



- 1) JALA has existed in one form or another since 1937, when a group of attorneys in the Jacksonville Bar banded together to provide legal services to those who could not otherwise afford them.
- 2) In 1973, the program's name changed to JALA, and the program moved into a small house on Church Street. The program at that time had about 8 staff attorneys, as opposed to volunteers.
- 3) The program achieved 501(c)(3) status in 1976. At that time the program had 10 attorneys. By 1979, the program moved into a small building on Hogan Street that is now the First Baptist Adult Services and Missionary Outreach building.
- 4) JALA currently provides legal services to the low-income residents of Duval, Clay, Nassau and St. Johns Counties. JALA maintains three fully staffed offices: The main office in downtown Jacksonville, an office in St. Augustine, and an office in Green Cove Springs.
- 5) JALA served over 12,000 clients and their families in 2011.
- 6) JALA has a staff of 40 attorneys, and a total staff of almost 80.
- 7) At this time, JALA receives approximately 110-150 applications for assistance each week. Due to limited resources JALA is only able to accept approximately 20% of the applications received. Of course that means 80% of the need for legal services for low-income persons in our community goes unmet.
- 8) JALA serves primarily very low-income clients. However, there are grants we receive that do not have income restrictions that allow us to serve persons over 60, and persons with HIV/AIDS, to name a few.

9) JALA serves clients with legal needs in the following areas:

- Child & Youth Advocacy
- Community Counsel (Development of non-profit community programs)
- Consumer Law & Predatory Lending, including Foreclosure Defense
- Elder Law issues, including Medicare
- Employment/Unemployment Law, WAGES issues
- Fair Housing
- Family Law (Child Support enforcement, Advocacy on behalf of victims of Domestic Violence)
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program (Legal services for the deaf population)
- Health and Benefits (Medicaid, SSI)
- Housing Law
- Mental Health Advocacy Project (Advocacy on behalf of mentally ill children and adults. Program founded and supported by Wayne & Pat Hogan through the Hogan Family Foundation)
- Refugee Immigration Project
- Ryan White Project (Advocacy on behalf of persons living with HIV/AIDS)
- Prisoner Re-entry Project (serving recently incarcerated persons reintegrating into society)

10) Contrary to popular belief, JALA does not receive its funding in a lump sum from the Federal government, nor is JALA a program that receives Legal Services Corporation funding. JALA has approximately 60 different funding sources, and competes for funding from the majority of those sources through competitive grants that must be re-applied for on an annual basis. The remainder of JALA's funding is received through private donations and fundraising events.

11) In 2010, the research group Florida TaxWatch studied the impact of legal services on the economy of the State of Florida. According to Florida TaxWatch, the total economic impact of civil legal assistance on the Florida economy is significant:

- ✦ Created over 3,300 jobs in the state economy;
- ✦ Produced \$250 million of output in the state economy;
- ✦ Provided \$297 million of disposable income; and
- ✦ Generated \$4.78 of economic impact for every \$1 spent on legal aid by Federal, State and local governments, the Florida Bar Foundation, grants from community and other foundations, and charitable donations.

*Interested in Volunteering at JALA?
Contact JALA's Assistant Deputy Director*

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at

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THE ECONOMIC IMPACT IN FLORIDA OF CIVIL LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE POOR

FLORIDA TAXWATCH FEBRUARY 2010

TaxWatch Economic Impact Study

In 2010, The Florida Bar Foundation engaged Florida TaxWatch to calculate the economic impact that providing civil legal services to the poor has on the Florida economy. The study was based on the work of Florida legal aid programs in 2008.

Overview of Legal Aid in Florida

Civil legal aid programs in Florida provide a broad array of legal services to Floridians who cannot afford to pay for legal representation. Floridians earning up to 125% of the federal poverty guidelines (e.g. \$27,938 for a family of four) are eligible to receive services from the legal aid programs in Florida. Civil legal aid services are offered by a network of 31 local non-profit organizations, operating in seven regions, serving all 67 counties. Most of the 98,438 legal aid cases in 2008 involved only advice or brief service. Less than nine percent of the legal aid cases actually go to court. Thus, legal aid is unlikely to put much pressure on the court system. In contrast, they provide legal consultation that can avoid further conflict.

Summary of FloridaTaxWatch Study Results

According to Florida TaxWatch, the total economic impact of civil legal assistance on the Florida economy is significant:

- **Created over 3,300 jobs in the state economy (30% related to civil legal assistance employment);**
- **Produced \$250 million of output in the state economy;**
- **Provided \$297 million of disposable income; and,**
- **Generated \$4.78 of economic impact for every \$1 spent on legal aid by Federal, state and local governments, The Florida Bar Foundation, grants from community other foundations, and charitable donations**

The driving factor of this impact is the large amount of Federal funding for legal services in Florida and the large amount of Federal funds flowing into Florida generated by legal aid work. Slightly over 30% of the 3,361 jobs created are related to legal aid employment with the remaining jobs are spread out in numerous other industries in Florida.