

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania
Quality Assurance Review
Public Benefits
July 1 - September 30, 2025

The AIDS Law Project strives to provide high-quality legal services. We proactively created a Quality Assurance Review to internally monitor our performance. Given the attorney's duty of confidentiality to clients and the sensitive nature of the attorney-client privilege, all our quality assurance reviews are done in-house.

To assess the quality of our work, we review annually the benefits cases we completed and closed in the third quarter of the previous year (July 1 – September 30). Benefits cases include those involving state-funded programs, federal-funded programs, and private insurance.

In the third quarter of 2025, **we closed 31 cases for 29 clients who contacted the AIDS Law Project requesting legal assistance with public or private benefits.** We provided direct representation and/or advocacy, legal information/advice, or referrals in 28 cases, which is **90% of all 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. The intake 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 clients in administrative law judge hearings. Other times, staff will negotiate an agreement with another party, such as the Social Security Administration. Clients needing assistance in a practice area outside our scope of expertise (e.g, Veterans Affairs benefits) are referred to appropriate counsel. Callers seeking information on their legal rights receive follow-up phone calls, meetings, or written information.

This survey was performed by legal interns Andi Eklund and Paige Katsapis, who reviewed the benefits cases closed in 2025. The team pulled the files for the cases and reviewed each one individually. Using the outcome section of our closing form as a guide along with the file notes, we determined the outcome of each of these cases, compiled data, 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 the third quarter of 2025, the AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania **closed 31 cases for clients requesting legal assistance with a benefits-related matter.**

- In 12 cases, clients received representation and/or advocacy. This category covers any instance when the AIDS Law Project represented a client in a hearing or contacted a third party on their behalf.
- In 15 cases, we provided legal information/advice to clients. This is the broadest outcome category and includes any time the AIDS Law Project provided information to a client after an intake, such as explaining Medical Assistance rules or advising on application procedures following a Social Security disability benefits denial.
- In 1 case, a client was provided with a referral. To best utilize our limited resources, we occasionally refer clients to the private bar, other public-interest law firms, or social service organizations.
- In 3 cases, no services were provided either because a client became unreachable after the initial intake, the services requested were not services provided by the AIDS Law Project, or the client's issue was resolved without further intervention.

Below, each of these 31 cases is analyzed further as one of three issue types: state-funded benefits, federal-funded benefits, and private benefits. Each case has been assigned to one of these three categories.

State-Funded Benefits

11 cases

Medical Assistance (MA)

5 cases

Representation/Advocacy — 3 cases

In two cases, clients sought assistance appealing a MA termination. Both cases were successfully appealed, and the clients were enrolled in a different category with no interruption in benefits.

In another case, a client with MA was erroneously charged for a medical service. We successfully advocated for the client and the charge was rebilled.

Legal Information/Advice — 2 cases

In one case, we advised a client to apply for MA after losing their health insurance.

In another case, we gave a client information about Medicaid estate recovery rules.

Waiver Benefits

4 cases

Representation/Advocacy — 4 cases

In one case, we helped a client through the application process. Their application was later approved.

In another case, a client's waiver application was denied. We successfully appealed the denial and the client received the waiver services.

In a third case, a client's home health care hours, which are provided by MA Waiver services, were cut significantly. We successfully appealed the reduction of hours with a win at the external grievance level.

In the fourth waiver case, a client had an interruption in coverage, but the client's home health aide continued to provide the care. We successfully appealed and the benefits were reinstated going forward, but not retroactively. We filed another appeal for the retroactive benefits, that was granted and aide was paid for the work already performed.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

2 cases

Referrals — 1 case

In this case, a client who sought assistance with their benefits being terminated was not eligible for our services, so we referred the client to a legal clinic for the disabled.

No Outcome — 1 case

One client was unreachable after requesting assistance with a SNAP termination.

Federal-funded Benefits

19 cases

Medicare

4 cases

Legal Information/Advice — 3 cases

In one case, the client sought assistance in applying for Medicare. We evaluated their eligibility for varying plans and advised them accordingly.

In another case, a client asked for help switching to a Medicare plan with transportation. We researched options and advised the client accordingly. The client successfully switched plans.

In a third Medicare case, a client needed to supplement their Medicare coverage. We researched options and advised the client accordingly.

No Outcome — 1 case

In one case, a client was unreachable after requesting assistance with Medicare enrollment.

SSDI/SSI Eligibility, Applications, and Appeals

9 cases

Representation/Advocacy — 2 cases

In one case, a client's SS benefits were terminated after he was erroneously reported as deceased. We successfully appealed the termination by offering proof the client was alive.

In another case, the client was a dependent of a spouse who was receiving SSDI and living in a long term care facility. We represented the client in applying for and receiving their dependent share.

Legal Information/Advice — 7 cases

In two cases, we provided the clients with information on how to apply for SSD benefits.

In two cases, we assessed a client's SSD eligibility. After reviewing the claims, we determined both were ineligible.

In another case, a client contacted us after their SSI benefits were terminated. We reviewed the case and found that the appeal period has passed. We advised the client to reapply.

We provided a client information about Continuing Disability Reviews (CDR) and advised them to contact us should they receive a CDR notice.

In one case, a client sought advice on returning to work. We informed them of the Back to Work rules and requirements.

No Outcome — 1 case

In this case, a client sought assistance appealing a benefits denial, but was represented by another law firm.

SSDI/SSI Overpayments

4 cases

Representation/Advocacy — 4 cases

In one case, a client's SSDI benefits ended because of a return to work and a large overpayment was imposed. We successfully appealed the termination and the overpayment was waived.

In another case, we assisted a client on SSDI enter into an overpayment repayment plan.

In a third case, a client's SSDI was terminated due to overpayments. We successfully appealed the termination, the full benefits were restored and the overpayment was removed from the client's record.

A fourth client's SSI benefits were reduced due to an overpayment. We successfully represented the client and the overpayment was waived and the amounts previously paid were returned.

Veterans Affairs (VA)

1 case

Legal Information/Advice — 1 case

In this case, we gave the client information on applying for VA benefits.

Private Benefits

1 case

Life Insurance

1 case

Legal Information/Advice — 1 case

We provided this client with basic information about applying for life insurance.

(Prepared 7/22/26)