


HOUSING JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Cleveland's Path to a Right to Counsel



The
Legal Aid Society
of Cleveland
Since 1905

Hazel G. Remesch
Supervising Attorney
(216) 861-5836
hazel.remesch@laslev.org

HOUSING JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Overview


Investing in the community by providing tenants the right to legal counsel.

https://www.youtube.com/user/LegalAidCleveland/vidcos?sort=dd&view=0&shelf_id=0



Evictions in Cleveland

- An average **9,000 evictions** are filed every year.
- In 2018, just **1% -2%** of tenants facing eviction were represented by an attorney.
- Estimated 70% landlords in housing court are represented by an attorney.
- 30% of tenants had a previous eviction filing, 76% of tenants facing eviction are African American women and 45% of the households facing eviction have children under the age of 18.
- More than half of all tenants do not show up in court for their eviction hearing.



Housing Justice Alliance

- **Preliminary Phase:** (Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland– Innovation Mission Fellowship)
 - Research
 - Created an advisory committee
 - Site visits to New York and Washington D.C.
 - Eviction sealing advocacy
 - Advocacy with City Council
 - Study with Case Western Reserve University – “Estimating the Downstream Costs of Evictions on Homelessness and Human Services”
 - Fundraising



Housing Justice Alliance

• **Phase 1 (mid-2019 through 2023)**

Increase legal representation	Eviction Diversion	Community Outreach	Evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• From 2% to 10%• Implemented by Legal Aid• No merit screen• Full legal representation• Volunteer lawyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rent assistance for non payment of rent cases• Partnership organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notice with summons• Help Desk at Housing Court• Continued advocacy with City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent evaluator