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Newsletter

September 2017

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LASP Delivers Hope

Helping a Grandmother Raise her Grandson

Resolving problems with government programs

Ms F took her grandson into her home because his mother was no longer able to care for him. However, the county assistance office continued to provide the little boy's SNAP benefits to his mother rather than switching them to his grandmother. Ms F needed the extra money to buy food for her grandson.

Thanks to LASP's advocacy, the county office investigated and confirmed that the boy lived with his grandmother. They now send the SNAP benefits to her - helping her give her grandson a healthy start in life.



Your donation to LASP brings hope - *and real solutions* - to people who cannot

afford an attorney. You are helping people facing life changing legal problems.

[Donate online today.](#)

Thank you!

DONATE NOW

[Donate Now](#)

**Name has been changed, but the story is real.*

More legal help for tenants & homeowners

Affordable housing is very limited in the four counties LASP serves. In fact, 46 of Pennsylvania's 50 most expensive housing markets are right here in suburban Philadelphia. The result - evictions, foreclosures, homelessness and hardship.

To help, LASP recently added 2 new housing attorneys. One focuses on the legal problems of lower income home owners, and the other represents tenants facing evictions, substandard housing or other landlord/tenant problems.

"A main goal is to provide representation earlier in the eviction process" says LASP Landlord/Tenant Attorney Eileen Carroll. "Many tenants can't effectively represent themselves at their eviction hearing" says Carroll.

Funding for both new housing law positions comes from a Bank of America settlement through the Pennsylvania IOLTA Board.

New York City Guarantees Representation to Tenants



Low income tenants in New York City are the first in the country to be protected by a guaranteed right to an attorney if they are evicted. The law, signed in August by Mayor Bill de Blasio, will be phased in over the next 5 years. By 2022, all tenants with incomes under 200% of the poverty level will get complete representation if they are evicted.

A strong push to increase NYC tenants' access to legal help began in 2014. At that time, one in ten tenants had an attorney for their eviction hearing. Today, the number of tenants with representation has increased by about 27% and evictions are down by 24%.

It is anticipated that fewer evictions will decrease the number of people who become homeless and save a significant amount of money for the city. Read more at [CityLab](#).

Highlights from the Counties

Bucks County

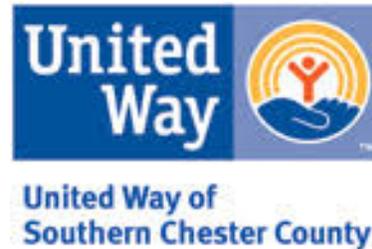
LASP's Bucks County housing attorney helped a renter threatened with eviction because of support animals. The landlord was willing to accept one support animal, but not the two animals the tenant needed. The LASP attorney was able to negotiate an agreement that worked for both parties, and prevented the tenant's eviction.



A support animal can be of enormous help. However, not all landlords are receptive. LASP protects tenants rights when there is a conflict.

Chester County

United Way agencies in Chester County provide important help to county residents. A big thank you goes to United Way of Chester County and the United Way of Southern Chester County for supporting legal services that help people improve their lives.



Delaware County

What can you do when your SNAP benefits are terminated? Going hungry isn't the only option. LASP advocates in all 4 counties represent people when government benefits are denied, stopped or reduced and when people are required to repay benefits.

LASP advocates in Delaware County are hard at work letting residents know help is available. Attorneys give benefits law presentations throughout the county and new posters are going up throughout the area.



Legal Aid
of Southeastern PA

877.429.5994

Monday through Friday, 9am to 1pm



If you think the County Assistance Office (“the welfare office”) made a decision about your benefits you don’t agree with, or just made a mistake,

YOU CAN APPEAL!

WHAT KIND OF DECISIONS SHOULD YOU APPEAL?

- Your benefits are stopped because you didn’t submit some or all of the required paperwork but you believe you did deliver the requested documents.
- You keep trying to reschedule a missed appointment at the welfare office but can’t get through to your worker, and you’re cut off anyway.
- The welfare office stopped your medical coverage or the medical coverage for your child.
- You’re forced to start a training program without enough time to find good childcare (you should be given 10 days to find appropriate childcare).
- The welfare office says you aren’t eligible for benefits or no longer eligible for benefits (if this happens, get a denial notice in writing).
- Any other decision you disagree with or believe is wrong.

★ DON’Y DELAY, APPEAL RIGHT AWAY!

You could lose your right to appeal and your right to receive benefits if you wait too long.

If you appeal within 13 days of the date of the notice, your benefits should not change while the appeal is being decided.

If paperwork or “verification” is the problem, appealing will give you extra time to submit any missing item. For example, if the welfare office lost a paper

you gave it OR you need more time to get a paper, you should appeal. You can always withdraw your appeal and there is no fee for filing an appeal.

You have 90 days to appeal a decision about food stamps and 30 days to appeal decisions about all other benefits from the welfare office. If you don’t appeal within 13 days of the date on the notice to keep your benefits going, you should reapply for benefits as well as appeal.

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Montgomery County

Volunteer attorneys from Merck and the [Montgomery Bar Foundation](#) joined LASP staff to help 53 adults and 45 children obtain birth certificates at a clinic held in

August. People whose records have been lost in a fire or other disaster, for example, may have trouble obtaining their birth certificate. Without a birth certificate, it is impossible to obtain many other forms of identification or to use some government services. Many thanks to the volunteers from Merck and the Montgomery Bar Association!



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