



**MARYLAND**  
**LEGAL AID**

*Advancing*  
**Human Rights and**  
**Justice for All**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Maryland Legal Aid Receives a \$55,000 Grant from  
The Mental Wellness Foundation, Inc.**

**BALTIMORE, MD., July 27, 2022** – Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is the recipient of a one-year, \$55,000 grant from The Mental Wellness Foundation, Inc. This grant supports MLA’s Prince George’s and Montgomery County offices to provide general legal services to clients who continue to be impacted by the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MLA Chief Attorney Claudine McCullough shared, “mental health and wellness is integral to our lives. The ability to manage stress and overcome a challenge directly impacts the ways in which an individual encounters legal problems and engages with the judicial system. The Mental Wellness Foundation grant recognizes this interrelationship and underscores the unique ways in which the pandemic has added to the pressures of low-income people. We are so grateful for the Foundation’s support. It will allow attorneys and staff to continue the work of seeking positive legal outcomes for clients and advocating for our community’s most underrepresented citizens.”

“This is an important opportunity and partnership. For many of the individuals, families and communities we serve, mental health and wellness are inextricably linked to employment, housing, government benefits, child and family law, intimate partner violence and other legal areas that are central to the free services Maryland Legal Aid provides to the public. We appreciate The Mental Wellness Foundation, Inc. and anticipate that this grant will have an exponentially beneficial impact on the residents of Prince George’s County for years and generations to come,” noted MLA Director of Advocacy for Children and Families, Erica LeMon.

The Mental Wellness Foundation awarded these funds to support MLA’s work in providing free general civil legal services to residents of Prince George’s and Montgomery counties who continue to struggle, in terms of their civil legal needs, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognizing that marginalized, low-income residents in these two counties have been disproportionately hard-hit by the pandemic, the Mental Wellness Foundation provided these generous resources so that MLA legal staff can address and alleviate residents’ civil legal problems, and compliment the work of other

organizations and community partners. This can lead to MLA's clients living mentally and physically healthy lives, free of the stress and fear that civil legal matters can cause. In this way, MLA and the Mental Wellness Foundation can partner to ensure that Montgomery and Prince George's County residents are economically stronger, residing in stable housing, and able to access the public benefits they need to thrive.

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#### **About Maryland Legal Aid**

Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) is a private, non-profit law firm that provides free, civil legal services to people who are in Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties from 12 offices. The firm handles cases involving a wide range of issues, including family, housing, government benefits, healthcare, employment, and consumer law. MLA also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings in 16 jurisdictions. Other vulnerable populations, such as homeowners facing foreclosure, migrant and seasonal farm workers, people with developmental and mental health disabilities, nursing home and assisted living residents, and veterans seeking benefits and assistance with related legal issues also receive representation through special projects. MLA's Community Lawyering Initiative, which includes its Lawyer in the Library program, assists with expunging criminal records to remove barriers to obtaining housing, employment, and child custody through clinics held in libraries, community centers, non-profit organizations, places of worship, schools, healthcare facilities, and other communal places.