



The Eastern Shore's Legal Assistance Network

ANNUAL REPORT FY 2020

Proudly celebrating 15 years of service to our community!

Who We Are and How We Help:

Mid-Shore Pro Bono (MSPB's) mission is to connect low income individuals, and families in need of civil legal help, with volunteer attorneys and community resources. People who go to court with legal representation get better outcomes, resulting in more financially stable households, safe and healthy homes for children, and a higher likelihood of intergenerational transfer of wealth. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented financial and legal challenges for everyone in our community, MSPB's fierce network of volunteer attorneys never stopped providing quality legal services for people in need. On the Eastern Shore, more than 50% of households are considered low-income, and more than 14% of families live in poverty. Over 80% of all people who need civil legal help in Maryland cannot afford it.

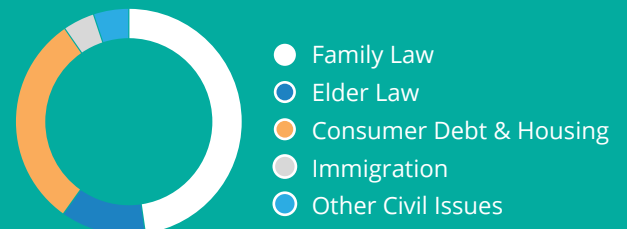
MSPB provides free access to legal services for those most in need in our community. We strive to pair qualified families and individuals with volunteer attorneys and believe that regardless of income or circumstance, everyone deserves equal access to civil justice. Proudly serving the Eastern Shore community.

Legal Services

MSPB responds to the unique needs of our rural communities and has developed specific projects to assist clients from across Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Mid-Shore Pro Bono (MSPB) envisions a world where all Eastern Shore residents have access to civil legal representation. We want all individuals to feel respected and empowered throughout the legal system

Types of legal service:



A Year Like No Other

Mid-Shore Pro Bono is still grappling with the effects of Covid -19, navigating our way through these turbulent times. First and foremost, we send our well wishes to you, your loved ones and your community. As we reflect on the year that has been so hard on all of us, we want to especially thank our staff, partners, board members, attorneys, interns and volunteers. Your support throughout this challenging year allowed MSPB to provide access to legal services for those most in need on the Eastern Shore. MSPB is truly grateful to be able to continue our work breaking down the barriers to equal access to civil justice for all.

Fiscal year 2020 began with restructure of Mid-Shore Pro Bono as we

entered into a new chapter of our organization. We expanded our Executive Team, welcoming a Managing Attorney, Meredith Girard and a Deputy Director, Michele Devine to our ranks. With merely more than 6 months under our belts after the restructuring, we were pleased to have found our stride and even added a new bilingual intake specialist to our staff. Then in the blink of an eye, the world as we knew it changed. Covid 19 dealt us all a swift blow changing the way we live and work. As so many organizations and service providers did, we quickly pivoted to the uncharted world of remote work, outfitting our staff with the equipment, technology, training, and support to ensure that we were able to continue to support our clients with uninterrupted continuity of service.

A Year Like No Other (continued)

As this global pandemic began to wreak havoc on the lives of so many of our neighbors, our mission remained steady and only furthered our desire to provide the much needed civil legal services that our low income neighbors so desperately needed. The first challenge was to ensure our Eastern Shore neighbors knew that we were still open and how to reach us. We contracted the design of a new multilingual website to better serve our clients remotely and aggressively expanded our community outreach. We increased our social media presence, partnered with food distribution sites, places of worship and our social service provider partners to distribute flyers. Constant monitoring of government local, state and federal government and court orders

became a priority in order to relay the ever changing regulations and requirements to our clients.


It soon became evident that Covid was not only exacerbating already existing civil legal services but creating new ones resulting in an increased demand for our services. Our network of volunteer lawyers provided free legal services on elder law, family law, landlord/tenant, mortgage foreclosure, consumer debt, and immigration. MSPB continued to help develop strategies and solutions to assist our clients and improve the financial and housing stability for Eastern Shore families.


Community Impact

\$1,972,750
MSPB's volunteer attorneys provided 7,771 hours of legal services worth \$1,972,750 (based on the average hourly rate of \$250).

 **10,055**
MSPB received 10,055 volunteer hours from our attorneys.

86
MSPB attorneys assisted 86 clients with immigration-related legal issues.

 **1,890**
MSPB provided 1,890 people with direct representation from a volunteer attorney.

 **226**
MSPB assisted 226 families with housing issues, including eviction and foreclosure prevention.

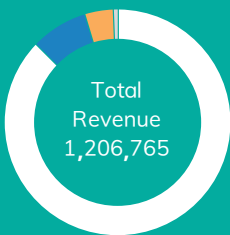
\$589,270
MSPB clients obtained \$589,270 in monetary benefits resulting from consumer judgments, debt relief, and family law related settlements.

 **2,821**
MSPB responded to 2,821 calls for help.

"After practicing law for nearly 35 years before retiring, I realize the importance of continuing to engage in pro bono work. MSPB offers quality attorneys and quality service for those in our community who need it most."

***-Tim Abeska,
Volunteer Attorney and Member for the Board who also serves as Treasurer***

Finances



- Grants 1,051,534
- Donor Contributions 98,690
- Program Income 48,599
- Misc Income 7,323



- Programs 916,980
- Operating Support 131,225
- Fundraising 144,862

Thank You For Your Support

There is no denying that our community shifted in ways we never imagined. Our staff and volunteer attorneys will stay nimble as we continue to bridge the gap between the demand for civil legal help and the availability and supply of those services. MSPB are committed to providing critical help to residents in need, which in turn results in a better, more stable Eastern Shore community.

As always, we remain incredibly thankful to our staff, our volunteers, our board, and our generous grantors and donors who enable us to continue to envision an Eastern Shore where access to civil legal help is available to all. Stay Well.