

COLUMBIA LEGAL SERVICES
CASE REFERRAL INFORMATION
Updated October 2008

Columbia Legal Services (CLS) represents low-income people and groups with critical civil legal needs and for whom no alternative legal services are available. CLS will consider representation in all areas of critical client need, but is unable to accept all referrals.

Many of CLS's clients are referred by lawyers and community groups who have identified legal problems that seriously affect the basic human needs of poor and vulnerable people. You may wish to refer clients facing the following legal problems on which CLS is currently working:

- **Access to court interpreters** and other court services for persons with limited English skills
- **Rights to public assistance:**
 - Medicaid eligibility for citizens who cannot immediately document their citizenship
 - Medicaid recipients under 21 whose mental health or other medical services have been delayed or denied
 - Families facing full family sanctions in the WorkFirst program
 - GAU (General Assistance Unemployable) benefits for those who were on assistance and employed between July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2008
- **Equal educational opportunity** for children regardless of race, nationality or language
- **Rights of persons in institutions:** conditions of confinement and access to services; alternatives to institutionalization; unlawful discrimination; sentencing and institutional placement; and access to the courts and adequacy of legal representation
- **Rights of foster children**, including the right to a hearing before benefits are reduced and the right to representation in dependency actions
- Legislation to protect consumers in **payday loan transactions**
- Protection of farm workers from **pesticides and other workplace hazards**
- Protecting and expanding the **rights of residential and manufactured/mobile home tenants** to: affordable housing; habitable housing; for-cause eviction; and protection from unfair and deceptive landlord practices
- **Access to transportation:**
 - protection from fraud in auto sales and financing
 - access to auto insurance and driver's licenses
- **Violations of farm worker rights**, including abuses of the H-2A guestworker program
- Protection of low-wage workers from **sexual assault and harrassment**

CLS will also consider referrals in other areas where other legal services organizations cannot provide representation. While CLS accepts some individual cases, it concentrates primarily on cases that affect a large number of low-income people.

Please email CLS at referrals@columbialegal.org if you have a referral, or for more information. In contacting this email address, please be aware that any information you provide is not treated as confidential and does not create an attorney-client relationship.