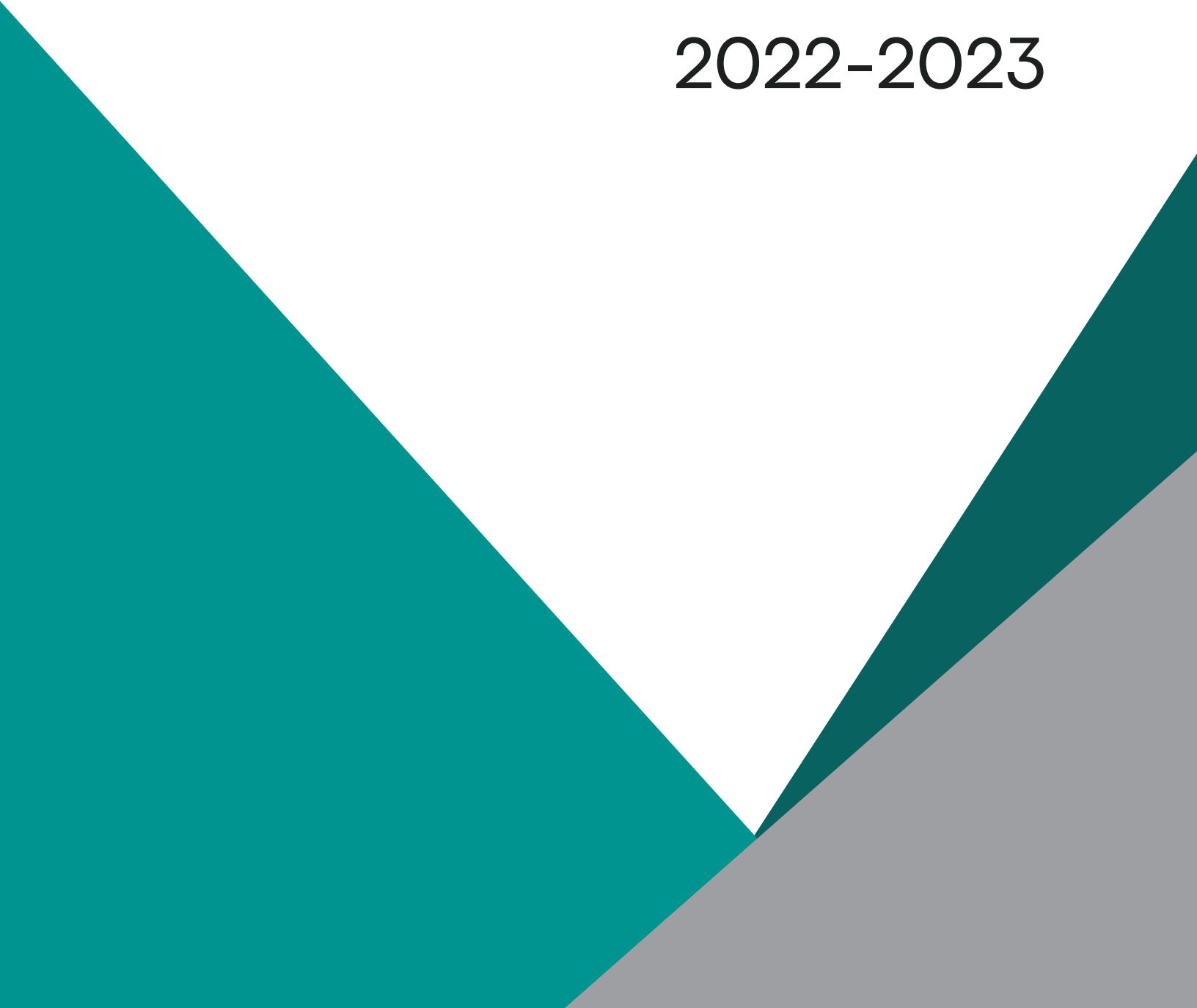


HOUSING CONSERVATION COORDINATORS

2022-2023



OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Housing Conservation Coordinators, Inc. (HCC) is a 51-year-old community based legal services organization that was founded to “advance social and economic justice and fight for the rights of poor, low-income and working individuals and families.” Over its history, HCC has largely focused its comprehensive services on housing-related matters, including preventing displacement, accessing public benefits, and preserving the limited stock of affordable housing. HCC has expanded its services over the past two decades to provide a wider range of legal support to lower income residents. HCC’s services now include assistance with immigration matters, consumer protection and elder law to help stabilize the lowest income households. In October of 2019, HCC launched its Older Adult Program to provide more comprehensive legal services to older adults, aged 62+, who reside along the West Side of Manhattan. During the pandemic as well as in this “post pandemic” legal landscape, the Older Adult Program proved to be an important addition as many older residents have required needed the additional support and access to services.

During this fiscal year, HCC assisted 3,743 low income households in Manhattan, including full representation in 215 matters; in-depth advocacy to 78 households, and advice/counsel to 965 households; secured monetary benefits and savings, including helping 15 tenants receive \$195,876.22 in rental arrears through the Emergency Rental Assistance Program; provided Community Legal Education benefitting 1,531 individuals, which included: tenant rights’ education for 15 tenant associations (389 total attendees), community groups (149 total attendance), 73 tenant leaders, community workshops on various legal issues benefitting 144 community members, outreach to 276 individuals, and 500 legal education brochures distributed; Pro se workshops benefitting 126 attendees at HCC’s 17th Annual West Side Tenant Conference, 505 individuals through clinics, and 17 attendees at Know Your Rights Trainings and Workshops, another 306 received Self-help printed materials; and referrals to legal and social service providers benefitting 3,167 families.



Population Served: Low Income Populations

Total Funding: \$4,366,641.00

Total IOLA Grant: \$137,500.00

Staffing Full Time Equivalents:

- Total Staff: 21
- Paralegals: 3
- Lawyers: 14
- Other: 4

DIRECT LEGAL SERVICES: CASES

Housing:

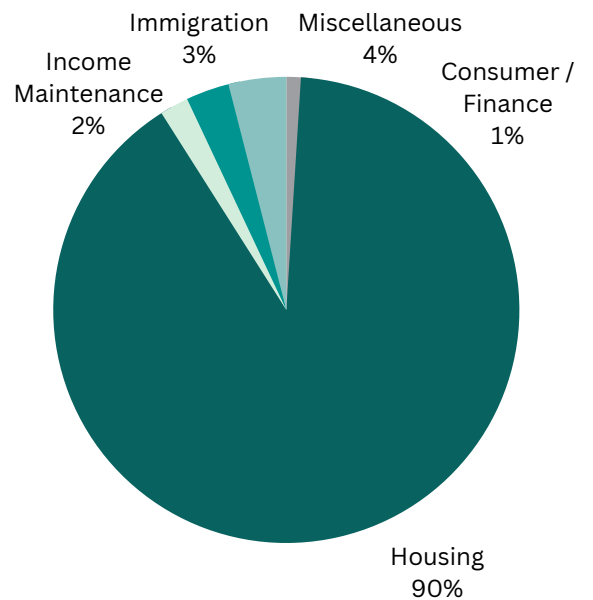
HCC represents the Santana family who have lived in a rent stabilized apartment in Hell’s Kitchen for 43 years. The couple raised their 4 children in the apartment, and one still resides there with them. They traveled to Ecuador just prior to the COVID lockdown to take care of Mr. Santana’s ailing mother. Their return flight was canceled in April 2020 due to the lockdown and then due to the continued health crisis and their own health, they were advised by their doctors not to travel until the summer of 2021. In the fall of 2022, a new landlord who purchased the building and has been selling the empty apartments in the building served them with a holdover proceeding claiming that the apartment was no longer their primary residence due to their absence.

Our legal team is preparing for depositions as the landlord is contending that they do not lack sufficient evidence of their medical excuses. The case has received significant press and Mr. Santana and HCC Counsel have been interviewed about their plight as “COVID Refugees”.

Immigration:

Antonio, a longtime Hell’s Kitchen resident, sought assistance from HCC, as he was terrified he would lose his Green Card, which identified him as a legal permanent resident. An openly gay man, Antonio was devastated after the sudden and unexpected death of his partner and wanted to spend time with family in Brazil to cope with his depression and care for his aging Aunt. Fearing if he spent too much time outside of the United States, as a Green card holder, he might need to apply for a reentry permit and could be considered to have abandoned his permanent resident status.

1,894 people benefitted from 1,258 legal cases closed



Cases by Legal Problem Area

Anthony met with an HCC attorney and paralegal and was advised to apply to become a citizen. HCC filed an N-400 to become a Naturalized Citizen, obtained a fee waiver, and prepped Antonio to take the citizenship test. Anthony was anxious that his English was not strong enough to pass the test but was reassured by staff who prepared him for the testing process. Anthony passed the citizenship test and is awaiting his date to be sworn in as a citizen. Antonio is less anxious and now can travel to spend time with family without fear of losing his immigration status.

Housing:

HCC's attorney and social worker partnered to prevent the eviction and homelessness of Mr. V, a 74-year-old disabled client who sought assistance after his Section 8 voucher for his apartment of 25 years was terminated in 2018 – thus increasing his \$400.00 rent to \$2,500. With Social Security as his only source of income, Mr. V could clearly not afford to pay the market rent. After substantial rent arrears accrued, his landlord commenced a nonpayment proceeding to evict him. Mr. V also suffers from depression and anxiety stemming from his incarceration in a Russian prison where he was held for political dissent in the 1980's.

Mr. V.'s housing voucher was terminated in 2018 with an allegation that he was absent from his unit for more than 180 days and was unavailable for his annual recertification. Mr. V did travel to Russia to his dying sister's bedside at the end of May, 2018, and remained there for the 40 day mourning period following her death that is the tradition in the Eastern Orthodox Christian religion. He returned to the United States, and to his home, in August, 2018.

Although Mr. V attempted to appeal the termination of his housing benefit initially in late 2018 he heard nothing for a lengthy period of time. He sought assistance from HCC in 2020 when the eviction proceeding began. The Covid pandemic then intervened, and as the attorney attempted to follow the paper trail, it was learned that the HPD appeals department was not holding hearings or processing cases due to the pandemic, and his market-rate rent arrears continued to accrue.

HCC's social worker met with and established a relationship with Mr. V. Once a trusting relationship had been built, the social worker was able to convince the client to tell his story and to secure and produce necessary documents including a photo of his sister's grave in Russia, and letters in support of Mr. V. from friends with whom he had spent the mourning period.

With the appropriate evidence in hand, the social worker and attorney partnered to advocate for a reasonable accommodation with NYC's Housing and Preservation Department to restore the section 8 voucher. The housing court eviction proceeding was subsequently dismissed, and the team is now working to secure the rent arrears that accrued during the period of time his rent was market rate.

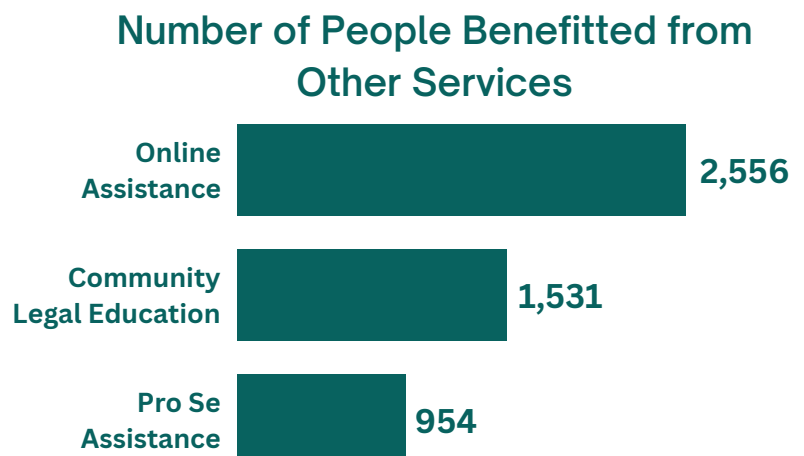
OTHER SERVICES: OVERVIEW

HCC provided Pro Se Assistance and Community Legal Education to 2,485 individuals.

Pro Se Assistance: a) On December 3, 2022 HCC hosted its 17th Annual West Side Tenant Conference in-person at Fordham Law School. The Conference included 5 workshops led by trained professionals and plenary sessions on issues facing tenants. The workshops were attended by 126 tenants; b) HCC staff also conducted 2 Know Your Rights Trainings via zoom to 17 attendees to provide information to tenants about their rights and what to do in case of eviction; c) HCC reached 39 constituents through partnership with local city council members’ clinics and another 466 individuals through clinics; d) an additional 306 received Self-help printed materials.

Community Legal Education: a) Tenant Associations; HCC continued to organize tenants building-wide to collectively challenge improper practices by building owners. Tenants are first given an overview of tenant’s rights in rent regulated housing before the specifics of the building situation are discussed. In the 2022-23 reporting period, HCC assisted 15 tenant associations, holding 52 tenant meetings for a total of 389 attendees; and b) Community Groups (149 attendees):HCC staff provided virtual trainings for community groups, including the West Side Neighborhood Alliance (WSNA) membership meetings as well as tenants living in buildings organized through the Stabilizing NYC coalition, to educate community residents on a range of issues facing the community. The Stabilizing buildings are targeted specifically to educate tenants in buildings owned by the “worst landlords” in NYC about their rights and remedies; c) outreach to 276 individuals); d) HCC staff held presentations attended by 144 community members on topics ranging from covid scams, cluttering issues, affordable housing and the 421-a tax benefit program, and workshops on elder abuse; e) We provided 73 tenant leaders with information to combat harassment, eviction, and hold landlords accountable for repairs; f) distributed 500 legal education brochures.

5,041 People Benefitted from Services Other Than Direct Legal Services



OTHER SERVICES: TECHNOLOGY

In June of 2019, HCC pivoted to utilizing LegalServer for our case management system. We continue to refine and improve the methodologies to better reflect and report the work that we do. Our Grants Administrator is currently part of a Legalserver working group with our Leap Coalition partners which is providing HCC with insight in how other organizations utilize Legalserver and also to collaborate on how we can better utilize the system to serve our coalition goals of providing services city-wide to our client base.

HCC engages Just-Tech, a technology and IT services organization experienced in and committed to providing high-quality IT support for small legal service nonprofits, and as a result, HCC receives an annual grant through Microsoft Azure. This year, we completed upgrades to our Firewall and slowly moved all HCC users to a secured VPN to access the server.

In November of 2022, HCC launched an updated website utilizing the WIX platform. The new website allows visitors to seek appointments or referrals directly with us. Additionally, a visitor can sign up for our mailing list as well as find an events page and blogs with the latest news.

OTHER SERVICES: TRAININGS

HCC promotes leadership development and training for all staff. During the 2022-23 fiscal year, HCC Staff attended regular internal trainings conducted annually by our own HCC attorneys, advocates and organizers on subjects related to lease renewals, and succession rights to vicarious trauma and public speaking. These are crucial trainings for newly hired staff. HCC staff regularly attend trainings conducted by Housing Court Answers on Housing related matters and the Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development on issues relating to organizing tenant associations. Our Director of Organizing participated in the Organizing Academy held by the Center for Community Leadership – a 6-month program.

As a member of Leap, a coalition of 18 legal services providers in NYC, HCC staff regularly attend regular Leap trainings on issues related to both housing law as well as other civil matters outside of our usual practice areas. HCC attorneys and paralegal/advocates take full advantage of attending these trainings. HCC Supervising Attorneys also lead trainings for coalition partners on various areas of housing law.

IMPACT CASES

Group Case:

In May 2021, HCC filed an HP proceeding against Akelius Realty and its agents in Manhattan Housing court on behalf of a group of nine (9) tenants living in 225 West 23rd Street and 220 West 24th Street seeking an order to fix the inadequate ventilation in the buildings, among other things. The tenants' complaints were supported by 29 HPD violations, including five (5) class "C" violations "to abate the nuisance consisting of unopenable window obstructing natural ventilation" and twenty-four (24) violations class "A" for installing windows "floor to ceiling without meeting minimal standards for ventilation and fall protection."

The landlord filed a motion attempting to dismiss the HP proceeding, but HCC secured a fantastic decision from the Court which ordered that the landlord repair the DOB violations, the HPD violations, and the conditions alleged in the petition that are not HPD violations. In that same order, the Judge also dismissed many of the landlord's defenses.

Despite the Court extending the deadline for Akelius to comply with the order, Akelius continued to flagrantly disregard the order of the Court and repairs went unattended. Thus, HCC filed a contempt motion and prepared for a trial with expert testimony regarding the ventilation issues. While awaiting the decision on the contempt motion, Akelius settled the case in March 2023 by fixing the repairs and providing a 6 month abatement to all tenants.

475
Beneficiaries
were affected
by 11 Impact
Cases

All Impact Cases:

- 104 W 83rd Street - HP Repairs
- 225 West 23rd Street - HP Repairs
- 307 W 39th St - DHCR Tenant Complaints
- 307 W 39th St- HP Repairs
- 338 W 49th St - HP Repairs
- 356 West 56th Street - Supreme Court Case
- 438 W 45th Street - Harassment
- 440 W 45th Street - Harassment
- 440 West 41st - HP Repairs
- 544 West 49th Street - DHCR LL Application
- 703 Ninth Avenue - Vacate Order and repairs due to fire

PRO BONO VOLUNTEERS

Pro Bono Assistance: HCC utilizes pro bono assistance either to provide direct case services or to co-counsel with HCC staff attorneys on cases outside of our area of expertise.

Legal Clinic: HCC conducts a weekly legal clinic for individuals who live outside our catchment area or who fall above our income guidelines for representation and staffs this clinic with volunteer attorneys from the private bar. In 2022-23, 285 clients were assisted with legal advice at HCC's Monday night legal clinic. During the past fiscal year, the Monday Night Legal Clinic continued to be staffed remotely by HCC attorneys and pro bono volunteers.


Non-attorney volunteers: HCC hosts non-attorney volunteers to support our legal and organizing program and maintains a Practice Order in good standing. In the past year, HCC hosted 2 student interns from John Jay College, 5 law student summer interns, and 3 fall law student interns. In Addition, HCC's Attorneys teach a Housing Rights Clinic at Fordham law school and provided supervision to 1 law student students during the Spring semester. A 3rd year Fordham Law student also joined HCC on March 1, 2023 as a full time (12 week) Pro Bono Scholar after taking the February Bar exam. 8 Volunteer Board members also actively participate in various committees and projects. HCC also hosted lawyers, organizers, advocates and elected officials who conducted seminars at the 17th Annual Westside Tenant's Conference



18 Attorneys volunteered 241 hours

12 Law Students volunteered 2,250 hours

19 Other Volunteers volunteered 708 hours

Each  icon is equal to 4.9 volunteers.

Attorneys are represented through the Green Figure.

Law Students and Other Volunteers are represented through the Grey Figure.

SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

In 2022-23, HCC worked in partnership with other legal services providers in New York City to directly enhance individual client services as follows: 1) HCC participated in the Legal Services of the Working Poor (LWSP) Consumer Debt coalition. The Coalition consists of five NYC provider partners (CAMBA, NMIC, Goddard Riverside Law Project and UJC). Each organization conducted its consumer debt intake and referred cases to the coalition for legal representation. Trainings were also conducted for coalition staff.

During this fiscal year, HCC assisted 12 individuals to resolve consumer debt issues through this program and an additional 30 seniors attended workshops on Identity Theft & Financial Scams, and 2) City-wide coalitions on specific issues: HCC also participated in numerous city-wide coalitions, including Leap (a coalition of 18 independent legal service providers), Stand for Tenant Safety, Illegal Hotels Coalition, Certificate Against Tenant Harassment (CATH); Right to Counsel Coalition; Stabilizing NYC; Real Rent Reform, Housing Justice for All, and the Anti-Warehousing Coalition to keep landlords from holding on to vacant apartments .

SOURCES OF FUNDING

Housing Conservation Coordinators received \$4,366,641 in total funding this past year

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| City and County Funding | \$3,597,295 |
| State Funding | \$388,873 |
| IOLA Grant | \$137,500 |
| Fundraising | \$138,973 |
| Foundations | \$77,000 |
| IOLA Sub-Grant | \$27,000 |

