

**AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania**  
**Quality Assurance Review**  
**Housing**  
**July 1 - September 30, 2024**

To assess the quality of our work, we annually review the housing cases we completed and closed in the third quarter of the previous year. Housing cases include those involving private landlord/tenant issues, subsidized housing, utilities, evictions, repairs and infestations, and security deposits.

In the third quarter of 2024, we closed 25 cases for 24 clients who contacted the AIDS Law Project requesting legal assistance with housing issues. We provided direct representation and/or advocacy, legal information/advice, or referrals in 23 of the cases, which is 92% of all housing cases closed during that period.

A thorough intake interview with an attorney, paralegal, or legal intern is conducted for every call, visit, or on-line request seeking legal advice. Cases are triaged for crisis. Immediate advice is given if there is a risk of eviction. The staff person will advise that “self-help” evictions without a court order are illegal; law enforcement may be contacted if a landlord changes the locks or takes other action to impermissibly force a tenant to vacate. The interview ends with an explanation of AIDS Law Project’s intake process. Each case is then reviewed by the Intake Team to determine an appropriate course of action.

Sometimes staff will represent the client in court. Other times, staff will negotiate an agreement with another party, such as a landlord or a utility company. Clients who need assistance in a practice area outside our scope of expertise (e.g. medical malpractice, personal injury, or criminal defense) are referred to appropriate counsel. Callers seeking general information on their legal rights receive follow-up phone calls, an in-person or on-line meeting, or written information.

This survey was performed by Jax Hebner, Jordan Diamond, and Laura Feeney, who reviewed the housing cases closed in 2024. Jax pulled the files for the cases and compiled the data. Using the outcome section of our closing form as a guide along with the file notes, Jordan and Laura determined the outcome of each of these cases and completed the report.

The word “cases” refers to the number of individual legal issues raised and the word “clients” refers to each individual with an open case file. As categorized below, some clients had multiple cases that required different types of responses. However, these are not exclusive categories and are merely a tool to help us understand the areas in which we are impacting our community. Accordingly, clients may be counted under more than one issue category below. As clients have multiple issues in one or more cases, the number of cases we worked on may exceed the number of clients. In analyzing outcomes, we qualified an interaction as successful if we addressed the issue for which the client sought assistance.

- In 10 cases, clients received representation and/or advocacy. This category covers any instance in which the AIDS Law Project represented a client in a hearing or contacted a third party on their behalf.
- In 13 cases, we provided legal information/advice to clients. This is the broadest outcome category and includes almost any time a staff member or intern spoke to a client, whether it was to give illegal lockout advice or advise how to request repairs.

- In 2 cases, we referred clients to organizations better suited to working on the issues presented

Below, each of these 25 cases is analyzed further as one of six issue types: Public and Private Landlord Tenant Issues, Subsidized Housing, Utilities, Evictions, Repairs, and Security Deposits. Each case has been assigned to one of these six categories. Clients may be reported in more than one case and more than one category

### **Public and Private Landlord Tenant Issues**

4 Cases

#### **Representation and Advocacy - 2 Cases**

In two cases, we assisted clients terminate their leases and recover their security deposits from their private landlords.

#### **Legal Information/Advice - 2 Cases**

In one case, we advised a client that we do not provide assistance in finding housing.

In another case, we informed a client that we do not assist with resolving disputes between neighbors when no law has been violated. We refer neighbor disputes to the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relation's Dispute Resolution Program, when the parties are interested in amicable resolution.

### **Security Deposits**

4 Cases

#### **Legal Information/Advice - 3 Cases**

In three cases, we advised clients to file *pro se* claims in municipal court to recover their security deposits. One client filed a successful claim in Municipal Court *pro se* and recovered their deposit.

#### **Referral - 1 Case**

In one case, we referred a client to SeniorLaw Center for assistance with recovering her security deposit.

### **Utilities**

4 Cases

#### **Representation and Advocacy - 1 Case**

In one case, we worked with a client and her housing counselor to keep her housing subsidy, despite her utility shut-off. The client stopped responding to follow-up calls.

#### **Legal Information/Advice - 2 Cases**

In one case, we gave advice to a client about a water shut-off. The client was not satisfied with our advice and declined further assistance.

In one case, we provided advice to a client disputing a gas bill.

#### **Referral - 1 Case**

In one case, we referred a client to Community Legal Services for additional assistance with disputing a gas bill.

## **Repairs**

1 Case

### **Legal Information/Advice - 1 Case**

In one case, we provided advice on repair payments to a client who successfully resolved a plumbing issue.

## **Evictions**

7 Cases

### **Representation and Advocacy - 3 Cases**

In one case, we negotiated with a client's landlord to recertify the tenant's share of the rent, maintain her subsidy, and reduce her balance. The client stopped responding before the matter was fully resolved.

In one case, we helped a client avoid eviction. After her apartment building was sold, she was ordered to vacate. We negotiated the terms of her surrender of possession of the apartment so that she had time to move.

In one case, we helped a client avoid eviction by negotiating with the landlord to establish a payment plan.

### **Legal Information/Advice - 4 Cases**

In one case, we had a conflict of interest and referred a client to CLS.

In one case, we provided information to a client about an eviction. The client ultimately retained private counsel.

In one case, we provided legal advice to a client that received a notice to vacate. The client's landlord did not end up filing a complaint and the client no longer needed legal advice.

In one case, we provided advice to a client on how to reclaim her possessions in the event of a lockout.

## **Subsidized Housing**

5 Cases

### **Representation and Advocacy - 2 Cases**

In one case, a client called regarding a subsidy termination notice. The client chose not to appeal, and no further assistance was necessary.

In one case, a client called for assistance with terminating her lease. Instead, we were able to negotiate with her subsidy provider to secure the client a transfer voucher.

### **Legal Information/Advice - 3 Cases**

In one case, a client came to our office seeking assistance to complete a rent rebate form. As this is not a provided service, we referred him to his housing counselor.

In one case, a client called seeking information on housing vouchers. We referred the client to TURN and he successfully received a housing voucher.

In one case, we provided a client with information about HUD eligibility.

(Prepared: 7.22.25)