



King County

Department of Community and Human Services

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2012 – 2017 Veterans and Human Services Levy Activity 1.5.B Veterans Legal Assistance Program

1. Goal

Increase self-sufficiency for veterans and vulnerable populations

2. Strategy

The Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan (SIP) set a goal of “Supporting veterans and their families to build stable lives and strong relationships” providing legal assistance to at-risk and homeless veterans to reduce barriers to housing, employment, and self-sufficiency.

3. Activity 1.5.B Veterans Legal Assistance Program

Activity 1.5.B Veterans Legal Assistance Program described below is one of three activities funded under Activity 1.5 Veterans Justice.

4. Service Needs, Populations to be Served, and Promotion of Equity and Social Justice

a) Service Needs

Veterans may encounter barriers as they seek housing, employment, and other resources that lead to or enhance self-sufficiency. Those barriers can include the need for civil legal interventions.

b) Populations to be Served

The Veterans Legal Assistance program is funded to serve veterans, other military personnel and their family members who qualify for services provided by the King County Veterans' Program and the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs. Eligibility is for King County residents who provide a discharge certificate, verifiable documentation of honorable military service, or documentation of being a family member of a veteran or other military personnel.

c) Promotion of Equity and Social Justice

The Equity and Social Justice Ordinance requires King County to consider the impacts of its policies and activities on its efforts to achieve fairness and opportunity for all people, particularly for people of color, low-income communities and people with limited English proficiency. The King County Equity Impact Review Tool available online at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity/toolsandresources.aspx> provides a list of the determinants of equity that may be affected by your activity. Evaluate your activity's impact by responding to the following questions:

i) Will your activity have an impact on equity?

The program is designed to serve veterans, other military personnel, and their family members who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

ii) What population groups are likely to be affected by the proposal? How will communities of color, low-income communities or limited English proficiency communities be impacted?

Veterans, other military personnel, and their family members are represented by the spectrum of diversity in King County. Veterans are the first priority for this program, followed by eligible family members of veterans, and then eligible other military personnel, and finally their families.

iii) What actions will be taken to enhance likely positive impacts on these communities and mitigate possible negative impacts?

Outreach plans and collaborative working relationships with other agencies and organizations serving veterans will be developed during the program, with the goal of locating clients in need of legal advocacy and assistance. In addition, training and internship programs on issues and potential situations unique to veterans, military personnel, and their families are offered to legal staff in order to enhance their understanding and ability to appropriately serve this population.

5. Activity Description

The purpose of the Veterans Legal Assistance Program is to provide legal help to clients at risk of homelessness. This help can include, but is not limited to the following:

- a) Assistance with rental housing application denials and evictions;
- b) Veterans Administration and public benefits applications and denials;
- c) Child Support modifications;
- d) Professional and Drivers' license suspensions and revocations;
- e) Sealing and vacating criminal convictions; and
- f) Providing advice and assistance with other veterans' civil legal problems that are a barrier to housing, employment, and self-sufficiency.

Clients may receive the assistance listed above at the Northwest Justice Offices, or they may be referred to organizations that are collaborating with the program. Examples of these

collaborating organizations include, but are not limited to: the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, the Washington Department of Veteran Affairs, and the King County Veterans Program.

The term “collaboration”, as used in this program, also refers to working with local firms and bar associations to promote pro bono attorney recruitment, training, mentoring, case referral, placement, and data collection efforts. In addition, the program works with Washington State law schools to develop internship programs and law student clinics that will provide legal services for veterans.

The 2012 contract is with the Northwest Justice Project. The Veterans Legal Assistance program initially began as a one year fellowship AmeriCorps project that was one of ten such fellowships across the United States.

6. Funds Available

The 2012 Service Improvement Plan identified the following allocations for this activity.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Veterans Levy	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Human Services Levy						
Total	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000

A total of \$20,000 is available in 2012 to implement this activity. Additional funds will be available annually through 2017 based on the activity’s performance.

7. Evidence-based or Promising Practices

Information not available.

8. Service Partnerships

The program design includes outreach and referrals to other agencies and organizations that serve veterans, military personnel, and their families. Those organizations include the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, King County Veterans Program, the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, and local Veterans Services Officers connected with the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, or American Veterans. In addition, collaborations are ongoing with local law firms, bar associations and Washington State law schools in order to train legal professionals on the unique needs of military-involved clients.

9. Performance Measures

The following performance measures were identified by the Levy’s Evaluation Team.

Objectives	Service Outputs/ Measures	Most Recent Performance	2012 Target(s)	Data Source
Engagement/ Assessment	Number of persons assessed for level of legal assistance needed	262 (Sept 2010 – June 2011)	264	Report Card- Services
	Number of cases referred to other appropriate social services, legal aid services, pro bono attorneys	77 (Sept 2010 – June 2011)	212	Report Card- Outcomes
Stabilization/Crisis Resolution	Number of civil legal cases successfully resolved	172 (Sept 2010 – June 2011)	58	Report Card - Outcomes
System Resources/ Capacity Building	Number of trainings to attorneys and case managers		4	Report Card - Services