Our Mission

To provide high quality civil legal advice, representation, and education free of charge to disadvantaged children, families and individuals in Palm Beach County so as to protect their personal safety, enhance their opportunities and living conditions, and promote self-sufficiency.

Administrative Staff

Robert A. Bertisch, Esq., Executive Director
Michael F. Spilane, Director of Finance and Administration
Nicolle Smith, Administrative and Grants Coordinator
Harreen Bertisch, Director of Development
Nicole Mercado, Development Associate
Heidi LaRoy, Marketing Associate
Justine Cupo, Fiscal and Grants Supervisor
Sarah Doran, Fiscal and Grants Manager
Marie Zooker, Fiscal Assistant
Pat James, Senior Legal Secretary
Janie Chavaz, Receptionist/Intake Specialist
Yarly Feijoo, Receptionist/Intake Specialist
Yapara Espinal, Receptionist/Intake Specialist

When no one else can help, where do you turn?

OUR PROGRAMS

Community Outreach

Low Income Taxpayer Clinic
Resolves conflicts between the IRS and taxpayers as well as providing assistance to English second language taxpayers.

Michael Bascgalupi, Project Manager/Attorney
Rick Collier, Taxpayer Advocate

Non-Profit Legal Assistance Project
Provides in-house legal services to non-profit agencies serving Palm Beach County.

John Foley, In-House Counsel
Ana Casey, Human Resources Generalist

Pro Bono Project
Enlists over 2500 private attorneys in Palm Beach County who assist Legal Aid in providing free legal services for low income individuals.

Kimberly Rommel-Enright, Supervising Attorney
Steve Spaulding, Pro Bono Coordinator
Family Advocacy

Domestic Violence Project
Provides representation for victims of abuse or domestic violence at injunction hearings and in divorce and separation matters where appropriate.
Kathryn Olesky, Supervising Attorney
Britney Gutin, Staff Attorney
Ramona Hupp, Staff Attorney
Alison St. John, Paralegal

Family Law Project
Provides services in dissolution of marriage matters to victims of domestic violence where child custody is an issue and services in adoption, visitation and support matters.
Ross Baer, Supervising Attorney
Angelia Patterson, Staff Attorney
Jennifer Westen, Paralegal

Elder Advocacy

Elder Law Project
Provides legal assistance to individuals over 60 years of age with an emphasis on abuse and exploitation matters.
Tequisha Myles, Supervising Attorney
Melva Harris-Roiz, Staff Attorney
Georgene Eisenberg, Paralegal
Frances McNair, Paralegal
Pearlie Moore, Paralegal

Public Guardianship
Provides guardianship services to indigent, adjudicated incapacitated elderly without family or friends to assist them.
Rena Taylor, Supervising Attorney
Libby Spillane, Paralegal
Rabin Armogan, Social Worker
Diane Charette, Social Worker
Kathy Morakes, Social Worker
Stephanie Lewis, Financial Manager

Health Advocacy

Coverage to Care Legal Initiative
Provides community education and outreach related to the Affordable Care Act and private utilization of health plans in order to improve consumers’ access to and utilization of health care coverage.
Vicki Tucci Krusel, Supervising Attorney
Anna Veguez, Paralegal

Medical Legal Partnership Project
Provides legal services to address the unmet needs of low income and/or uninsured patients of Federally Qualified Health Clinics in Palm Beach County that contribute to their health and well-being.
John Foley, Supervising Attorney
Juan Medolla, Staff Attorney
Christina Russo, Staff Attorney
Lisa Santos, Paralegal

Ryan White Legal Project
Provides free legal services to indigent individuals infected with HIV/AIDS. The areas emphasized are employment, health insurance, Social Security disability, Medicare/ Medicaid and advanced directives.
John Foley, Supervising Attorney
Stephanie Carden, Staff Attorney
Colin White, Staff Attorney
Sandra Vines, Paralegal

Individual Rights Advocacy

Children’s Advocacy

Children’s Healthcare Advocacy Project
Provides direct and co-representation as well as systemic advocacy to promote access to healthcare by overcoming obstacles in the rapidly changing and complex Medicaid programs to ensure foster children receive necessary health benefits.
James Walsh, Supervising Attorney
Toni Pollard, Staff Attorney

Educational Advocacy Project
Provides systemic advocacy, litigation and legal representation to ensure that K-12 public school students receive equal educational opportunities.
Melissa Duncan, Supervising Attorney
Shahar Pasch, Supervising Attorney
Erica Sonn, Staff Attorney
Alex St. Pierre, Staff Attorney
Tatum Coutee, Paralegal

Foster Children’s Project
Provides representation to children in the foster care system, seeking to reunite them, when appropriate, with their parents or prepare them for adoption placement, ensuring a safe and stable family environment in a timely manner.
John Walsh, Supervising Attorney
James Walsh, Supervising Attorney
Jorge Anton, Staff Attorney
Sarah Cohen, Staff Attorney
Jennifer Gardner, Staff Attorney
Amy Genet, Staff Attorney
Susan Hendricks, Staff Attorney
Kirsten Herrdon, Staff Attorney
Elaine Martens, Staff Attorney
Kelly Moore-Bertsch, Staff Attorney
Tim Stevens, Staff Attorney
Maisa Wells, Staff Attorney
Kelly Easton, Permanency Planner
Nicole Schoepf, Permanency Planner
Tasha Evans, Permanency Planner
Jannette Hernandez, Paralegal
Jessica Singer, Paralegal
Karen Verner, Paralegal
Rachel Ware, Paralegal
Paul Munroe, Systems Administrator/IT Manager
Ben Willis, Database Administrator/IT Support
Scott Easton, Facilities Manager

Juvenile Advocacy Project
Represents children up to age 18 in Juvenile Court, Family Court, Probate Court and also before the School Board of Palm Beach County and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), to help access appropriate treatment and/or placement for youngsters with emotional, developmental or physical disabilities.
Bill Booth, Supervising Attorney
Allyson Gaiser, Staff Attorney
Drew Hanley, Staff Attorney
Nazi Sommez Matt, Staff Attorney
Cassandra Ward, Staff Attorney
Christine Jagernauth, Paralegal
Dawn Lang, Paralegal

Relative Caregivers Project
Provides legal assistance to relative caregivers (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) raising minor children. The project provides advocacy in custody, guardianship and adoption matters as well as with education, housing and benefits issues.
Judith Megdal-Mack, Supervising Attorney
Angela Bradford, Paralegal

Children’s Health and Immigration Project
Provides legal assistance to non-citizen children in order to, 1) increase their access to health and medical care, and 2) to achieve family stability for those at risk of abuse, neglect or abandonment.
Shane O’Meara, Supervising Attorney
Maryam Kassaei, Staff Attorney
Laura Rivera, Paralegal

Consumer Advocacy Unit
Provides legal services to protect consumers’ income and assets and ensure their financial stability dealing with issues such as auto loans, pay day loans, credit card debt, bankruptcy, mortgage loan modification, rental security deposit, garnishment, scams and student loans.
Tequisha Myles, Supervising Attorney
Andrew Batog, Staff Attorney
Denise Mutamba, Staff Attorney
Angela Smith, Paralegal

Fair Housing Project/Mortgage Foreclosure Defense Project
The Fair Housing Project provides community outreach, education, advocacy and enforcement activities regarding fair housing law so that no one in Palm Beach County is denied housing based on race, color, national origin, gender, disability, marital status, familial status, age and/or sexual orientation.
The Mortgage Foreclosure Defense Project provides services to victims of predatory lending schemes, truth in lending violations, foreclosure rescue scams, and unfair and deceptive trade practices.
Tequisha Myles, Supervising Attorney
Rick Collier, Fair Housing Advocate
Rachel Bentley, Staff Attorney
Fair Housing Advocate
Latrice Dean, Staff Attorney
Frances McNair, Paralegal
Amanda Kleinrock, Staff Attorney
Carlon Smith, Testing Coordinator/ Investigator

Guardian Advocacy Project
Provides services for disabled youth aging out of foster care and individuals under 60 who have a developmental disability and are without family or friends to care for them.
Rena Taylor, Supervising Attorney
Jessica Kelson, Social Worker

Immigrant Advocacy Project
Provides legal services to immigrants applying for lawful permanent residence, with a focus on noncitizen victims of domestic violence and dependent immigrant children, and community education in the area of immigration and nationality law.
Shane O’Meara, Supervising Attorney
Ana Hurtado, Paralegal

Wage Dispute Project
Serves all victims of wage dispute resulting from wages owed by their employers, either due to non-payment, underpayment or misclassification.
John Foley, Supervising Attorney
Lance Cornick, Staff Attorney
Erica Sonn, Staff Attorney
Ana Casey, Intake Specialist