect tenants with housing inspectors and follow up with inspectors who fail to act promptly	Support individual tenants and families in advocating with housing officers to enforce habitability regulations in 40 cases
		Educate public about lead and mold and urge housing inspectors to do more about lead and mold	Tenants and community advocates will be empowered to advocate with health officers to enforce habitability regulations
Financial Stability for low income individuals and families	Improve client's financial status through consumer advocacy	Debt collection/repo cases	Reduce or prevent judgment in 140 cases through advice, referral and representation
		Bankruptcy/debtor relief cases.	Counsel clients on bankruptcy and connect them with lawyers in 150 cases

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	Community education on protection from creditors	200 web info downloads
	Collection practices cases	Help 30 individuals/families protect themselves from harassing creditors.
Improve financial status of parents who owe arrears to state		
	Advise people who are unable to pay child support because of disability or lack of jobs	Reduce poverty for disabled or underemployed people in 25 cases
	In appropriate cases, litigate where disabled or chronically unemployed people are deprived of basic income	Disabled and chronically unemployed people will not be deprived of basic income they need to survive in 2 cases
Preserve and provide access to basic government benefits		
	Food stamp, Reachup, Fuel Assistance, Social Security cases	Get benefits or preserve benefits for 160 individuals/families through advice, referral and representation
	Working with DCF and others, provide information on the needs of low income Vermonters	DCF makes changes that make it easier for low income Vermonters to receive benefits they are entitled to

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Protect/preserve family safety	Victims of abuse are able to get relief from abuse orders	Domestic abuse cases	Victims of abuse get protection from abusers in 5 cases
		Train and consult with shelter workers	Train 20 shelter workers in person and at Guen Gifford lay advocacy training
	Crime victims receive advice and support in civil legal issues related to victimization	Legal representation in civil cases	Provide representation for 40 crime victims in civil cases
		Coordinate state-wide hotline support for crime victims	Provide hotline advice and referral for 200 crime victims
	Victims of abuse are able to get necessary services to stabilize their situation	Assist victims of abuse in family court, evictions, and benefit cases	10 victims of abuse will receive benefits or services to stabilize their situation.

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Empower low income individuals and families		
	Senior clients receive support in civil legal matters	
		Through hotline support, 200 low-income seniors will receive information and advice about civil legal matters
		100 low-income seniors will receive legal representation in civil legal cases through case referral and direct representation
	People understand their rights and are better able to manage their legal problems	
		People report that information is useful and they are more able to deal with their legal problems
		People report in surveys that the services were helpful and they feel better able to manage their legal problems.

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	<p>People are able to represent themselves</p>	<p>Coaching, help with pleadings, advice, encouragement</p>	<p>1000 families will learn how to represent themselves through coaching, encouragement, and pro se assistance.</p>
<p>Prevent homelessness</p>	<p>Homeless people get housed</p>	<p>Represent people denied emergency housing</p>	<p>Temporary housing for 30 homeless individuals/families.</p>
		<p>Working with others, inform DCF about the need for better programs to end homelessness</p>	<p>More and better housing services will be provided for homeless people</p>