



JUSTICEGUIDE



FREE Resources for the Public

Online Info on a Wide Variety of Legal Issues

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Farmworker Receives Representation

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Medicaid Expansion—What You Need to Know

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Domestic Violence Documentary & Awareness
Month 2023 Recap

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Get Legal Help



APPLY ONLINE
legalaidnc.org/apply



Toll-Free HELPLINE
1.866.219.LANC (5262)

Legal Aid NC

Our services are **FREE** to low-income people. To find out if you qualify, apply online or call our helpline.

We can help you with civil legal issues related to

**Housing | Consumer | Employment | Public Benefits
Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault**

We do not handle criminal cases.

Facebook Live Streams & Zoom Clinics

**See pages 4 & 5 for more information
on our FREE, online legal clinics.**

Algunos videos, materiales y eventos en línea están disponibles en español.

CONTACT

PO BOX 28741
RALEIGH, NC 27611







DEVELOPMENT
& DONATIONS
919.436.2340

[LEGALAIDNC.ORG](https://legalaidnc.org)

PRO BONO

[LEGALAIDNC.ORG/PRO-BONO](https://legalaidnc.org/pro-bono)

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GIVE

[LEGALAIDNC.ORG/DONATE](https://legalaidnc.org/donate)



Your gift allows us to provide essential legal services to our clients throughout the state. As an LSC-funded organization, all grants and contributions made to us are subject to the Legal Services Corporation Act, 42 U.S.C. 2996 et seq. and LSC's appropriations. These regulations have been followed by our program since 1976 and ensure that all our funding will be used to meet the most critical legal needs of the most vulnerable North Carolinians.

Please contact us for more information. See lsc.gov.

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Visit legalaidnc.org/clinics for self-help materials that can help citizens address some legal problems without assistance from an attorney.

See pages 4 & 5 for details.

Visit legalaidnc.org/get-help or call 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to apply for brief service and advice on your individual case, as well as to apply for more extensive services.

Access FREE Legal Information

We are a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people to ensure equal access to justice and remove legal barriers to economic opportunity. Every year since 2002, Legal Aid NC has helped thousands of victims of abuse, families on the brink of homelessness, and others in crisis get the justice that they deserve. If you are a North Carolina resident living in poverty, we may be able to help you with issues you face related to housing, education, healthcare, employment, safety from abuse, government benefits, and consumer protection.



In addition to direct representation, we offer three ways for the public to access legal information:

- Regularly held Listen & Learn [webinars](#) on many legal topics (simple divorce, tenant rights, etc.). These sessions are FREE, require advance registration, and can be attended in person or on Facebook Live.
- Intermittent [clinics](#) on additional legal topics.
- A [library of audio, video, and written materials](#) on basic legal issues. These resources give individuals the information they need to handle these issues without paying for an attorney. Please see the next two pages for details.

Facebook Live Streams & Zoom Clinics

Facebook.com/LegalAidNC

Detailed information on Facebook Live streams and Zoom clinics on the topics of interest to you.

Facebook.com/LegalAidNC/live

Recordings of past Facebook Live clinics.

Tinyurl.com/LegalAidNCEvents

Info on upcoming Facebook Live clinics.



LISTEN & LEARN
LEGAL AID OF NORTH CAROLINA



To learn more and register for a webinar, visit: legalaidnc.org/listen&learn.

Or, scan the QR code above with your smart device to register.



Regularly Scheduled Topics for Online Listen & Learn Sessions

- Simple Divorce
- Child Custody
- Criminal Record Expunction
- Tenant Rights
- Health Care Power of Attorney & Living Wills
- Social Security Disability
- SNAP 101
- Medicaid Eligibility



Intermittent Topics for Online Clinics (DAYS/TIMES VARY)

- Domestic Violence
- Housing
- Disaster Relief
- Unemployment Benefits
- Remote Notarization
- Education Rights
- And More!

You can learn how to handle certain basic legal issues without hiring an attorney. Our regularly scheduled Listen & Learn sessions and intermittent clinics provide guidance, support, and necessary paperwork. Webinars and clinics provide general information only.

If you need help specific to your case, call us toll-free at 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to apply for services.

100+ Videos on Legal Topics Available

Our videos are maintained in two archives:

[YouTube.com/LegalAidNC](https://www.youtube.com/LegalAidNC)

Find playlists of videos on certain topics.

[LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library](https://www.LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library)

Access an alphabetical list of the legal topics on which detailed information is available.

In addition to our online clinics, we offer more than 100 videos on a wide variety of legal topics, such as foreclosure and consumer rights.

Algunos recursos están disponibles en español.



[YouTube.com/LegalAidNC](https://www.youtube.com/LegalAidNC)

Videos of online presentations are posted to our YouTube Channel, so you can view them 24/7. Videos provide information on both your legal rights and Legal Aid NC services. You can access 20 videos on housing alone; other topics include the following:

- Senior Law
- Tribal Law
- Motor Vehicle Law
- Medicaid Appeals
- COVID-19
- Racial Inequality

Algunos videos están disponibles en español.



[LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library](https://www.LegalAidNC.org/Self-Help-Library)

The library provides access to self-help videos with extensive information on the following topics:

- Advance Child Tax Credit Payments
- Consumer Rights
- Criminal Record Expunction
- Disaster Relief
- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Assault
- Education
- Employment
- Health Insurance
- Housing

Also available in the library is "A Guide to Small Claims Court," a 57-page downloadable booklet that explains how to fill out the right forms, prepare for trial, handle the trial, and follow through on the judge's decision.



**LANC
AT A
GLANCE**

**WE ARE THE
3RD LARGEST LAW FIRM
IN NORTH CAROLINA**



Legal Aid NC
coordinates 15 Special Projects
that focus on unique client
populations & special areas of law.

Legal Services Corporation (LSC) recently awarded \$4.35M to our Disaster Relief Project to support the delivery of legal services to low-income people impacted by severe weather events in our state.



**In 2022,
1 in 3 of our clients
reported an annual
income of \$10K
or less.**



**Our helpline
currently
receives 359K
calls annually
from residents
seeking help.**



**6,669 Domestic Violence
Protective Orders were filed
or enforced in 2022 with
our support.**

Legal Aid NC and Farmworker Justice Represent a Farmworker in an Unpaid Wages and Human Trafficking Suit

Represented by the Farmworker Unit (FWU) of Legal Aid NC and Farmworker Justice, a farmworker filed suit against employers in Eastern North Carolina in July 2023. Defendants Lamm Farms, LLC, Alvarado's Harvesting, LLC, and others are accused of human trafficking, fraudulent inducement of employment, breach of contract, and unlawful retaliation, as well as state and federal minimum and overtime wage violations.

The plaintiff, farmworker Axel Campos Arroyo, is seeking actual and punitive damages. In 2022, Lamm Farms and their farm labor contractor, Alvarado's Harvesting, LLC recruited him to pick and harvest crops in Bailey, North Carolina on an H-2A temporary work visa. Axel alleges he and his coworkers worked more than 60 hours a week under constant threat of deportation and harm to their family members.

Axel alleges he and his coworkers worked more than 60 hours a week under constant threat of deportation and harm to their family members.

Labor traffickers frequently utilize recruitment practices that involve deception and illegal fees, trapping workers into debt, and threats related to immigration status. The plaintiff alleges that he and his coworkers never received the wages they were required to be paid, subject to the United States Department of Labor's H-2A visa regulations. The plaintiff was also forced to pay the recruiter and supervisor hired by Lamm Farms for his travel to North Carolina.

The complaint states that Lamm Farms and other defendants confiscated the plaintiff's and the other workers' passports and did not provide them with details on the locations where they would be working. After Axel escaped his employer-controlled housing in the middle of the night, the defendants repeatedly called and texted him, threatening to have him arrested and deported to Mexico.

Farmworkers that have experienced issues in North Carolina and who have questions about their rights can call FWU's confidential hotline at 919.856.2180.

Legal Aid of North Carolina's FWU is a statewide project that provides high-quality civil legal services to address the special legal needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in our state. We focus on representing H-2A and other farmworkers like Axel Campos Arroyo with employment and civil rights matters.

Adults ages 19 through 64 earning up to 138% of the federal poverty line (for example, singles earning about \$20,000/year or families of three earning about \$34,000/year) may be eligible.



Starting on December 1, 2023, North Carolina is expanding who can get Medicaid. You may be able to get health care coverage through Medicaid even if you didn't qualify before. Some non-U.S. citizens can get coverage through Medicaid.

According to the NC Medicaid Division of Health Benefits of the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS): Adults ages 19 through 64 earning up to 138% of the federal poverty line (for example, singles earning about \$20,000/year or families of three earning about \$34,000/year) may be eligible. Current beneficiaries with full Medicaid coverage will not see any changes.

If you have internet access, visit epass.nc.gov online (ePASS) to apply for Medicaid. Applications submitted online may be processed faster. You can also apply in person by visiting your local Department of Social Services (DSS). Or, call your DSS office or mail the paper application available at ncgov.servicenow.com.

The processing time for applications can be up to 45 days. You will receive a letter in the mail that will tell you if you are approved or denied. Your authorized representatives will receive the same communication.

If you're eligible for Medicaid benefits, the healthcare services are comprehensive and include primary care, hospital services, maternity and postpartum care, vision and hearing, dental/oral health care, prescription drugs, behavioral health, and more. Medicaid will pay for your doctor visits, yearly check-ups, emergency care, mental health, medical-related devices, and other services. There is no monthly fee and copays are never more than \$4.

Legal Aid NC represents people in cases involving denial, termination, reduction, or overpayment of benefits in many federal and state programs, including Medicaid.

Visit facebook.com/LegalAidNC for FREE Listen & Learn Online Clinics on Medicaid Rights and Eligibility.

Legal Aid NC Toll-Free Helpline: 1.866.219.LANC (5262)

8:30 AM–1:30 PM, Monday–Friday

5:30 PM–8:30 PM, Monday & Thursday

If You're Told You're Not Eligible for Medicaid or Your Medicaid Is Canceled

If you have received a letter from your local DSS that your Medicaid has been denied, canceled, or reduced, you can ask for an appeal. Follow these steps:



Contact your local social services agency right away. You only have 60 days, or less than 2 months, to appeal your canceled Medicaid. If you ask for a hearing within 10 days of receiving your letter, you can continue to receive benefits until the first hearing decision is made. Find your local social services agency at ncdhs.gov/localDSS.

Request a hearing. To start the process, call 877.201.3750 or visit ncmedicaidombudsman.org and click "Get Help." The NC Medicaid Ombudsman may also be able to help you with getting approval for medication or coverage for medical treatment, getting to a medical appointment, understanding a Medicaid notice or bill you've received, or answering questions about the Medicaid complaint or appeal process.

For free help requesting a hearing, contact Legal Aid NC's tollfree helpline:

866.219.LANC (5262). If you live in Mecklenburg County, call Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy: 704.376.1600. Pisgah Legal Services serves people living in these counties: Avery, Buncombe, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, and Yancey; call 800.489.6144.

If You Don't Qualify for Medicaid

If you don't qualify for Medicaid, there are other possible options for health-care coverage. You may qualify for low-cost health coverage offered on HealthCare.gov (also referred to as "the Marketplace," "Obamacare," or "Affordable Care Act [ACA]" plans). You can get FREE unbiased help finding quality, affordable health insurance from the NC Navigator Consortium at ncnavigator.net.

Legal Aid NC leads the Consortium, a statewide network of federally qualified health insurance navigators. Visit ncnavigator.net or call 1.855.733.3711 (toll-free) to schedule an appointment to receive help in person, by phone, or by Zoom. If you lost health care coverage, you may qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.

If you can't afford any health plan and don't qualify for coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), you can get low-cost health care at a nearby community health center. Visit healthcare.gov/community-health-centers to locate a community health center near you. How much you pay depends on how much you make. The centers are located in urban and rural areas and provide prenatal care, baby shots, general primary care, and referrals to specialized care that includes help with mental health, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS.

In October, Legal Aid NC released a new documentary titled *Beyond Fear* as part of our 2023 DV Awareness Month efforts. The 30-minute film tells the stories of three women who found freedom from DV with our help and support. Screenings were held throughout the state. To view the film online, visit [YouTube.com/legalaidnc](https://www.youtube.com/legalaidnc) and type "Beyond Fear" to the right of the magnifying glass in the navigation bar (below the "Subscribe" button).



"*Beyond Fear* highlights the crucial role played by advocates and lawyers in helping survivors navigate the complex legal system and find their path to safety and healing," says Helen Hobson, Chief Communications Officer. "Our heartfelt gratitude to survivors Amy, Aracely, and Gina for sharing their stories. Your strength will undoubtedly inspire countless others."

To help empower survivors and their allies, Legal Aid NC launched a new awareness campaign in October 2023 called *Breaking the Silence: Abuse Affects Us All*. Resources included an interactive website (stopthecycle.org) with information specific to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse. Legal Aid NC provides legal assistance to abuse victims regardless of income or immigration status.

"We're committed to compelling, creative statewide outreach to increase awareness of the services available for survivors through Legal Aid NC," Helen adds.

"Domestic violence is on the rise throughout the state of North Carolina," says TeAndra Miller, Project Director for Legal Aid NC's statewide Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative. "Studies show that legal intervention is the most important factor in breaking the cycle of violence."

There is hope. There is help.

If you or someone you know is being abused:

Visit tinyurl.com/legalaidncevents

for upcoming Facebook Live clinics that are free and open to the public.

Visit legalaidnc.org/topic/domestic-violence-and-sexual-assault for written resources and informational videos.

Call the Legal Aid of NC Helpline toll-free at 1.866.219.LANC (5262) to apply for free assistance. If you have filed for a protective order in court and need advice or representation at an upcoming hearing, we may be able to help.



Innovation Lab Staff Are Increasing Access to Justice in North Carolina

Every year, Legal Aid of NC handles thousands of civil legal aid cases for low-income North Carolinians—but the need is far greater than we and other nonprofit service providers can meet. We must develop more cost-effective ways to deliver effective legal help, especially in rural areas of our state. These new solutions often involve technology.



Fast Facts about the Lab:

- We're the first Legal Services Innovation Lab in the country.
- We're striving to revolutionize the legal landscape by enhancing the delivery of legal services, expanding access to justice, and combating inequities in underserved rural communities.
- We aim to make a lasting impact on individuals and communities that often face barriers in accessing legal assistance.
- We champion collaboration, fresh approaches, and technological advancements.
- We're collecting more, higher-quality data on legal needs in our state and using these data-driven insights to improve our service offerings, particularly in sparsely populated areas.
- We share what we learn with other legal services organizations so they can adapt it for use in their own communities.

Our first focus is modernizing client intake. We're making improvements to our Helpline, and this work is focused on four key areas:

1. Expanding the entry points to our helpline so that people in need can engage with us by texting, using the web, and connecting with us through our community partners.
2. Modernizing our call center technology.
3. Deepening our ties with other legal service organizations to make higher-quality referrals for people we're unable to help directly.
4. Identifying process improvements to smooth the adoption of new technologies and tools.

For more information about the Lab, visit legalaidnc.org/innovation-lab. We want to hear from people who are directly impacted by our work. Please email your questions and comments to Lancinnovates@legalaidnc.org.

Help Us Welcome Our New Chief Diversity Officer!

At Legal Aid NC, our commitment to DEIAB is central to our mission. We strive to integrate an understanding of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, & Belonging into every aspect of our work.

We're excited to welcome our new Chief Diversity Officer, Demetrius Edwards, MPA. Demetrius previously held positions with the City of Raleigh, Youth Empowered Solutions (YES!), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



"My role at Legal Aid NC requires me to be an equity and inclusion strategist," says Demetrius. "I'm responsible for embedding equity across all policies, programs, and procedures for the organization."

Demetrius works collaboratively with staff in all areas of the firm to ensure that consistent inclusion initiatives are in place. Using the best practices of normalizing, organizing, and operationalizing, he is striving to incorporate DEIAB principles and practices throughout the culture and framework of Legal Aid NC.

"Effective DEIAB requires self-reflection, critical thinking, and a consistent and collective effort to foster a more equitable environment," he says. "I am committed to creating a diversified and inclusive workforce by achieving equitable access to justice for all, removing legal barriers to economic opportunities, and strengthening ties to our surrounding communities."

DEIAB is essential to creating a highly functioning workplace. Much more than a trend or buzzword, DEIAB is a movement that is creating environments where all people have equitable opportunities regardless of their background.

You can email Demetrius at DemetriusE@legalaidnc.org with questions or comments regarding our DEIAB initiatives.

Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence

When she found out she was expecting her second child, Nicole decided it was time to leave her abusive relationship. She wanted to start over and make sure that she and her kids would be safe. However, when she tried to leave her abusive relationship, the violence only became worse.

Her abuser consistently stalked her, destroyed her property, and physically assaulted her. To make matters worse, Nicole's case against her abuser was not progressing in court, leaving her unprotected.



Afraid and unable to afford court fees, Nicole called Legal Aid NC for help. Our advocate stood by Nicole, ensuring that her case was heard without additional unnecessary delays. Legal Aid NC was able to secure a domestic violence protective order for Nicole, making sure that she and her children can live safely and securely.

Protecting the Rights of Farmworkers

About 150,000 migrant farm workers and their families work in our state each growing season. The average farmworker makes \$8,000 per year—well below the federal poverty line and significantly less than the average income for a North Carolinian. They often live in unsafe, overcrowded, housing with poor sanitation and are frequently denied health insurance and workers' compensation.



Legal Aid's Farmworker's Unit partners with other nonprofits, government agencies, and medical clinics to address workers' needs and provide crucial referrals to other services. We assist with immigration issues and help farmworkers secure unfairly withheld wages. In addition to helping farmworkers escape hazardous work and living conditions, we help them gain protection from fraudulent and illegal hiring practices. We also provide information about housing, health care, and employment rights.

One farmworker's story: "I'm a migrant worker, I love fieldwork, and Legal Aid really helped me when things were bad. In 2011, Hurricane Irene came, and it was a disaster. The watermelons were ruined, and we couldn't finish our work. We went to the unemployment office, but we couldn't get unemployment.... Legal Aid found out that our boss said we weren't employees. That's why unemployment couldn't process my application. Legal Aid helped me a lot with the paperwork, all the W-2s and necessary papers, to get me named as an employee. Eventually I did get my unemployment for that ruined season."

Pro Bono Opportunities

**Be a Pro Bono Hero
for North Carolinians
in Need!**

Thousands of people across our state who cannot afford an attorney are desperate for help. We need you! We offer pro bono programs to fit all schedules, interests, and levels of experience. You can engage in meaningful service remotely or in person.

Not an attorney or paralegal? No problem! The breadth and depth of our services means we often need the expertise of other professionals. We welcome all who are interested to join our mission for justice.

"We want our pro bono programs to meet our clients' most pressing legal needs while also meeting yours," says Allison Constance, Director of Pro Bono Programs. "We want to know what motivates you to volunteer, what you need to succeed, and how we can meaningfully thank you for your service."

Announcing Pro Bono Go!

We're making it easy to get involved. Pro Bono Go is North Carolina's new one-stop shop for pro bono statewide. You can easily find, sign up for, and share information on a wide variety of pro bono opportunities. You can also create customized email alerts to be delivered to your inbox when new opportunities matching your preferences are posted to the site. You do not need to create an account and or remember a password.

Regardless of your interests—senior law, advocating for children, consumer law, business law, housing stability, assisting immigrants, driver's license restoration, or another area—we have a volunteer opportunity for you. You can search and filter opportunities by keyword, location, practice area, type (e.g., cases, clinics, etc.), and sponsor organization.

The North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center created Pro Bono Go and maintains the website in partnership with Legal Aid NC, Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy, and Pisgah Legal Services.

Visit legalaidnc.org/pro-bono to get details and sign up! You may also contact the team with questions: probono@legalaidnc.org. No matter how you choose to volunteer, our team is dedicated to helping you help our clients.



This season, give hope.

MORE THAN 2 MILLION NORTH CAROLINIANS qualify for our support to protect basic needs like safety and housing. We can help only a fraction due to limited funding. Your donation helps more families and individuals access justice through Legal Aid NC.

\$6K assists survivors of sexual assault and human trafficking with complex, lengthy processes like obtaining visas, jobs, and child custody.

\$3K prevents homelessness and substandard housing conditions through legal advocacy in eviction court.

\$1K helps domestic violence survivors obtain Orders of Protection, child custody, and divorce settlements.

\$500 protects seniors and veterans from the impacts of mortgage and benefits scams that target the vulnerable.

\$250 helps the parents of children with disabilities secure equitable education services.

\$80 provides legal advice to a family in crisis.

**Thank you for
your support!**

Visit legalaidnc.org/donate to give securely online. You can make a one-time or monthly donation. If you prefer to mail a check, the address is Legal Aid NC, PO Box 28741, Raleigh, NC, 27611.

Contact Development Director Missy Hatley at missyh@legalaidnc.org or 919.436.2340 for information about planned giving, giving stock, or donating via your IRA.

We can also provide detailed information regarding *cy pres* funds.

Visit doublethedonation.com/legalaidofnorthcarolina to find out if your employer matches donations or volunteer time.



IF YOU NEED LEGAL ASSISTANCE with one of the following, Legal Aid NC may be able to help:

**Eviction | Utilities | Food Stamps |
Unemployment Benefits | Domestic Violence |
Mortgages and Foreclosure |
Health Insurance Enrollment |**

NEED LEGAL HELP?

**If you need help, call us toll-free:
1.866.219.LANC (5262)
legalaidnc.org**

SUPPORT OUR WORK

**If you are in a position to support
our work, please visit:
legalaidnc.org/donate**

**Legal Aid NC
PO Box 28741
Raleigh, NC 27611**