



# Florida Legal Services, Inc.

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An Overview



# Mission and Values

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Florida Legal Services (FLS) is a statewide leader in advancing economic, social, and racial justice. We advocate for poor, vulnerable, and hard to reach people through impact litigation, legislative and administrative advocacy, education, and strategic partnerships.

As an organization, FLS is guided by the following values in all our work:

- **Equal Access to Justice** - We believe in the fundamental right of all people, including the poor, the most vulnerable, and the hardest to reach, to have equal access to justice under the law
- **Respect and Dignity** - We engage our clients with respect and dignity and involve them as full participants in resolving their legal problems
- **Collaboration** - We build productive and innovative partnerships both within and beyond the legal community to effectively and strategically resolve our clients' legal problems and increase opportunities for low-income and vulnerable communities
- **Community Empowerment** - We empower our client communities by inviting them to determine their own social justice goals and providing advocacy tools to help craft solutions to community problems
- **Systemic Change** - We strategically focus our advocacy to maximize impact, and to reform systems and policies that perpetuate racial and economic injustice and create barriers to opportunity

# Our Projects

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Florida Legal Services advocates for vulnerable populations and their whole legal needs. Our attorneys practice in all of Florida's state and federal courts and provide legal help with a wide variety of issues faced by Florida's low-income and vulnerable populations, including:

- Low-wage earners and disenfranchised job seekers
- Immigrant children separated from their families
- People in need of health access
- Survivors of crimes, including domestic violence and human trafficking
- Vulnerable seniors
- People seeking safe, fair, and affordable housing
- Adults and children detained, jailed or imprisoned in federal, state and local institutions
- Immigrant families and migrant workers
- People facing discrimination based on race, color, religion, disability, national origin, familial status, criminal history, history of domestic violence, gender identity, or sexual orientation

# Our Projects

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Florida Legal Services attorneys work in specialized projects that deal with different areas of law and/or populations in need of legal assistance. Our current projects include:

- **Economic Opportunity Project**
  - Safety Net benefits for low-income and other vulnerable populations
- **Eviction Prevention Project**
  - Statewide Eviction Legal Helpline
- **Immigrant & Migrant Rights Project**
  - Unaccompanied Immigrant Children
  - Humanitarian based immigration relief for victims of crime
  - Migrant and seasonal farmworkers and temporary H-2A and H-2B workers
- **Fair and Affordable Housing Project**
  - Fair Housing education and outreach
  - Assistance with housing discrimination complaints

# Our Projects (cont'd)

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- Florida Institutional Legal Services Project
  - Incarcerated Survivors of Sexual Violence Project
  - Florida Manual for Incarcerated Parents
  - Reentry Information Packets
  - Community Toolkit for Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline
- Survivor Advocacy Project
  - Domestic Violence Legal Hotline
  - Human Trafficking Survivors
  - Haitian LEP Crime Victims
- Children's Advocacy Project
  - Strategic litigation and legislative and administrative advocacy to advance the rights of children and youth
- Children's Health Project/Connecting Kids to Coverage
  - Assistance for families and pregnant women applying for healthcare coverage through Florida's KidCare and Medicaid programs

# Our Operations

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Florida Legal Services is a statewide nonprofit law firm that serves low-income and other vulnerable populations. As a primarily grant-funded organization, we utilize the following strategies to reduce organizational administrative costs while continuing to provide high-quality legal services to our clients:

- Hybrid Work - FLS attorneys and advocates work remotely and from our physical office locations. FLS has had a presence in Alachua County for many years. Our office in Jonesville has been in operation for 15 years.
- Use of Cloud-Based Technology - FLS has integrated the use of cloud-based systems throughout our program, including our legal case management system, phone system, accounting software, and office suite. Cloud-based systems provide a number of advantages that reduce administrative costs and increase the efficiency of our services, including:
  - Improved accessibility to case files and other documents from anywhere with an internet connection;
  - Increased collaboration between staff through the use of shared documents and video conferencing;
  - Greater security through enhanced security features such as encryption and multi-factor authentication;
  - Greater flexibility of systems that allows us to scale our operations up and down as needed without having to make costly investments in hardware or physical infrastructure
- Paperless Office - FLS stores all organization and client documentation, with the exception of some original client documents, in cloud-based systems. This eliminates the need for costly printing, copying, and storage of paper documents, and provides us easy access to all documents via an electronic search of our storage systems.