MidPenn Legal Services is a nonprofit, public interest law firm with staff of 95, including attorneys, paralegals, support staff and administrators. Since our beginning, we have provided free legal advice and representation to nearly one million low-income individuals, families and survivors of violence. We work to improve the lives of our clients through the provision of high quality impactful legal services.

MidPenn provides free legal services in 18 counties in central Pennsylvania.

.Manifest Image: A map showing the coverage area of MidPenn Legal Services.

**Executive Director’s Message**

Greetings,

As 2022 quickly winds to a close, I am reminded that as the year began, we were still trying to effectively navigate the fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to have a disproportionate effect on low-income families who experience civil legal problems. Individuals like Jennie, who suffered horrible, physical and mental abuse at the hands of her partner. However, with the assistance of a MidPenn attorney, Jennie found the courage to go to court and confront her abuser where she received a final Protection Order. At the conclusion of her case, Jennie wrote, “My attorney was an amazing person ... because of her help, I am safe today, and moving forward with my life.”

However, despite all that we do, the numbers of low-income individuals and families who need our help continues to grow. This fact was highlighted in April when the Legal Services Corporation (LSC) released its Justice Gap Report. The Report found that “Low-income Americans do not get any or enough legal help for 92% of their substantial civil legal problems.” The study further found that civil legal problems were present in 3 out of 4 low-income households and that 1 in 2 low-income Americans had personally experienced a legal problem that substantially impacted their lives – with the consequences affecting their finances, mental and physical health, safety, and relationships.

Each day, our advocates work to assist individuals like Jennie who need legal help to gain access to income and health benefits, maintain their housing and remain safe. As you read this Report, you will find stories describing the work we did on behalf of others like Jennie, who needed help to resolve their critical civil legal problems. We were there for them, and together with your assistance, we will continue to be the first responders to those who need our help.

Finally, as we begin to close the book on another year, I would like to take this time to thank each and every one of you who supported the work we do, that has allowed us to serve so many individuals and families across our region during these challenging times.

In deepest gratitude,

Rhodia D. Thomas, Esquire
Executive Director
Welcome and Greetings all:

In 1974, when Congress created the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), the following was written, “Without the services of a lawyer, low-income people with civil legal problems may have no practical way of protecting their rights and advancing their interests.” Today, almost fifty years later, the LSC Justice Gap Report found that the numbers of individuals and families needing legal help when facing life altering legal situations involving their health, housing, income, safety and overall family stability continues to grow.

While, our civil justice system is designed to afford relief to those seeking resolution in matters that affect their rights, their businesses, and the most intimate aspects of their lives, lack of access to legal representation because of the inability to afford a lawyer, prevents many low-income Americans from obtaining resolution in matters that negatively impact lives. You may not think of the work of civil legal aid attorneys as essential, however, it is for those facing critical legal problems, that often impact their survival. Without legal aid... 

- Where will survivors of violence in need of civil legal protection turn for help?
- Where will Seniors denied life sustaining health benefits turn for help?
- Where will those denied needed benefits including Unemployment Compensation turn for help to obtain the income they need to support their families?
- Where will an individual or family lay their head at night, if they lose their housing through eviction or mortgage foreclosure? And
- Where will Veterans who have dutifully served our nation, get assistance when faced with loss of income or other housing?

For more than 50 years, this has been the work that MidPenn attorneys, advocates and staff have done on behalf of those living in poverty. Matters that include preserving housing, protecting survivors of domestic violence and obtaining needed income and life sustaining benefits. And with your continued support, we can continue to address the growing legal needs of low-income individuals across our service area.

So, on behalf of the MidPenn Legal Services’ Board of Directors, I write to thank all of the individuals, law firms, corporations and foundations who have contributed time and financial support to MidPenn in the past year. Michael J. Pykosh, Esquire

Board of Directors
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Director of Development
Elizabeth Truntz
Director of Finance
Valerie West, Esq.
Director of Contract Compliance

HELPING A LOW-INCOME CLIENT TAKES MORE THAN LEGAL REPRESENTATION. IT TAKES A HOLISTIC APPROACH. IT TAKES A COMMUNITY. I AM MOST PROUD OF HOW OUR EVICTION PREVENTION PROJECT HAS ENGAGED A COMMUNITY TO MEET A COMMUNITY NEED.

DONALD J. SMITH, JR., ESQUIRE, FORMER MIDPENN BOARD CHAIR
Domestic Violence

Jennie’s husband had become physically abusive and was threatening to kill her after a verbal argument. Jennie had asked her husband to leave the residence several times and he would refuse each time. The last time he refused to leave, Jennie attempted to leave however, her husband hid her car keys from her. Things escalated as the day progressed, and her husband continued to verbally accost her, then began physically beating her. Her husband grabbed her, called her horrible names, slapped her face, grabbed her by the arms and pinched her thigh as hard as he could causing deep pain. The police were called to their home and her husband was forced to leave. Jennie was able to receive an emergency Protection from Abuse (PFA) Order from the Magisterial District Judge (MDJ) and a court hearing was scheduled in the Court of Common Pleas. When MidPenn’s attorney was able to gain Jennie the needed Protection From Abuse Order, she wrote a comment: “My attorney was an amazing person, she was always available when I needed her and always answered any questions I had. She helped me to see I could do what needed to be done and she gave me the encouragement to do it. Because of her help, I am safe today and moving forward with my life. Thank you.”

Unemployment Compensation

Bill needed legal assistance in his Unemployment Compensation (UC) benefits case. Bill had received a notice in April of 2020 that he was financially eligible to receive Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. In March of 2021, he reached out to MidPenn because he had not been receiving any benefits that he was qualified to receive. Our MidPenn Attorney made an inquiry to the Department of Labor and Industry and learned that Bill should have been granted Unemployment Compensation benefits instead of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. MidPenn’s advocate was able to shift Bill’s claim with the Department of Labor and Industry to the Unemployment Compensation and he was able to receive his benefits as well as the additional $600/week. Bill is also receiving over $20,000 in back benefits due to the error made by Labor and Industry.
Consumer

Robin is a 67-year-old woman who is permanently disabled due to terminal Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension, and she also has breast cancer. Robin contacted MidPenn because she was being sued by credit card company in Court for $40,061.92 in delinquent credit card charges. In the past, Robin had been the victim of repeated instances of identity theft. While she reported the theft to the credit card company, they, without explanation, determined the $40,061.92 that was charged to her credit card account through a sophisticated fraud scheme was not fraud. Robin is not technologically sophisticated, and she was unaware that someone had set up an online account for her credit card without her knowledge. Despite her card having a low balance, the individual committing the fraud kept charging items to her card and then would make payments on the balance with checks that would be returned for insufficient funds. This process was repeated until her card reached the $40,000 credit limit.

After our attorney reviewed Robin’s credit card statements, it became clear what had happened. Our attorney filed Preliminary Objections because the credit card company failed to attach a proper card member agreement to their Complaint. After receiving our attorney’s Answer, the credit card company’s attorney contacted our attorney and asked that he fill out a Fraud Affidavit on her behalf. In the Fraud Affidavit, our attorney wrote a detailed letter explaining how the fraud happened, in addition to making them aware of Robin’s dire health conditions. As a result of our attorney’s advocacy, the credit company reversed their original decision in finding there was no fraud and agreed to dismiss the case against Robin which resolved all of her outstanding legal issues regarding the outstanding debt.

Mortgage Foreclosure

Annie and her husband had obtained a mortgage to purchase a new home. Unfortunately, due to several incidents of domestic violence, Annie divorced her husband and he moved out of the home and refused to help her with the mortgage payments. Annie contacted MidPenn for assistance after she received an Act 91 Notice when she fell three months behind on her mortgage. She immediately applied for a loan modification for the mortgage, however her ex-husband refused to provide her with the information she needed to complete the paperwork. She believed if she could qualify for a modification, she could get caught up and could afford to pay the mortgage herself. Our attorney contacted Annie’s ex-husband and was able to gain his cooperation and our advocate then drafted an agreement that would allow him to sign over his interest in the property to her, which allowed her to refinance the mortgage. In addition, our attorney contacted the lender to inquire about what information Annie would need to refinance. She gathered the necessary information and applied to refinance her mortgage. Her application was approved, and she was able to pay the arrears on the mortgage. Annie was able to save her home for herself and her children.
**Housing**

Michael is a senior citizen and a veteran. He contacted MidPenn through the “Help is on the Line Project” after his electric had been terminated. He had been having trouble paying his bills and had owed over $1,000 in back payments. His primary source of heat is electric. Over the winter his electric bills were sometimes over $1,000. This was due to poor insulation and drafty windows. Overwhelmed financially, he also got behind in his rent. Fortunately, he had not yet received an eviction notice.

The Help is on the Line attorney was able to connect Michael with various resources that could help him get caught up and help get him back some financial stability. In particular, Michael received assistance from the electric company’s Customer Assistance Program which helps customers keep their electric service through income payment plans. The attorney also provided information on the Supportive Services for Veterans Program which could help him pay the back rent and utility bills as well as the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and the WARM program. Customers participating in WARM receive an in-home energy usage evaluation and energy-savings plan, and have the opportunity to obtain energy-saving home improvements. Michael has been able to resolve the issues thanks to resourceful information obtained from MidPenn.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to retired MidPenn Staff John Mitton, Esq. and Carolyn Sexton. At the York County (PA) Bar Association/York County Bar Foundation’s Annual Recognition Dinner in June of this year, John was presented with the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Civil Legal Aid Attorney of the Year Award and Carolyn was presented with the PBA Pro Bono Partner Award for their distinguished careers and dedication to the provision of legal services.
ACCESS TO JUSTICE

On September 22, 2021, MidPenn held its inaugural “Access to Justice” event to recognize local law firms, volunteer attorneys and non-attorney volunteers who work to support MidPenn’s mission of providing high quality legal representation on behalf of low-income individuals. The Honorable Superior Court Judge, Carolyn H. Nichols gave a keynote address in which she stated, “We all know that change is needed and state courts cannot simply rely on the same old comfortable methods of the past to make justice a reality for the thousands and thousands of civil litigants.” Judge Nichols’ remarks were followed by the awards ceremony in which former MidPenn Board Chair, Donald F. Smith, Jr., from Berks County received the Volunteer Attorney of the Year award for the extraordinary work he has done in Berks County to assist low-income residents to resolve their landlord/tenant matters. This was followed by the Law Firm award, which was given to the law firm of McNees Wallace & Nurick for their many years of pro bono advocacy and financial support of MidPenn and its mission. Finally, Kay Pickering of the Harrisburg Peace and Justice Center was awarded the non-attorney Volunteer Award in honor of her many years of working collaboratively with MidPenn advocates to assist low-income residents with housing problems in Dauphin County.

“I AT MCNEES WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF CIVIL LEGAL AID. WE AT MCNEES WILL MANY TIMES SAY THAT WE ARE A HELPING PROFESSION AND WE WANT TO HELP AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE. NOTHING IS MORE POWERFUL IN COMBATTING POVERTY THAN A LEGAL AID ADVOCATE.”

JAMES P. DEANGELO, ESQUIRE, MCNEES WALLACE & NURICK

“IF YOU WANT TO BE A TRUE PROFESSIONAL, YOU WILL DO SOMETHING OUTSIDE YOURSELF. SOMETHING TO REPAIR TEARS IN YOUR COMMUNITY. SOMETHING TO MAKE LIFE A LITTLE BETTER FOR PEOPLE LESS FORTUNATE THAN YOU. THAT’S WHAT I THINK A MEANINGFUL LIFE IS—LIVING NOT FOR ONESELF, BUT FOR ONE’S COMMUNITY.”

JUSTICE RUTH BADER GINSBURG

THE WORK WE DO HAS MANY, MANY DAILY CHALLENGES.
I APPRECIATE THE SHARED ATTITUDE OF SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO SURMOUNT BARRIERS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT OUR SHARED GOALS AND OUR SHARED CLIENTS.

KAY PICKERING
2021-2022 Financials

### Revenues and Other Support

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contracts and grants</td>
<td>$9,737,375</td>
<td>$9,847,956</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contributions:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-financial assets</td>
<td>$817,161</td>
<td>$463,179</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
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<td>Net realized &amp; unrealized gain (loss) on investments</td>
<td>$947,196</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$4,323</td>
<td>$13,771</td>
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<td>Total Revenue and Other Support</td>
<td>$9,931,413</td>
<td>$11,321,441</td>
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**Expenses**

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<th>Program Services</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$8,822,459</td>
<td>$8,675,747</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>$1,190,255</td>
<td>$1,165,792</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$13,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$10,025,839</td>
<td>$9,850,316</td>
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### Major Funders

- Adams County Bar Association
- Adams County Commissioners
- Alexander Stewart, M.D.
- Foundation
- AmazonSmile Foundation
- Berks Community Health Center
- Big Spring Community Chest
- Blair County Bar Association
- Young Lawyers Committee
- Campbell’s Soup
- Centre County Office of Aging
- Centre County United Way
- CommonWealth of Pennsylvania – The Unified Judicial System of Pennsylvania
- County of Lebanon
- Cumberland County Bar Foundation
- Dauphin County Bar Foundation
- Dauphin County Community and Economic Development
- Dickinson School of Law — Penn State
- Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland & Perry Counties
- Faith United Church of Christ
- Hershey Company
- Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton Area Agency on Aging
- Internal Revenue Service
- Lancaster Bar Association Foundation
- Lancaster County Coalition to End Homelessness
- Lebanon County Bar Association
- Lebanon County Office of Aging
- Lebanon County Area Agency on Aging
- Legal Services Corporation
- LST III LLC
- Opportunity House
- Palmyra Gives
- Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- Pennsylvania Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts Board
- Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network
- Regional Housing Legal Services
- Schuylkill County Commissioners
- Schuylkill County Office of Senior Services
- Southwestern PA Legal Services
- State College Community Land Trust
- The Long Family Educational Foundation
- United Way of Berks County
- United Way of Blair County
- United Way of Carlisle & Cumberland County
- United Way of Cumberland County
- United Way of Greater Lehigh Valley
- United Way Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
- United Way of Lancaster County
- United Way of Lebanon County
- United Way of Mifflin-Juniata
- United Way of the Capital Region
- United Way of York County
- Veterans Multi-Service Center
- WellSpan Health
- York County Area Agency on Aging
- York County Bar Foundation/Association
- York County Commissioners

**Fiscal Year 21-22 Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>MidPenn Staff</th>
<th>Volunteer Attorneys</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>2,830</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2,884</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td>2,434</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>2,507</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>1,359</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder Law</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax Controversies</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Benefits</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,633</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,054</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,687</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pursuing Justice - Improving Lives

Administration
213-A N. Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
For Admin: 717-234-0492

Altoona
171 Lakemont Park Boulevard
Altoona, PA 16602
For Services: 800-326-9177

Bedford
232 E. Pitt Street
Bedford, PA 15522
For Services: 800-326-9177

Carlisle
401 E. Louther Street
Suite 103
Carlisle, PA 17013
For Services: 800-326-9177

Chambersburg
230 Lincoln Way East
Suite A
Chambersburg, PA 17201
For Services: 800-326-9177

Clearfield
211 East Locust Street
Clearfield, PA 16830
For Services: 800-326-9177

Gettysburg
123 Baltimore St., Suite 301
Gettysburg, PA 17325
For Services: 800-326-9177

Harrisburg
213-A N. Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
For Services: 800-326-9177

Lancaster
38 N. Christian Street
Suite 200
Lancaster, PA 17602
For Services: 800-326-9177

Lebanon
1150 Chestnut St., Suite 1
Lebanon, PA 17402
For Services: 800-326-9177

Lewistown
3 W. Monument Square Suite 303
Lewistown, PA 17044
For Services: 800-326-9177

Pottsville
315 N. Centre Street Suite 101
Pottsville, PA 17901
For Services: 800-326-9177

Reading
35 North Sixth Street Mezzanine Suite 101
Reading, PA 19601
For Services: 800-326-9177

State College
3500 E. College Avenue Suite 1295
State College, PA 16801
For Services: 800-326-9177

York
29 N. Queen Street
York, PA 17403
For Services: 800-326-9177

Mid Penn
LEGAL SERVICES

Administrative Offices
213-A N. Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
717-234-0492
https://www.midpenn.org/