

# AUSTIN COMMUNITY LAW CENTER

## 2018 MID-YEAR REPORT

January 1 – June 30, 2018



*Law*



*Community*



*Justice*

[www.AustinCommunityLawCenter.org](http://www.AustinCommunityLawCenter.org)

2221 Hancock Drive, Austin, TX 78756

Tel: 512-596-0226

## Message from the Executive Director

The Austin Community Law Center is a nonprofit law firm. Our mission is to make legal representation radically more affordable, invest in a stronger community, and fight for justice. Our operations include affordable legal services; community-based legal clinics; and policy advocacy.

**In the first half of 2018, we saved our clients \$51,725.22 in legal fees** compared to what they would have paid at market rates. We did it with just **\$6,639.73 in donations**, leveraging donations to provide sliding-scale and free legal services.

Our next step is to expand our staff with a social work program, to provide our clients with more holistic services to meet their basic needs.

But we can't do it without you. Your support is critical for continuing our work.

Sincerely,

*Brian McGiverin*

Brian McGiverin  
Executive Director and Attorney



Brian McGiverin

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# Affordable Legal Services

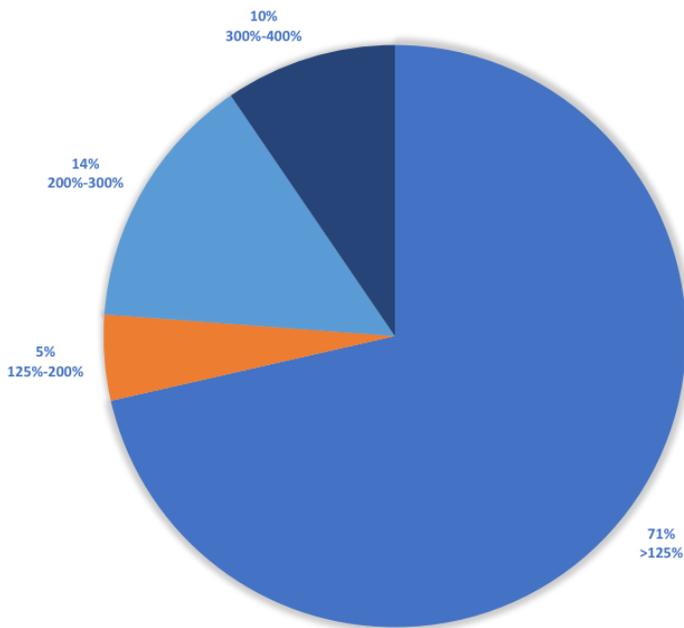
In the first half of 2018, the Austin Community Law Center saved our clients **\$51,725.22** compared to what they would have paid for the same legal services at market rates. We set fees at sliding scale rates based on a client's income and family-size, measured at percentages above the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).

Your income:	Below 125% FPG	125% - 200% FPG	200% - 300% FPG	300% - 400% FPG
Your fee:	\$75/hour	\$100/hour	\$125/hour	\$150/hour

Many of our clients (below 125% FPG) would be income-eligible for free legal services from a legal aid organization but are made ineligible by case type or immigration status.

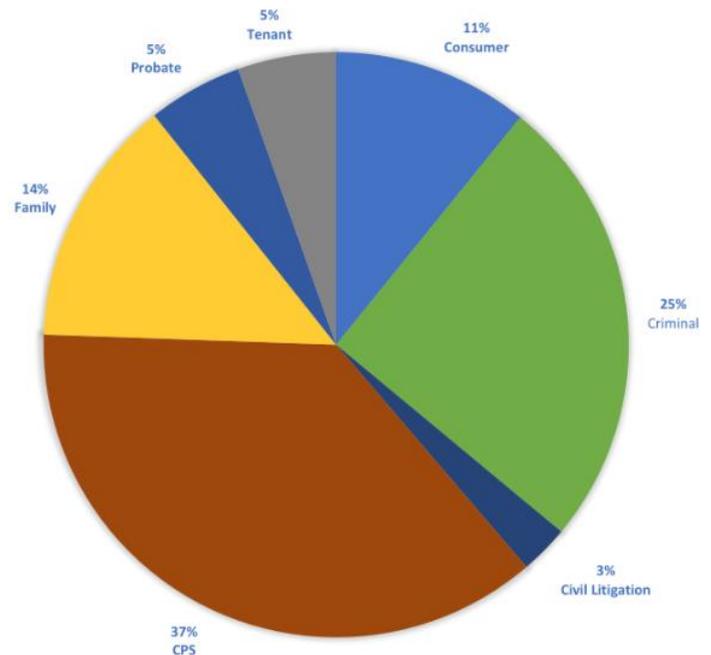
Other clients below 400% FPG are not income-eligible for free services from legal aid but would still struggle to pay market-rate attorney's fees. They fall into a "services gap" that ACLC is bridging with our innovative model, which leverages donations to provide sliding-scale fees for this whole range of clientele.

CLIENT INCOME LEVEL (% POVERTY LINE)



- 71% at or below 125% FPG
- 5% between 125%-200% FPG
- 14% between 200%-300% FPG
- 10% between 300%-400% FPG

SAVINGS BY CATEGORY



- 37% Child Protective Services
- 25% Criminal Defense
- 14% Family Law
- 11% Consumer Law
- 5% Tenant's Rights
- 5% Probate
- 3% General Civil Litigation

# Community-Based Legal Clinics

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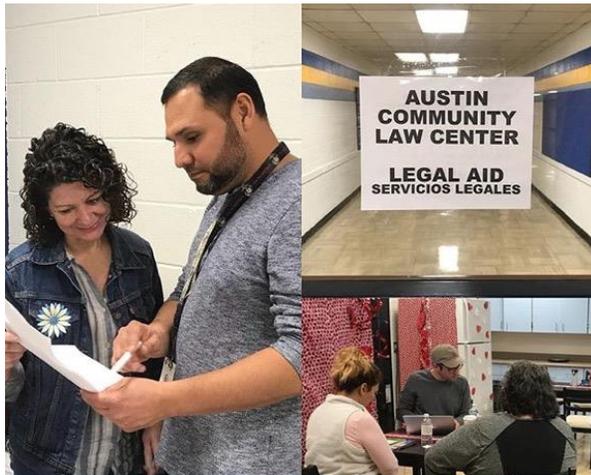
In 2017 and 2018, the Austin Community Law Center has collaborated with social workers at AISD campuses (and the Austin Bar Association's Civil Rights & Immigration Section) to host legal clinics for the parents of school-aged children.

We are improving families' security by executing powers of attorney, advanced designations of guardianship, authorization for nonparent adult caregivers, and wills. Most low-income families don't have these important resources in place, and there are few resources to help satisfy the need.

The legal clinic model leverages volunteers to offer thousands of dollars in value to each family served.



**Burnet Middle School**



**Webb Middle School**

In April 2018, ACLC received a \$5,000 grant from the Austin Bar Foundation to increase the frequency of our legal clinics, to serve more families.

Our next step is to expand our clinics to address a wider set of needs for clients' financial security, such as child support and recovering rental security deposits. These legal services shore up families' financial foundation, which helps them go on to secure other basic needs such as childcare, food, shelter, and education supports.

# Policy Advocacy

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The Austin Community Law Center advocates at the local government level for policies important for low-income people in the legal system.



In 2018, ACLC collaborated with community groups\* to push for improved civilian oversight of police and increased accountability for police misconduct.

\* Including the Austin Justice Coalition, CounterBalance ATX, ACLU of Texas, Black Sovereign Nation, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, Grassroots Leadership, and Communities of Color United for Racial Justice

In late December 2017, the Austin Police Association walked away from an agreement with the City that had controlled most civilian oversight up to that time. ACLC has analyzed the legal framework available to the City for continued civilian oversight of police misconduct, to help ACLC's community partners chart the path forward.

Further, in March 2018, the Austin Police Association sued the City of Austin in an effort to stop the Office of the Police Monitor from performing oversight of police misconduct. ACLC represented the Austin Justice Coalition as *amicus curiae* interveners in the lawsuit, arguing the Office of the Police Monitor was a legal and vital city department.

