

Interest on Lawyer Account Fund of the State of New York

ANNUAL REPORT 2020





The IOLA Fund

The IOLA Fund ("IOLA") supports non-profit organizations in New York State that provide legal assistance to low-income people and improve the administration of justice for groups underserved by legal services.

IOLA was established as a public body by the State of New York in 1983, with the support of the New York State Bar Association. It is governed by an independent Board of Trustees appointed by the governor, legislative leaders and the Chief Judge of the State of New York.

IOLA's revenue is derived from interest on attorneys' IOLA escrow accounts that hold pools of client money that individually are too small or expected to be held too briefly to generate sufficient income to justify the expense of administering a segregated account for the client's benefit. Approximately 43,000 IOLA accounts are open at 189 banking institutions in the state.

Since it was established in the 1980s, through the \$70 million in recent grants issued in 2020, IOLA has awarded over \$540 million. Over that period the amount awarded each year has fluctuated, often considerably, because IOLA's revenue is largely driven by prevailing bank interest rates.

Legal Services Provided by IOLA Grantees

IOLA grantees provide legal assistance and information to a variety of low-income, at-risk, or other populations that have difficulties accessing the legal system.

In 2020* alone...



327,000+ cases closed

718,000+ New Yorkers benefitted



1.6 million people received legal information & training



207,000+ people received help handling their legal problems on their own ("pro se")



5.9 million people received online self-help materials or forms

IOLA grantees help thousands of New Yorkers get the legal advice they need to lead lives free of legal worries.

Including...

10,266

Veterans

29,677

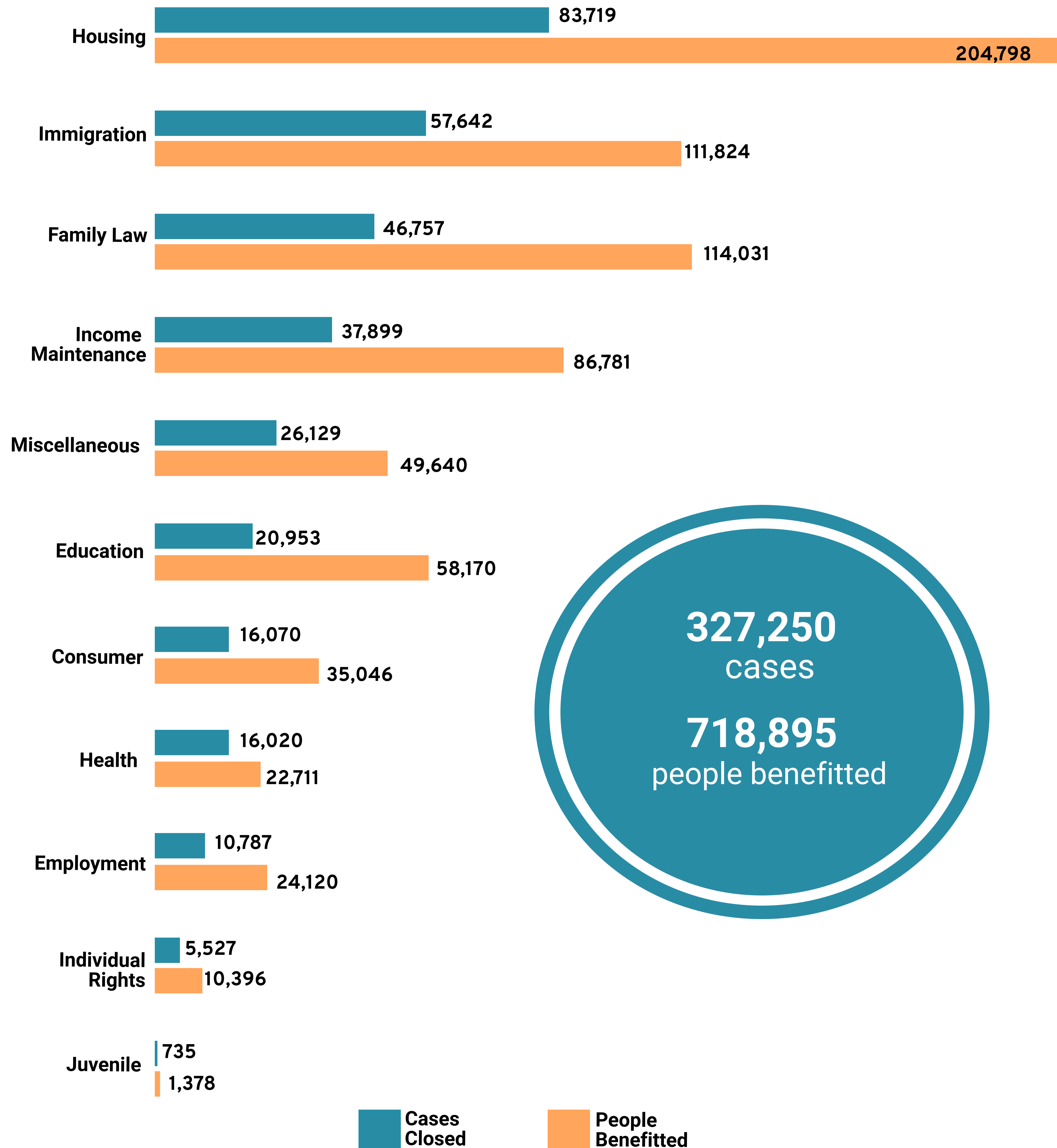
Victims of Domestic Violence or Elder Abuse

35,082

Immigrants

*NYS Fiscal Year 2020, reflecting 4/1/19 - 3/31/20

Legal Cases Closed and New Yorkers Benefitted



Direct Legal Services

The cornerstone of many IOLA grantees work is the direct legal services they provide to low income New Yorkers. The below stories are representative of the important work being done to help the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

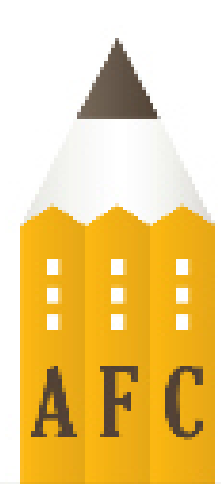
Children

Arthur is a seven-year-old boy with ADHD and autism. When his parents came to Advocates For Children (AFC) in the Fall of 2019, Arthur had been struggling for three years at his public school and was reading on a kindergarten level, despite being in second grade. In addition, he was traumatized by the bullying he received from both his teachers and classmates.

When Arthur was in a specialized pre-school for children with autism, he was able to make a lot of progress. Unfortunately, when he started kindergarten, he was placed in a public school that was unable to address his disabilities. When Arthur was in first grade, the school concluded that he did not know how to get along with others, so they took away his recess, sending him to the computer lab instead, and would not allow him to go on field trips.

Arthur experienced other poor treatment at school. For example, one day when Arthur's mom arrived to pick him up at school, she found Arthur in the bathroom, where he had been covered in soap by another boy who also slapped him. The school told his mother it was her fault for not picking him up on time. Things worsened when Arthur's teacher moved his seat and isolated him from the other students in the class. When Arthur was having trouble sitting still, the teacher would force him to stand facing the wall. He would often come home from school crying and told his father that he was being punished every day.

After the family contacted AFC, it took swift action to remove him from his woefully inappropriate school. An AFC attorney advocated for Arthur to be placed in a new public school that has a specialized program for strengthening the academic and social skills of students with autism in an inclusive environment. Arthur started in this program in late January, and his father reports that he loves his new school.



Advocates for Children
of New York
Protecting every child's right to learn

Health

Ariel was diagnosed with heart failure shortly after he entered the United States at age sixteen. He was denied a heart transplant in part because of his undocumented immigration status. The New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI) team met with him in the hospital after an operation to implant a left ventricle assist device to ensure that his heart continued pumping. They immediately began advocating for the heart transplant, representing him in immigration court, and working to get him asylum. They fiercely advocated for an expedited review of his asylum application.

As a result of zealous advocacy, Ariel was granted asylum in March 2020 and was reunited with his mother after being separated from her for the past 12 years. NYLPI continues to represent Ariel in his transplant advocacy.



Direct Legal Services

Immigration

Ms. U was a victim of the abhorrent practice of female genital mutilation at the age of 10 in her home country. Partially as a result, she suffers from severe medical conditions that will most likely last her entire life. Ms. U originally left her country of birth in 2018 with her four children in tow, and sought assistance applying for asylum from Mobilization for Justice (MFJ) months later.

MFJ completed Ms. U and her children's asylum applications, meeting with the family twice a week for several hours, preparing testimony that was often very painful to discuss, and gathering evidence for the hearing. MFJ represented the family at the hearing, as a result of which Ms. U and her family were all granted asylum. The family is now stabilized, has work authorization and Ms. U's eldest son is looking forward to attending college.



Employment

When Youth Represent met Marcus and ran his criminal history, they discovered he had an open case for marijuana possession pending against him. However, the District Attorney wasn't pursuing the charges; in fact, Marcus had been granted an ACD. Youth Represent was able to tell Marcus the good news: ACDs are not convictions, and the case would eventually disappear from his public RAP sheet. They also had to tell him the bad news, though, which was that the charge would appear as an open arrest until June.

Typically, open arrests like this would have essentially rendered Marcus ineligible to remain in his chosen track of Financial Operations at his job placement program, Year Up. Because of a change in New York State Law in 2019, though, employers in New York are no longer allowed to deny employment to a person solely on the basis of a pending ACD. Youth Represent conducted legal research to confirm that this law would apply to FDIC-regulated institutions, and assured Marcus he would be legally eligible for a position at a bank.

When Marcus was selected for a position at a major bank, the bank discovered his open arrest and asked him for information about it, including the charges, disposition, and for an explanation of what happened. Youth Represent provided Marcus with information about his case that he could share with the employer, along with a statement of events that led to the charge. They included language in that statement that explained the change in New York law that prohibited the bank from taking adverse action against him. As a result, he was able to begin working right away. Fortunately, the bank recognized the change in New York law. Youth Represent's client-driven representation enabled them to resolve this matter without resorting to litigation and to obtain the client's objective, which is a career-starting job at a financial institution.



Direct Legal Services

Domestic Violence

Safe Horizon Domestic Violence Law Project (DVLP) represented Mary in her order of protection case in Kings County Integrated Domestic Violence Court. Mary's spouse on several occasions, sexually assaulted, strangled and harassed Mary. Mary was very nervous about testifying in front of her spouse in open court in her order of protection proceeding. Safe Horizon DVLP made a request to the court prior to the hearing that the court be cleared and that only parties to the case be allowed to be present while Mary was testifying. The court granted Safe Horizon DVLP's request. Mary testified for a couple of hours on her direct examination. After her direct examination, the court took a break and asked all attorneys to approach the bench for an off the record conversation with the Judge and all attorneys. Before the opposing side started cross-examination he stated that the opposing party would consent to a two-year order of protection. Safe Horizon had discussed this offer with the client during the break after the bench conference and the client agreed to this offer. The court allocated both parties on this settlement and Mary did not have to appear anymore on this matter and received a two-year full stay away order of protection. Mary was relieved and thankful that she did not have to undergo cross examination and that she no longer had to appear in court and face her abuser.



Disabled



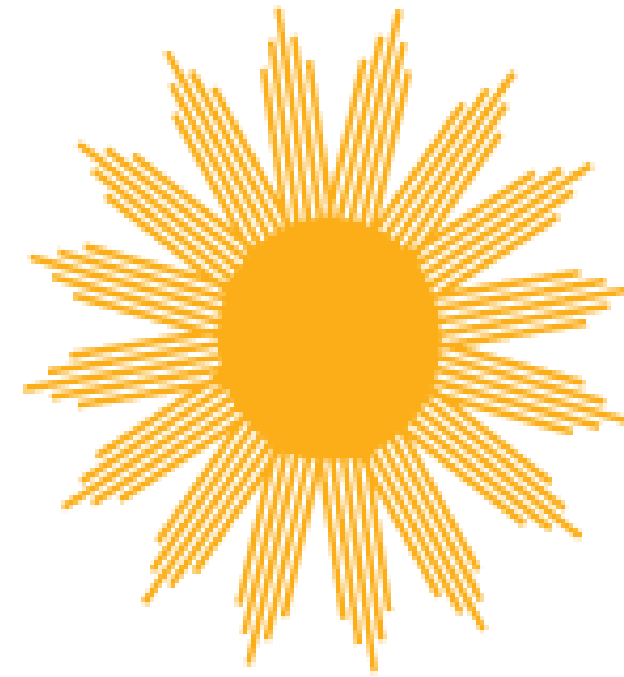
Disability Rights New York (Disability Advocates) represented Joanne in a complaint of disability discrimination with the New York State Division of Human Rights (DHR). Joanne had repeatedly asked her housing cooperative for a parking spot close to her cooperative unit so that she would not require to endure the pain and discomfort of an extensive walk. She received no response. DHR found that this lack of response to her reasonable accommodation request constituted discrimination. Joanne received the parking accommodation request, \$5,000 in emotional distress damages and \$5,000 in punitive damages. In addition, the housing cooperative was required to pay a \$10,000 civil fine and penalty to New York State, create reasonable accommodation policies and procedures for the cooperative, and provide a training session to their staff on the prevention of unlawful discrimination.

Direct Legal Services

Elder

Denise connected to the Center for Elder Law and Justice through its Medical-Legal Partnership. A paraplegic with multiple complex medical issues, she admitted to a hospital social worker that she was subjected to horrific physical abuse at home by her only caregiver. She was reluctant to speak out as she thought if she lost her caregiver, she would have to go into a nursing home.

The Center for Elder Law and Justice team obtained an order of protection and the abuser was arrested. The team also revoked Denise's prior power of attorney and health care proxy and found another family member to fill that role. Finally, the Center for Elder Law and Justice worked with the hospital discharge planners to ensure she obtained Medicaid and the necessary supports to return home.

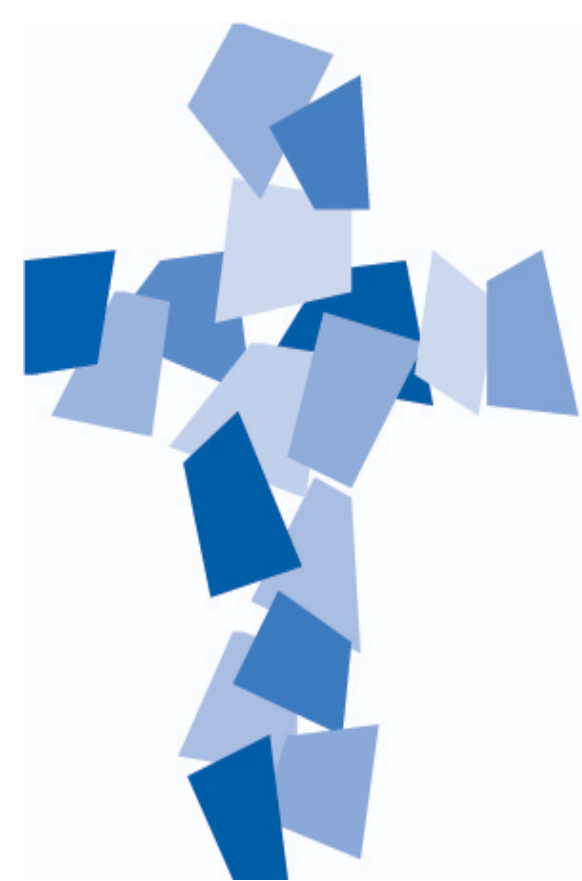


CENTER FOR
ELDER LAW
& JUSTICE

Housing

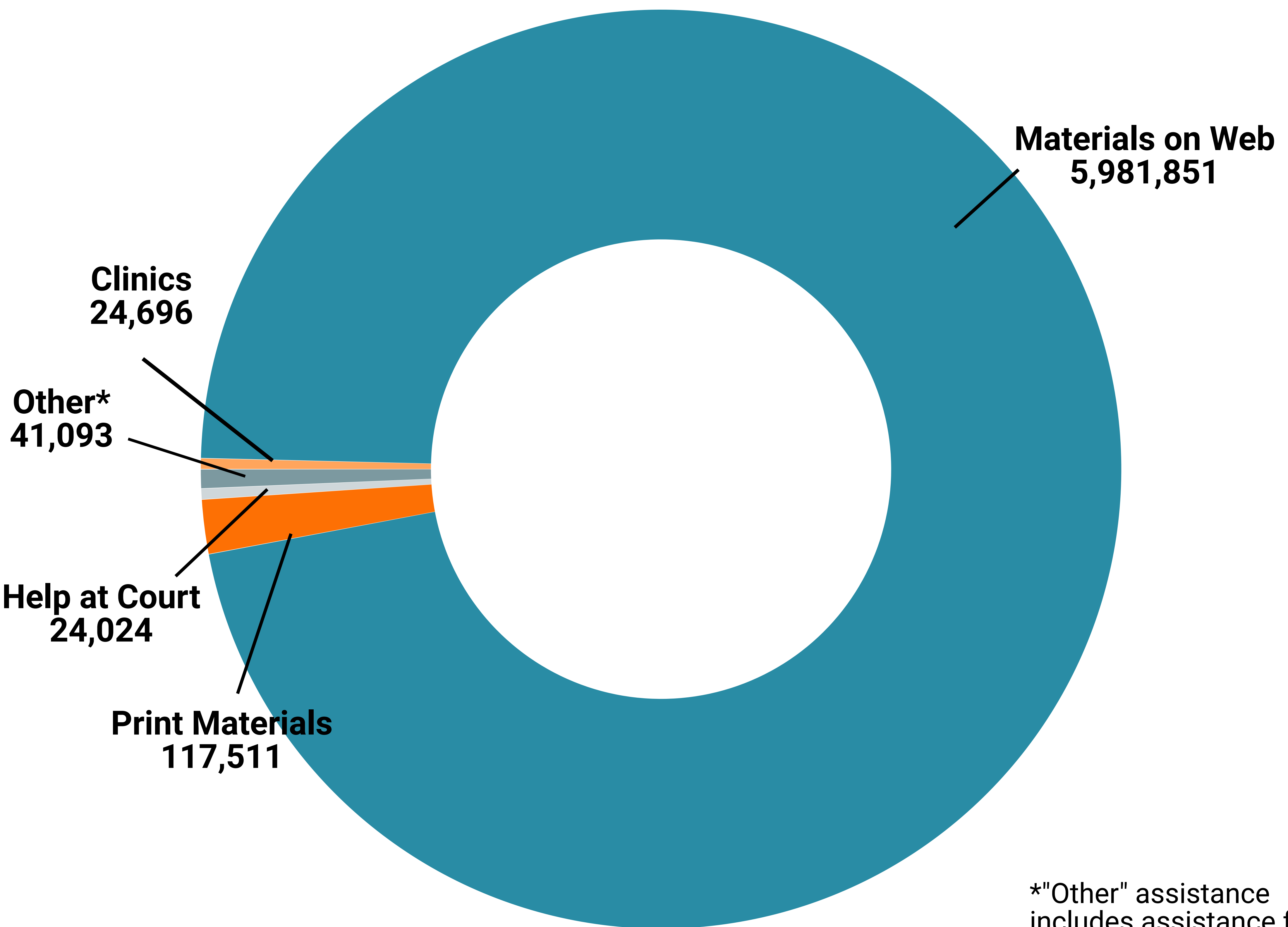
Gillian, a 73 year-old woman originally from Honduras, shared an apartment with her sister in Jackson Heights. Her sister was the tenant of record, but had recently passed away. When Gillian talked to the landlord about becoming the tenant of record, the landlord offered her a lease with vacancy and longevity increases added to the rent. Gillian could not afford these increases and was fearful of losing her apartment.

She went to Catholic Migration Service's housing clinic for help. Catholic Migration Services contacted the landlord and pointed out that the lease offered to Gillian was in violation of the Rent Stabilization Law and Code. The landlord disagreed regarding the applicable law and calculation of the correct rent. After further communication and negotiation, the landlord agreed to offer a succession lease with the monthly rent and lease start date consistent with the legal basis Catholic Migration Services had argued. This enabled Gillian to retain her apartment at an affordable rent.



CATHOLIC
MIGRATION
SERVICES

Pro Se Assistance



*"Other" assistance includes assistance filling out forms, case consultations, and videos.



Celia is a single mother whose former boyfriend is also her daughter's father. When Celia was unable to agree on an informal arrangement with her co-parent for joint custody of their daughter, she found Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) inside Bronx Family Court. Seeking a court order for custody and visitation, Celia could not afford to hire an attorney, but was certain that she needed legal advice and in-depth guidance in order to prepare for representing herself in court. Thus, she scheduled a consultation with LIFT's Staff Attorney. The consultation enabled Celia to gain a clear understanding of her parental rights and the procedural rules of Family Court. The attorney also helped Celia prepare court documents, organize her arguments and practice speaking before the judge. At the conclusion of their meeting, Celia thanked the attorney and expressed confidence that she was well-prepared for court proceedings. She later returned and was pleased to report that the judge had issued the order for custody and visitation that she was seeking.

Partnerships



IOLA grantees partner with one another, the Courts, community groups, law enforcement, hospitals, bar associations, and government entities to share legal expertise and information with various community stakeholders. These strategic alliances allow legal service providers to leverage their resources and best serve their communities.



**BROOKLYN
DEFENDER
SERVICES**

NDS

H A R L E M

Through continued participation in the NYCHA Permanent Exclusion Taskforce, Brooklyn Defender Services (BDS) partnered with Neighborhood Defender Services of Harlem to provide a citywide training on defending NYCHA Termination Proceedings aimed at arming the paralegals and attorneys at organizations providing assigned counsel assistance at NYCHA Termination proceedings. Given its expertise and experience with these cases it was imperative the advocates that will be representing tenants on the ground learned from the BDS team and will continue to act as a resource for its colleagues at these organizations.

NYLAG
New York  Legal Assistance Group

SH★REFRONT

YM-YWHA OF BRIGHTON - MANHATTAN BEACH, INC.

The Public Benefits Unit's Elder Law Practice at the New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) started a new Life Planning Practice with the Shorefront YM-YWHA of Brighton-Manhattan Beach in Brooklyn. The Life Planning Practice provides advance planning services on medical advance directives and powers of attorney for Holocaust survivors.

Community Legal Education

In 2019, IOLA grantees provided community legal education to more than 3.6 million people through presentations to community groups, distribution of legal education materials, and through other means. In addition, millions of unique visitors accessed websites maintained by IOLA grantees to download legal educational materials.



NMIC collaborates with Councilmember Ydanis Rodriguez at monthly Constituent Service Nights. At these events, NMIC staff joins other community-based organizations to present information on legal services offered at NMIC, and to connect community members with both legal and additional social services offered at the agency. Multiple staff members from different units within the Legal Department typically attend these presentations so community members with different legal issues (housing, immigration, consumer, etc.) can speak with staff members who have extensive experience handling similar issues.

Since 2017, the Worker Justice Center has been partnering with the Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County and the Cornell Farmworker Program to offer Family Preparedness Clinics to farmworker families in Western NY. The Family Preparedness Clinics were created in response to the immigrant community's fears that American-born children may end up in the foster care system should a family member or loved one be detained or deported. With fear and risk ever increasing for undocumented families, immigrants need to be legally prepared in case they are targeted.

Through this collaboration, clients are provided with access to immigration Know-Your-Rights Trainings, screened for immigration remedies and potential labor violations, as well as connected with resources for accessing health insurance and other basic needs assistance. Volunteer attorneys assist clinic participants with a variety of family preparedness tools and forms, including parental designation, parental permission for child to travel, power of attorney, passport statement of consent for minor, and authorization to pick up paychecks.



VOLUNTEER
LEGAL SERVICES
PROJECT
OF MONROE COUNTY, INC.

Pro Bono

● 39,503 pro bono volunteers

● 670,811 volunteer hours



\$167.7 MILLION IN LEGAL SERVICES

provided by the private bar working with IOLA grantees*

*services estimated at \$250/hour



NEIGHBORHOOD
LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS) piloted its Justice Bus Initiative to overcome transportation barrier impacting the provision of free legal services in Western New York. NLS trained over 20 University at Buffalo law students on the new New York State eviction law and in public benefits law as part of this program. Through NLS Justice Bus community clinics, which provide on-site legal advice and other services designed to empower low-income families, and address housing and financial insecurity issues in communities of need, NLS provides assistance to those most challenged when seeking access to services. This project will improve NLS's ability to reach clients who cannot access services due to transportation and/or mobility barriers, while leveraging the support of and developing partnerships with volunteer attorneys and law students.



Monetary Benefits

Benefits Won

Social Security, SSI Benefits:	\$282,245,662
Medicaid Benefits	\$523,588,541
Other Federal Benefits:	\$99,627,175
Unemployment Compensation:	\$3,645,063
Family Law - Child Support:	\$53,431,748
Family Law - Maintenance/Spousal Support:	\$1,471,988
Family Law - Equitable Distribution of Assets:	\$8,924,745
Affirmative Judgments:	\$20,270,428
Other Benefits:	\$1,471,988
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Total Benefits:	\$994,677,337

Note: Total includes back awards and cumulative monthly benefits. The number of months used for the cumulative benefits differs based on historical averages. Social Security and SSI were tracked over 120 months. Unemployment compensation was tracked over 6 months. Child support was tracked over 108 months, while other federal benefits were tracked over 36 months. Most other categories were based on 12 month averages.**

Savings Secured

Bankruptcy & Consumer	\$87,370,405
Housing & Foreclosure Prevention	\$62,131,968
Medicaid, Medicare & Health Savings	\$38,495,912
Food Stamps & Other Income Maintenance	\$7,636,392
Tuition & Education Services Savings	\$10,046,200
Fee Waivers, Family Law Matters & Other	\$13,531,660
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Total Benefits:	\$219,212,538

Note: Total includes lump sum awards and settlements avoided. In addition, this total includes monthly savings achieved, for instance, in bankruptcy matters, lease abatements, mortgage rate reductions, and food stamps, based on 12 month duration.

**Prior to 2017, IOLA calculated monetary benefits as follows: Social Security and SSI were tracked over 60 months; child support and other federal benefits were tracked over 36 months; and most other categories were based on 12 month averages.



IOLA Grants and Grantees

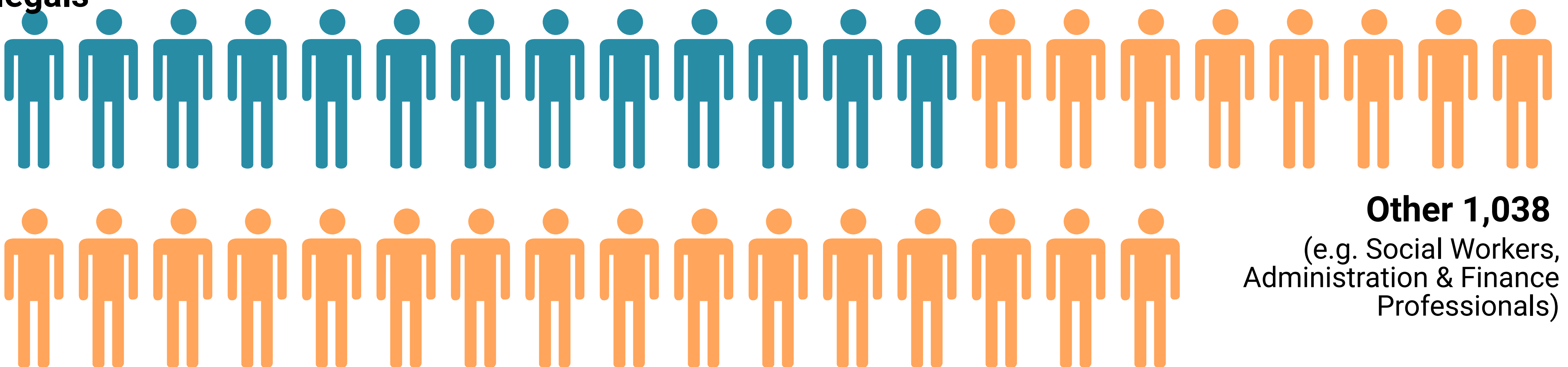
IOLA Grantee Staffing, is Nearly 4,000 Strong

In FY 2020, IOLA grantees employed 2,381 attorneys, 987 paralegals, and 1,038 other staff, all working to enhance low-income New Yorker's access to justice.

Attorneys
2,381



Paralegals
987



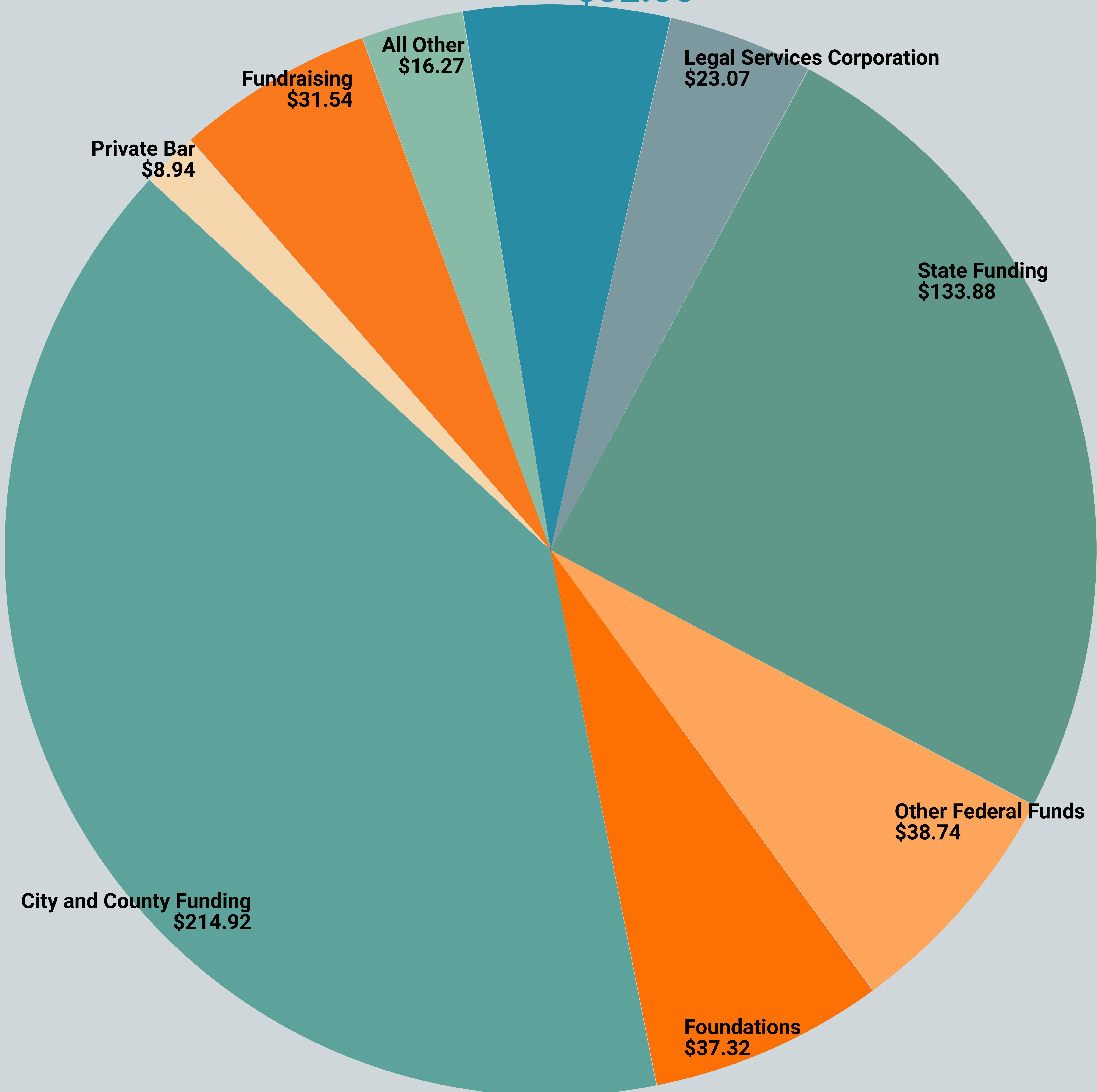
Other 1,038
(e.g. Social Workers,
Administration & Finance
Professionals)

Funding Received by Grantees

\$537.5 million

in 2020

IOLA
\$32.86



IOLA Grants April 2019-March 2021

\$70 million

75% of IOLA funds are distributed to civil legal aid providers and are allocated according to the geographic distribution of low-income persons throughout the state.

25% of IOLA funds are allocated to providers improving the administration of justice, including the provision of civil legal aid to underserved groups.

Civil Legal Service Grantees - \$52,500,000

The Bronx Defenders Bronx, NY www.bronxdefenders.org	\$450,000
Brooklyn Defender Services Brooklyn, NY www.bds.org	\$300,000
CAMBA Brooklyn, NY www.camba.org	\$1,100,000
Empire Justice Center Albany, NY www.empirejustice.org	\$1,800,000
Frank H. Hiscock Legal Aid Society Syracuse, NY www.hiscocklegalaid.org	\$1,100,000
Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo Buffalo, NY www.legalaidbuffalo.org	\$700,000
Legal Aid Society of Mid New York Utica, NY www.lasmny.org	\$320,000

Legal Aid Society (NYC) New York, NY www.legal-aid.org	\$10,500,000
Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York Albany, NY www.lasnny.org	\$3,100,000
Legal Aid Society of Rochester Rochester, NY www.lasroc.org	\$1,600,000
Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. Geneva, NY www.lawny.org	\$2,300,000
Legal Services for New York City New York, NY www.legalservicesnyc.org	\$10,500,000
Legal Services of Central New York Syracuse, NY www.lscny.org	\$2,800,000
Legal Services of the Hudson Valley White Plains, NY www.lshv.org	\$3,900,000
Mobilization for Justice New York, NY www.mfy.org	\$1,200,000
Nassau/Suffolk Law Services Committee Hempstead, NY www.nslawservices.org	\$2,980,000
Neighborhood Legal Services Buffalo, NY www.nls.org	\$2,200,000
New York Legal Assistance Group New York, NY www.nylag.org	\$2,250,000
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation New York, NY www.mnic.org	\$1,800,000
Rural Law Center Plattsburgh, NY www.rurallawcenter.org	\$600,000
Urban Justice Center New York, NY www.urbanjustice.org	\$1,000,000

Administration of Justice Grantees - \$17,500,000

Advocates for Children of New York New York, NY www.advocatesforchildren.org	\$225,000
African Services Committee New York, NY www.africanservices.org	\$125,000
Association of the Bar of the City of New York Fund, Inc. New York, NY www.citybarjusticecenter.org	\$1,075,000
Atlas DIY Brooklyn, NY www.atlasdiy.org	\$150,000
Brooklyn Bar Association - Volunteer Lawyers Project Brooklyn, NY www.brooklynvlp.org	\$425,000
Brooklyn Legal Services Corporation A Brooklyn, NY www.bka.org	\$150,000
Capital District Women's Bar Association Legal Project, Inc. Albany, NY www.legalproject.org	\$500,000
Catholic Charities Community Services, Archdiocese of New York New York, NY www.catholiccharitiesny.org	\$460,000
Catholic Migration Services Queens, NY www.catholicmigration.org	\$220,000
Center for Elder Law and Justice Buffalo, NY www.elderjusticenyc.org	\$700,000
Center for Family Representation New York, NY www.cfrny.org	\$240,000
Central American Legal Assistance Brooklyn, NY www.centralamericanlegal.info	\$92,000
Central American Refugee Center (CARECEN NY) Hempstead, NY www.carecenny.org	\$205,000
Community Service Society New York, NY www.cssny.org	\$160,000

Day One New York, NY www.dayoneny.org	\$63,000
Disability Advocates Albany, NY www.drny.org	\$200,000
The Door- A Center for Alternatives, Inc. New York, NY www.door.org	\$275,000
Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc. Buffalo, NY www.ecbavlp.com	\$725,000
The Family Center Brooklyn, NY www.thefamilycenter.org	\$175,000
Goddard Riverside Community Center New York, NY www.goddard.org	\$150,000
Her Justice New York, NY www.herjustice.org	\$490,000
Housing Conservation Coordinators, Inc. New York, NY www.hcc-nyc.org	\$275,000
Hudson Valley Justice Center White Plains, NY www.hvjc.org	\$140,000
Human Rights First New York, NY www.humanrightsfirst.org	\$150,000
Jewish Association for Services for the Aged New York, NY www.jasa.org	\$150,000
Journey's End Refugee Services, Inc. Buffalo, NY www.jersbuffalo.org	\$150,000
LatinoJustice PRLDEF New York, NY www.latinojustice.org	\$205,000
Lawyers Alliance for New York New York, NY www.lawyersalliance.org	\$425,000

Legal Action Center of the City of New York, Inc. New York, NY www.lac.org	\$240,000
Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT) Brooklyn, NY www.LIFTonline.org	\$270,000
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House New York, NY www.lenoxhill.org	\$245,000
Long Island Advocacy Center, Inc. New Hyde Park, NY www.theliac.org	\$300,000
Make the Road New York Brooklyn, NY www.maketheroadny.org	\$625,000
My Sisters' Place White Plains, NY www.mspny.org	\$175,000
National Center for Law and Economic Justice New York, NY www.nclej.org	\$140,000
New Economy Project New York, NY www.neweconomyyny.org	\$275,000
New York County Lawyers Association New York, NY www.nycla.org	\$125,000
New York Immigration Coalition New York, NY www.nyic.org	\$190,000
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest New York, NY www.nylpi.org	\$590,000
New York State Dispute Resolution Association, Inc. Albany, NY www.nysdra.org	\$275,000
Pro Bono Net New York, NY www.probono.net	\$1,100,00
Pro Bono Partnership, Inc. White Plains, NY www.probonopartner.org	\$250,000
RiseBoro Community Partnership, Inc. Brooklyn, NY www.riseboro.org	\$150,000

Safe Horizon, Inc. Brooklyn, NY www.safehorizon.org	\$475,000
Safe Passage Project Corporation New York, NY www.safeassageproject.org	\$200,000
Sanctuary for Families, Inc. New York, NY www.sanctuaryforfamilies.org	\$550,000
Unity House of Troy Troy, NY www.unityhouseny.org	\$120,000
Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County Syracuse, NY www.onvlp.org	\$200,000
Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County, Inc. Rochester, NY www.vlsprochester.org	\$400,000
Volunteers of Legal Services New York, NY www.volsprobono.org	\$375,000
Western New York Law Center Buffalo, NY www.wnylc.com	\$800,000
Worker Justice Center of New York, Inc. Rochester, NY www.wjcny.org	\$980,000
Youth Represent New York, NY www.youthrepresent.org	\$150,000



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State Finance Law §97-v
Judiciary Law §497
21 NYCRR part 7000

OFFICE ADDRESS

11 E. 44th Street
14th Floor
New York, NY 10017

Tel: 646-865-1541

For questions about the content of this report, please
email Colleen Fehringer at cfehringer@iola.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.IOLA.ORG

