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## **Maryland Legal Aid Launches MLAGPT, A Secure Generative AI Platform Built for Civil Legal Services**

**Baltimore, MD** – Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) today announced the official launch of MLAGPT, a secure, internally managed generative artificial intelligence platform designed specifically to support civil legal services. The platform represents a significant step forward in how nonprofit legal organizations can responsibly integrate AI while protecting client confidentiality and strengthening access to justice.

MLAGPT is powered by LibreChat, a model-agnostic AI platform, and is self-hosted within MLA’s secure cloud environment. The system operates under formal Business Associate Agreements with AI providers and a Zero Data Retention policy, ensuring that client information is not stored or used to train external AI models. This privacy-first infrastructure reflects MLA’s core commitment to safeguarding the sensitive information entrusted to it by low-income Marylanders.

**“MLAGPT is not about replacing human connection or judgment,”** said Vicki Schultz, Executive Director of Maryland Legal Aid. **“It is about equipping our staff with a secure tool that reduces administrative burdens, improves efficiency, and lets our advocates focus on the high quality, impactful legal representation our clients and communities need and deserve.”**

**“Maryland Legal Aid’s launch of MLAGPT reflects exactly the kind of thoughtful innovation our legal services ecosystem needs”** said Michelle Siri, Esq., Executive Director of Maryland Legal Services Corporation. **“By developing and sharing innovative tools like this, Maryland Legal Aid is not only strengthening its own work, but also helping to elevate the capacity of providers across the state. Their leadership is**

**creating a model others can learn from and build upon—expanding what’s possible for civil legal services and improving access to justice for low-income Marylanders.”**

**“Technology has the potential to significantly expand access to justice when it is implemented thoughtfully and responsibly,”** said Reena Shah, Executive Director of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission. **“Maryland Legal Aid’s development of MLAGPT reflects a careful balance between innovation and the protection of client confidentiality. Efforts like this can help strengthen the civil legal services system and improve the ability of advocates to serve Marylanders who need legal help the most.”**

## **Designed for Legal Aid Workflows**

Unlike general commercial AI tools, MLAGPT has been tailored to the specific needs of civil legal services organizations. Attorneys and paralegals can use the platform to draft client letters, summarize lengthy case files, brainstorm legal arguments, and translate complex legal language into plain English for clients. Administrative and operations staff can generate internal communications, create training materials, summarize reports, and streamline documentation workflows.

The platform also includes custom “agents” built around recurring legal aid tasks, such as case summaries, rent ledger analysis, and referral support, promoting consistency and quality across offices. By standardizing workflows and reducing repetitive drafting time, MLA expects staff to devote more energy to complex case strategy and client engagement.

## **Security, Transparency, and Accountability**

MLAGPT was developed in alignment with MLA’s AI Executive Vision and Strategy, which emphasizes accessibility, security and control, tailored value for legal aid, and transparency. The platform integrates with MLA’s Single Sign-On system and is managed internally by MLA’s IT team, giving the organization full visibility into how the tool operates.

Training for all staff emphasizes ethical use and mandatory human review. All AI-generated content must be reviewed, verified, and edited by MLA staff before being used in any official capacity. The system also includes clearly communicated limitations, including restrictions on scanned documents, file sizes, and guidance around the use of public web search tools to ensure responsible and secure use.

**“We treat data with the same level of care we bring to legal advocacy,”** said Russ Bloomquist, Program Manager, Senior Full Stack Information Developer at Maryland Legal Aid. **“From day one, our goal was to build a platform that reflects the realities of legal services work. That means strong safeguards, clear policies, and practical functionality that helps staff serve clients more effectively.”**

## **A Model for the Legal Services Sector**

MLAGPT builds on MLA’s earlier AI pilot work and marks the organization’s transition to a modern, scalable environment that can evolve alongside emerging technology. Beyond internal deployment, MLA intends to share lessons learned, workflows, and governance frameworks with peer organizations across the country.

**“Maryland Legal Aid’s willingness to openly share its work made a direct impact on our organization,”** said Shannon Knox, Director, Information Technology, Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc. **“By publishing its implementation approach and lessons learned, MLA gave us a jumpstart that allowed us to build and adapt a solution within our own environment. We’ve since developed additional tools tailored to our intake and case workflows. That kind of peer collaboration accelerates innovation across the legal services community and helps all of us serve clients more effectively.”**

**“Maryland Legal Aid’s work demonstrates how generative AI can be thoughtfully integrated into mission-driven legal help organizations to drive greater impact,”** said Margaret Hagan, Executive Director of the Legal Design Lab at Stanford University. **“Their focus on privacy, governance, and practical use cases offers an important example for other organizations exploring how AI can responsibly support access to justice.”**

As legal services providers nationwide grapple with growing demand and limited resources, MLAGPT demonstrates that innovation and client confidentiality can coexist. By pairing enterprise-grade safeguards with tailored legal aid use cases, MLA aims to contribute to a broader community of practice focused on responsible AI in high-stakes environments.

**“Access to justice requires both compassion and creativity,”** Schultz added. **“If we can responsibly use technology to work smarter, we can reach more people and**

**strengthen the quality of representation we provide. That is what MLAGPT is ultimately about.”**

## **About Maryland Legal Aid**

Established in 1911, Maryland Legal Aid is a statewide nonprofit 501(c)(3) law firm that advocates with and for Marylanders experiencing poverty to achieve equity and social justice through free civil legal services, community collaboration, and systemic change. From its 11 offices across the state and through its many community-based clinics, Maryland Legal Aid helps clients preserve and access safe and affordable housing; maintain custody of their children and be safe from domestic violence; and increase their economic security by defending against consumer debt, including foreclosures and tax sales, removing barriers to employment, and accessing critical income supports such as Medicaid, SNAP, unemployment, and other vital public benefits. In its advocacy, Maryland Legal Aid seeks to change systems that perpetuate poverty and inequity.