



MARYLAND
LEGAL AID

Advancing
Human Rights and
Justice for All

For Immediate Release

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Maryland Legal Aid, Maryland DHS, and Talbot County Government Partner for CARES Legal Services Program

BALTIMORE, Md., (August 12, 2020) - Maryland Legal Aid (MLA), the Maryland Department of Human Services, and the Talbot County Government have partnered to create a new program to assist Talbot County residents who have been impacted by COVID-19. The *Talbot County CARES Legal Services Program* aims to maintain housing and financial stability for impacted individuals, their families, and communities by providing civil legal information and resources, and free civil legal representation.

Supervising Attorney Rachel Wolpert Bitter from MLA's Upper Eastern Shore office in Easton shared, "Talbot County has recognized the increased needs of the community during the COVID-19 crisis, and Maryland Legal Aid is pleased to join in the network of community partners to help provide stability and support to people in need."

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was passed by Congress to provide economic assistance to workers, families, and small businesses, and to preserve jobs. Some of the funds were distributed to states and then to local governments. Talbot County set aside a portion of these funds to provide legal assistance. The funds will be used, in part, to ensure that families are able to avoid evictions should their landlords file complaints against them in the Talbot County District Court.

Through the *Talbot County CARES Legal Services Program*, MLA will provide legal advice, counsel and representation to eligible Talbot County residents facing civil legal challenges caused and/or exacerbated by the COVID-19 health crisis. The Program can also assist those who need legal assistance due to a situation arising from COVID-19, such as job loss due to the virus and the need to file for unemployment.

Eligible Talbot County residents can seek assistance by phone, online, or in person on Thursdays at the Talbot County District Courthouse, and in person at MLA's Upper Eastern Shore office.

Phone: 410-763-9676, Monday-Friday, 9:30AM-4:00PM

Online: mdlab.org, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

In-person: Talbot County District Courthouse (108 West Dover Street Easton, MD 21601), Thursdays, 12:00-4:30PM; or MLA's Upper Eastern Shore (106 North Washington St., Suite 101 Easton, MD 21601)

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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. As Maryland's 3rd largest law firm, MLA handles cases involving a wide range of issues, including family, housing, government benefits, healthcare, education, employment, and consumer law. MLA also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings in 14 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, medical facilities, and other gathering places.

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