

AppalReD Legal Aid Project Renew

Improving outcomes for patients in recovery with legal advocacy



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Response Program



Goals and Objectives

Goal: To educate participants on the importance and implementation of civil legal aid within the recovery ecosystem and how it benefits individuals affected by the opioid epidemic in Kentucky.

- Objective 1 – Gain a comprehensive understanding of civil legal aid and the Project Renew model that provides legal aid and wraparound support to individuals in reentry and recovery.
- Objective 2 – Analyze the different methods that can be used to incorporate the Project Renew model into community-based settings that promote reentry and recovery.
- Objective 3 – Examine common barriers to success faced by individuals seeking reentry and recovery services and learn how to implement Project Renew's screening tools to leverage civil legal aid as a vital source of support.

What is legal aid?

- **Legal Aid provides free civil legal assistance to low-income, disabled, and elderly people with civil legal problems.**
- **Legal Aid helps resolve legal problems that pose barriers to self-sufficiency and works to improve our clients' quality of life.**
- **There is a legal aid service provider for every county in the United States.**
- **There are 4 legal aid agencies in Kentucky, covering all 120 counties.**
- **Each Legal Aid agency in Kentucky is a private non-profit law firm.**
- **Services are fully grant-funded keeping services free.**





Who is eligible for services?

To be eligible for free civil legal help from AppalReD you must:

1. Have an income that meets our eligibility guidelines. Households that are generally below 125% of the federal poverty level.
2. Be a US citizen or eligible non-citizen.
3. Have a type of civil case that AppalReD accepts.
4. Have a legal issue in one of the 37 counties of the service area (Eastern and South-Central Kentucky).
5. Not have a conflict of interest.

Cases:

◆ VICTIMS' RIGHTS

Domestic violence and protective orders, safe housing, safe visitation orders

◆ DIVORCE, CUSTODY, AND FAMILY

Divorce, custody, visitation, child support, and more

◆ WORK AND SCHOOL

Unfair school discipline, school access for children with disabilities, criminal record expungement, wage claims

◆ ELDER LAW

Living will and power of attorney documents, family law disputes, bankruptcies, debt collection problems, benefits and health insurance counseling, long-term care issues

◆ HOUSING

Eviction, foreclosure, utilities disputes, habitability, fair housing, housing discrimination, public housing

◆ HEALTH AND PUBLIC BENEFITS

Medicaid, Medicare, Food Stamps, Social Security

◆ MONEY AND DEBTS

Debt collection issues, vehicle repossessions, wage garnishments, predatory lending, bankruptcy



THE CHALLENGE

Financial Crisis

- Rural, low-income, and underserved communities face the greatest barriers
- Kentucky has the highest poverty rate in the country (US Census Data)

Key barriers for recovery and prevention: Lack of transportation, insufficient treatment providers, and the overwhelming cost of basic needs



THE CHALLENGE

Workforce Impact

- The crisis impacts families, youth, and the states workforce.
- Kentucky has the 6th highest poverty rate in the country, 1 in 5 children (US Census Data)
- 70,000 Kentucky Children aren't living with their parents (Kentucky Youth Advocates)

Opioid Abuse is estimated to have reduced Kentucky's labor force participation rate by up to 3.1 percentage points (55,200 workers lost and \$1-2.8 billion in annual lost earnings. (University of Kentucky Center on Drug and Alcohol Research)



What is Project Renew?

- A division within AppalReD dedicated to providing free legal assistance to individuals in active addiction, recovery, or reentry from jail/prison.
- The goal is to address the civil legal needs, including expungement, to break down barriers that hinder success during reentry and recovery.
- Common legal issues include divorce, expungement, driver's license suspension, tax debt, and custody/visitation.
- All of the four legal aids in Kentucky have a form of Project Renew in their agency.



Project Renew helps to mitigate the impact substance use has on individuals and their families by acting as a missing link in recovery.

Recovery is about more than just treatment. Project Renew aims to break down legal barriers by providing:

- **Holistic, person-centered support and resource connection to enhance civil legal assistance**
- **Direct advocacy and collaboration with outside agencies**
- **Educational presentations and outreach to SUD/ODU providers and partners**



Outreach and Community Partnerships

- **Eliminates barriers by meeting clients where they are (i.e. clinics, recovery centers, jails, shelters, court, CRCs)**
- **Works in partnership with treatment centers, recovery housing, schools, courts, and social service agencies for referrals**
- **Leverages medical-legal partnerships to assess legal needs as part of treatment**
- **Engages local leaders, peer support, and faith-based organizations to reach those in need where they are**



Recovery
Agencies



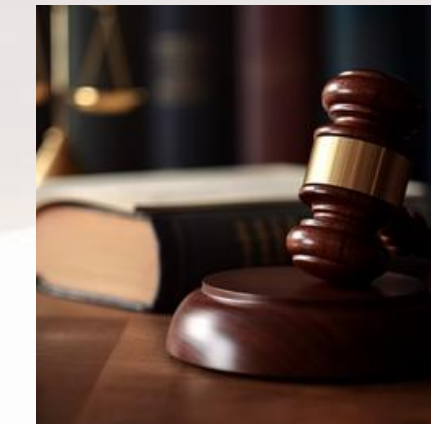
Community
Mental Health



Shelters



Community
Resource
Centers (Hubs)



Specialty
Courts



Reentry
Service

Case Screening Examples

Jane Smith

- Jane tells staff that she and her children are losing weight because they had their food stamps cancelled and cannot afford groceries. She has been looking for employment but is worried she is not getting called back because of her criminal record.

John Ruiz

- John tells staff that he has crippling student loan debt and cannot build credit. He has a permanent disability. Unknown to clinic staff, the patient's parents are seeking custody of his daughter who has lived with them periodically.

WITHOUT PROJECT RENEW

Amber is in jail for assaulting her spouse and drug possession. She is released and lives on a friend's couch. She can't get a job until she gets copies of a birth certificate and license.

Amber visits a recovery center. She attends meetings. She is excited to meet other people who share their stories. She goes to her sister's house but she lives far out and it's hard to get rides to the center or to look for jobs.

After two months, she works at a fast food counter. She gets an apartment. It's hard to pay rent on low wages. Eating fast food for most meals makes her feel sick.

She falls behind on rent and gets an eviction notice. She has a panic attack and goes to the ER.



She goes back to her abuser. At first things are ok but when the abuse starts again, she starts to misuse drugs.

She leaves but takes the car to live in. A month later she is arrested for theft and drug possession. Amber doesn't think anything will ever change.

WHICH PATH WILL YOU TAKE?

ardfky.org
1-866-277-5733



WITH PROJECT RENEW

AppalReD Legal Aid's Project Renew provides free civil legal aid to low-income individuals with a history of substance misuse. Because people can and do recover.

Amber hears about Project Renew in jail. She gets copies of a birth certificate and license so she can apply for jobs when she gets out. She starts to think about the future.

Amber visits a recovery center. She attends meetings. She is screened for civil legal issues. She learns she is eligible for SNAP. She tells a paralegal about how depressed she is that she can't see her children who live with her abuser.

She quickly gets a job at a fast food counter. She gets an apartment. It's hard to pay rent on low wages but having SNAP helps. She also learns about LIHEAP to help pay for utilities.

An AppalReD attorney represents her in court to arrange a custody agreement. She is allowed to see her children! She receives a referral to therapy and learns healthy coping behaviors and ways to support her children who have experienced trauma.

Her attorney gives her a tablet through a program for domestic violence survivors and refers her to a career center. She researches jobs.

The career center helps her apply to a fair chance employer with better wages. She begins a certificate program at KCTCS. She attends the expungement clinic AppalReD hosts at the recovery center. She is excited for the future and to provide a good home for her kids!

PROJECT RENEW RECOVERY IN ACTION

Matt first heard about Project Renew when he was in jail. An attorney helped him get the documents he'd need to work when released and also provided assistance with self-help divorce paperwork. When he left jail Matt only had a few possessions in a garbage bag and the phone number of a Project Renew attorney. He was worried that it would be hard to remain sober if he had to live on the street. Project Renew helped him find housing in a supportive living community. With a stable place to live, Matt was able to finalize his divorce and get a job at the grocery store. He has been named Employee of the Month multiple times!



Referral Process

- Attorney on-site visits and presentation at partner events (e.g., 1-2 times per month).
- Any care provider can make a referral to the MLP.
 - The program serves all patients in recovery.
 - Complete a referral form and email it to staff or provide staff contact information to the patient to reach AppalReD directly.
 - We can work with partner's procedure for release of information. We are bound by confidentiality and a release of health information to us does not allow us to disclose client legal information to partners or third parties.



BARBOURVILLE OFFICE:

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(806) 546-5115
FAX (806) 546-5117
Low Income Taxpayer Clinic: 1-800-477-1394
Central Intake: 1-866-277-5733
www.ardfky.org

Area Offices:

Barbourville, KY
Hazard, KY
Pikeville, KY
Prestonsburg, KY
Richmond, KY
Somerset, KY

Robert C. Johns
Executive Director
robertj@ardfky.org

John M. Rosenberg
Director Emeritus

I, _____, am referring _____, to AppalRed

Legal Aid for civil legal services to assist in the client's continued recovery, such as
expungements, divorce, domestic violence, bankruptcy, government assistance, and housing
issues.

Date:

Name of Organization:

Contact Number:

Email:

Reason for Referral:

Client's Contact Number:

Is there a phone number/address that we could contact you to leave a message if we're not
able to reach you at your primary contact information?

Client's Address:

Client's email address:

Staff Signature:

Client's Signature:

Email form to justina@ardfky.org



APPALACHIAN RESEARCH AND DEFENSE FUND OF KENTUCKY, INC.
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Referral Process in Action

Patient is given contact info for AppalReD by provider and reaches out directly.

Provider identifies patient with legal issue(s) and refers to AppalReD.

- During treatment, the facility understands that the patient may have one or more civil legal issue.
- Completes referral form, signed by both clinic staff and patient, and provides to AppalReD.

AppalReD connects with patient to determine eligibility.

- AppalReD will conduct a standard intake to determine:
 - Whether patient qualifies.
 - Whether patient has conflict.
 - What legal services are appropriate.

AppalReD will provide legal services to patient if eligible.

- AppalReD will provide advice or extended services depending on the needs of the patient. For example:
 - File expungement or divorce.
 - Seek domestic violence protection order.
 - Defend from eviction.

Case Screening Examples

- Jane Smith

- Jane tells staff that she and her children are losing weight because they had their food stamps cancelled and cannot afford groceries. She has been looking for employment but is worried she is not getting called back because of her criminal record.

AppalReD works with the patient to determine whether all or part of her criminal record can be expunged. AppalReD can also pursue action with DCBS to restore the patient's SNAP benefits and assist her with obtaining identifying documents (birth certificate, ID) for job search. Additionally, AppalReD connects her with other resources and partners to assist with food and employment help.

Case Screening Examples

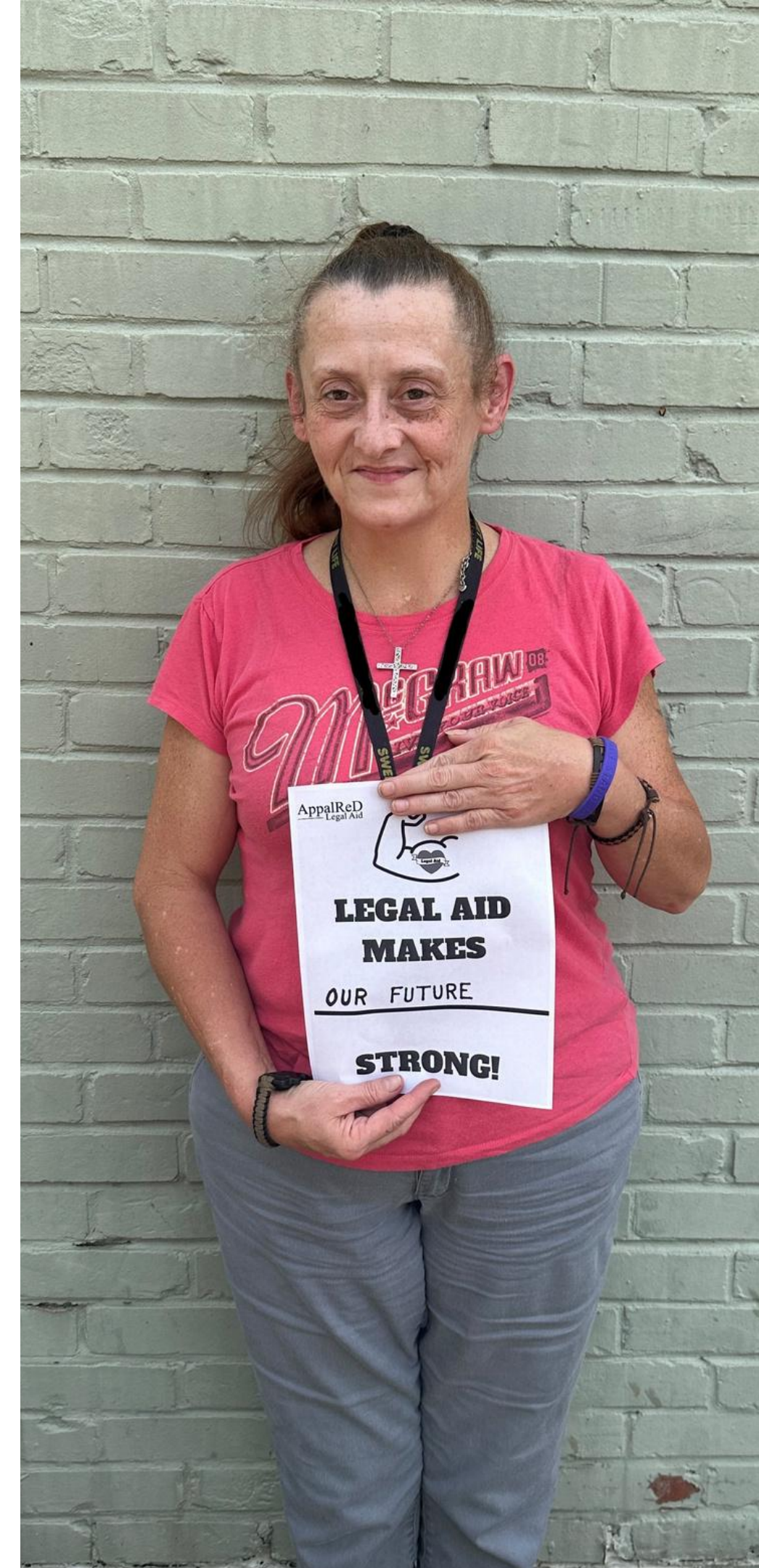
- John Ruiz
 - John tells staff that he has crippling student loan debt and cannot build credit. He has a permanent disability. Unknown to clinic staff, the patient's parents are seeking custody of his daughter who has lived with them periodically.

AppalReD works with the client to discharge his student loan debt based on his disability. AppalReD provides legal screening during intake and asks about any other potential issues patient is facing. AppalReD provides assistance to defend his custody rights in the grandparents' action for de facto custodianship and connects him with local partner to provide modifications in his home and rehabilitative services.

Building Stronger Communities



- Work-force Ready Communities: Help clients clear records, restore licenses, and access employment
- Reduce Recidivism and Prevention: Avoid evictions by opening pathways to employment, resolve benefits and healthcare issues
- Family Stabilization and Youth Prevention: Assist with custody, child support, and safe family reunification
- Wraparound Recovery Supports: Provide trauma-informed, non-enforcement



PROJECT RENEW IN ACTION

7,177
clients



10,440
cases



29,994
people helped

PROJECT RENEW FINANCIAL IMPACT



\$1,290,381

*dollars preserved and restored on
behalf of Project Renew clients.*



\$1 = \$7

*For every \$1 invested in civil legal aid, there
is an average return of \$7 to the community.*

JOIN US! FUTURES FORWARD

- Help us connect justice to hope and healing for Kentuckians in your community
- Be part of a proven, evidence-based, and transparent solution

Thank you!



www.ardfky.org
1-866-277-5733



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BLUEGRASS

www.lablaw.org
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LEGAL
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