

Law Line Priorities 2018

| Priority | Goal | Strategy | Desired Outcomes |
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| 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 at various trainings |
| | | 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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| Improve financial status of parents who owe arrears to state | Community education on protection from creditors | 200 web info downloads |
| | Collection practices cases | Help 30 individuals/families protect themselves from harassing creditors. |
| Preserve and provide access to basic government benefits | 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, Reach Up, 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 various trainings |
| | 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 | | |
| | | Hotline support for seniors | Through hotline support, 200 low-income seniors will receive information and advice about civil legal matters |
| | | Case representation for seniors | 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 | | |
| | | Accessible, useful information available on the web at vtlawhelp.org | People report that information is useful and they are more able to deal with their legal problems |
| | | Coaching, help with pleadings, advice, encouragement | People report in surveys that the services were helpful and they feel better able to manage their legal problems. |

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