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LEGAL AID

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For Immediate Release

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Maryland Legal Aid and Enoch Pratt Free Library Partner to bring Civil Legal Services to Baltimore City Neighborhoods

BALTIMORE, Md. (July 16, 2015) – Maryland Legal Aid is excited to announce a new partnership with Enoch Pratt Free Library to present *Lawyer in the Library*, a community lawyering initiative.

Lawyer in the Library was developed to provide direct civil legal assistance and outreach services to residents in their neighborhoods and to hear from communities about civil legal issues that affect them and their families. **The project kicks off on Wednesday, July 22 at 5:00PM with the first of three, free presentations led by Maryland Legal Aid advocates on various civil legal issues, at the Enoch Pratt Free Library Pennsylvania Avenue branch, 1531 W. North Avenue.** The first presentation will focus on Housing and Landlord/Tenant issues such as foreclosures, evictions, and housing conditions. Participants will learn about their legal rights in the housing arena and will be able to ask questions about their specific housing issues.

Future talks at the Pennsylvania Avenue branch are scheduled for Wednesdays, July 29 and August 26, from 5:00PM – 7:30PM. The topics will be Government Benefits (such as Medical Assistance and Social Security Disability) and Employment Wage Claims on July 29; and Family Law (such as divorce and child custody & visitation) on August 26. The three presentations serve as a prelude to the central component of the project, which will begin in September when Maryland Legal Aid attorneys, paralegals, law students, and volunteer attorneys will spend a few hours each week at the Pennsylvania Avenue branch providing free, brief, one-on-one advice on a variety of civil legal issues.

“The idea to partner with Enoch Pratt Free Library was a natural given their excellent and long-standing reputation in the community as being a resource for information, education, and cultural enrichment,” says Wilhelm H. Joseph, Jr., Maryland Legal Aid Executive Director. “We are committed to building and maintaining an enduring partnership with Enoch Pratt in an effort to increase access to civil legal services for people in all communities.”

All of the presentations are FREE and open to the public. Registration is not required. For more information, contact Frank Natale, Maryland Legal Aid’s Director of Advocacy for Income Security, at (443) 451-2812 or FNatale@mdlab.org.

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About the Partners

Maryland Legal Aid, established in 1911, is a private, non-profit law firm providing free, civil legal services to low-income people statewide. Maryland Legal Aid serves Baltimore City and Maryland’s 23 counties from 12 full-service offices and handles a wide range of legal matters involving family, housing, government benefits, healthcare, elder, education, employment, and consumer law. Through a number of special projects, Maryland Legal Aid also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings, homeowners facing foreclosure, migrant and seasonal farm workers, nursing home and assisted living residents, and veterans seeking benefits and assistance with related legal issues.

Enoch Pratt Free Library, the nation’s first free library system, opened its doors in 1886, the result of the generosity and imagination of businessman and philanthropist Enoch Pratt. Mr. Pratt envisioned a public library where “races, ages, and socio-economic classes mingled and people could educate themselves – without cost,” and his passionate belief continues to guide the organization. Today’s Pratt Library—Baltimore’s public library

and the Maryland State Library Resource Center—consists of the Central Library, an anchor library, 22 branches, two bookmobiles, a jail library, Pratt Centers for Technology Training, and the Regional Information Center. The Library's mission is to provide equal access to information and services that support, empower, and enrich all who pursue knowledge, education, cultural enrichment, and lifelong learning.



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ENOCH PRATT *free* LIBRARY