

trying need know told contact

family nothing hard back call thru

afford complaint friends seeking also took

agencies answers work family action

denied Just things hope getting give

notice sent deal dad least public

Soe

violence question seeking next friends also took

also took someone

father bank

tried Tried situation

aid can find issues laws like called

count now fix will way last police office want state talk

asked lawyer many spoke lawsuit friend

check time never order paid years dont

program health rights yet

gave lot doing

case ask one aid can find issues laws like called

try sure good really

check time never info order paid able

years dont

Legal

problem resources

behind

insurance month

money contacted

problems checked received person referred

agency information Arizona anyone

everything filed another

attorneys home

still ? fight people

wants

referred

apartment

what

Tried

2017 Arizona Legal Needs Study Background

The title of this 2017 Arizona legal need study came from the survey respondents. The survey asked for comments as to what the individuals did when facing legal challenges. As the cloud title graphic on the front page indicates, the one word reply used most often was “Tried”. The people tried to deal with the unfair demands, tried to work with the other parties, tried to search for answers, tried to understand the processes... They tried. Still, they were not able to overcome the barrier facing them. It is important to understand that often that barrier, according to Arizona law, should never have been a hurdle. This is when the barrier is a matter of justice and it is when Arizona Legal Aid agencies are there to help.

This legal need study examines the legal issues facing families, explores the costs beyond that of the individual to include the cost to their communities, and outlines a comparison of individuals provided legal assistance in that same time period of the study and how those individuals were positively impacted.

Following the results of the Legal Need Study are steps forward, made since the 2007 Arizona Legal Need Study, in creating equal access to justice for Arizonans and a proposed outline of goals for the coming decade to assure our pledge of “justice for all” is not an empty promise.

Methodology: The data reviewed includes survey responses of nearly 6,000 individuals, reports from industry experts, and 2017 annual client data reports from the legal aid agencies. The surveys, modeled after the 2007 legal need survey, were available in English and Spanish both online and in hard copies at legal aid agencies’ offices across Arizona. Acknowledging the non-scientific random collection of online surveys, this study has taken the following steps to increase the validity of generalization with the data collected:

- Offers a comparison of demographics between survey respondents and Arizona’s general population with notations where there is a percentage difference in the demographics.
- Evaluates the 2017 actual client service reports of the legal aid agencies compared to identified legal needs of survey respondents.
- Includes outside studies to analyze similarities of needs identified generally to Arizona compared to those legal needs identified by survey respondents.

Executive Summary

The Legal Service Corporation's 2017 Justice Gap Report¹ (LSC Justice Gap Report) found that 71% of low-income Americans had at least one civil legal issue in the prior twelve months. As this Arizona 2017 Legal Need Study, *Tried*, indicates, Arizonans surveyed had a higher percentage with legal needs than national report percentage: 80% of Arizonans surveyed reported that they had at least one legal issue in the last twelve months.

Arizona, though, is doing better than the national percentages when it comes to individuals accessing professional legal assistance. The LSC Justice Gap Report shows that 86% of the civil legal need programs presented by low income Americans received inadequate or no legal help. Approximately one out of two (46%) of those participating in Arizona's 2017 legal need study stated they were able to contact legal aid or a private attorney to help them with their legal problems. That means, even though Arizona is beating national percentages, that the majority (54%) of Arizonans surveyed were not able to access the professional legal help they need.

The Arizona Legal Need survey also shows that Arizonans are trying to deal with their legal programs. Only 16% did nothing at all when facing their civil legal crisis. The reasons for not seeking help varied with the largest number of people (24%) stating they were concerned they would create a bigger dispute if they sought help, the second most often mentioned reason (22%) was that they did not know who could help, and the third highest percentage (12%) were concerned that the cost would be more than they could afford.

The other 38%, who didn't reach a legal aid agency or private attorney but did seek help, sought to solve their problems through various ways: contacted a church or community group; complained to a government agency; looked for legal information at libraries, courts, or online; tried resolving by contacting the other party; or represented themselves. While they were trying to handle the situation with the resources they had available, 86% reported that their legal problem was not resolved satisfactorily.

Arizonans are trying but our justice system is not meeting the demand. Following the study you will find an outline provided through the National Center for State Courts of measures to be taken in meeting the Conference of Chief Justices resolution that calls for the aspirational goal of 100 percent access to effective assistance for essential civil needs. Please read through these measures, find where you can help, and reach out.

In case you are concerned that the need is so great, nothing will ever change. We are presenting evidence that we can do better. In each section we have added a paragraph of what the Legal Aid Agencies were able to accomplish with their limited resources. Also, take a moment to read the changes since the 2007, "Voicing a Need for Justice, Survey Results on Legal Aid Access in Arizona" was published and the goals for 2007-2017 were established. You will see we can, and we must, do better for our neighbors and for the justice system itself. Without equal access to justice there is no justice.

Hon. Joseph Kreamer, Chair

¹ <https://www.lsc.gov/media-center/publications/2017-justice-gap-report> retrieved 3/04/2019

Increasing Access to Justice 2007 - 2017

In 2007, Arizona did not have:

- An 800-number statewide automated call center for legal aid, modest means, and full-pay lawyer referral.
- There was no Modest Means program.
- There was not an online pre-qualifier application, A2J interview, for legal services.
- The librarians were not trained and equipped to assist with legal information for the public.
- There was no court rule allowing an attorney to provide brief and/or unbundled services.
- There was no court rule allowing CLE credit for pro bono work.
- There was no rule court allowing retired Arizona attorneys to offer pro bono services without re-establishing their Arizona license.
- There was no portion of the pro hac vice fees going toward the provision of legal aid.
- There was not an online court filing system.
- There was no Arizona Access to Justice Commission.
- There was no In-House Counsel Access to Justice Commission
- Maricopa Court did not have a Justice Corp Court Navigator program.
- <http://azcourthelp.org> ; <http://lawforseniors.org> ; <http://lawforveterans.org> did not exist.
- The State Bar did not have a streamlined “Find A Lawyer” portal available for all the public.

Today, through the hard work and commitment of many people, Arizona now has all of the above bulleted items. While we can state this with pride, we also acknowledge where we are today includes a great need and that we are confident in saying we can do better.

We Can Do
Better

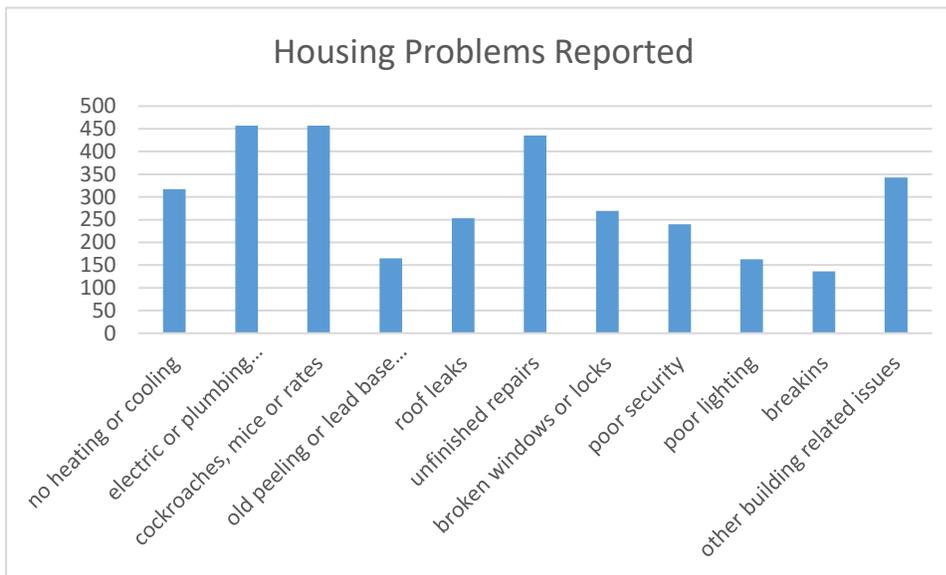
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Legal Needs for Arizonans

Your House but My Home - Tenants

37% of Arizona households are renting their homes.² Many of these renters are being evicted: in 2017 there were more than 25,000 families who were court ordered to leave their home.³ 46% of the people answering the 2017 legal need survey (Survey) were renters. Of the Survey renters, only 41% reported having no disagreement with their landlord. Those reporting disagreements with their landlord were about issues such as the rent due, terms of the lease, security deposits, and a host of other issues. Many of those 'other' issues included the landlord not keeping the home safe and sound for the renter.



The chart on the left cites the number of housing problems reported by surveyed tenants. Only 24% of the Survey tenants reported that they had no problem with the condition and/or safety of their home.

Communicating with the landlord is one way Legal Aid lawyers provide assistance. Whether it is with a

dispute regarding the disagreements cited above or one of the home safety and condition issues represented in the chart, Legal Aid attorneys are assisting landlords and tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities under Arizona law.

How Legal Aid Helped.....1,641 cases, Over \$70,000 economic benefit to families

In 2017, Arizona's federally funded Legal Aid agencies: Community Legal Services, DNA People's Legal Services, and Southern Arizona Legal Aid (Legal Aid) helped 1,641 cases (3,839 total people in families) with landlord/tenant issues involving both private landlord and public housing residences. These families each received assistance in understanding how to resolve the landlord/tenant dispute within their legal rights. Of these families, there were 52 where the resolution included a direct beneficial financial impact for the family. With Legal Aid attorneys' assistance, 50 of these families had a cumulative total of over \$70,000 either returned to them or were able to prove it was not owed,

² <https://www.deptofnumbers.com/rent/arizona/> 2016 statistics retrieved 11/2018

³ <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-best-reads/2018/04/13/eviction-rate-spikes-again-across-phoenix-affordable-housing-crisis-worsens/508696002/> retrieved 11/2018

Bad Deals and Broken Promises – Consumer law

Between 2015 and 2017 complaints about errors against the three major US credit agencies more than doubled in Arizona with some being small name misspellings while others involved identity theft and fraud badly damaging credit scores.⁴ Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich reported that his office received more than 17,500 consumer complaints in 2017, with the top complaints involving telemarketing scams; motor vehicle sales, repairs, and rentals; timeshares, telecommunications (i.e., internet service providers, cell phones, pay TV, bundling); and, mortgage and real estate.⁵

Of the 2017 Survey respondents 8% reported having one or more consumer law problems. The top Survey consumer complaints were somewhat different than the top reported to the Attorney General's office: debt collectors/collection agencies (571); problems with bank accounts (505); credit card accounts (438); student loans (425); credit reports (324); and, loss of driver's license (324).

How Legal Aid Helped.....1,137 cases, Over \$1,490,000 economic benefit to families

In 2017, 14% of the Legal Aid agencies cases (1,137) were addressing consumer law problems. Of the cases accepted, the top issues under consumer law were: Collections (repossession /deficiency /garnishment) (515); Bankruptcy/Debtor Relieve (273); and Contracts/warranties (234). Legal Aid attorneys were able to realize a direct financial impact for 80 of these families with a cumulative total of over \$1,490,000 either returned to them or the debt cancelled allowing them to keep these funds for their family. In addition 7 families had a monthly impact on average of \$386 (\$26 to \$736 per month) added to their monthly budgets for expenses.

Increasing the dollars kept in the family budget helps the local community by giving the family increased dollars for consumer spending: an average of \$386 more a month and the over \$1 million could only positively impact their local economies.

The map shows the Arizona counties of the 2,687 people who were seeking assistance with consumer law problems and helped by Legal Aid attorneys. These financial injustices are a statewide issue that cost families and communities. Legal Aid attorneys have shown they can assist in advocating for consumer rights under Arizona law.

These additional components of the gross **domestic** product aren't as critical as **consumer spending**. Even a small downturn in **consumer spending** can damage the **economy**. As it drops off, **economic** growth slows. ... When **consumer** demand exceeds manufacturers' ability to provide the goods and services, prices increase. Nov 4, 2018

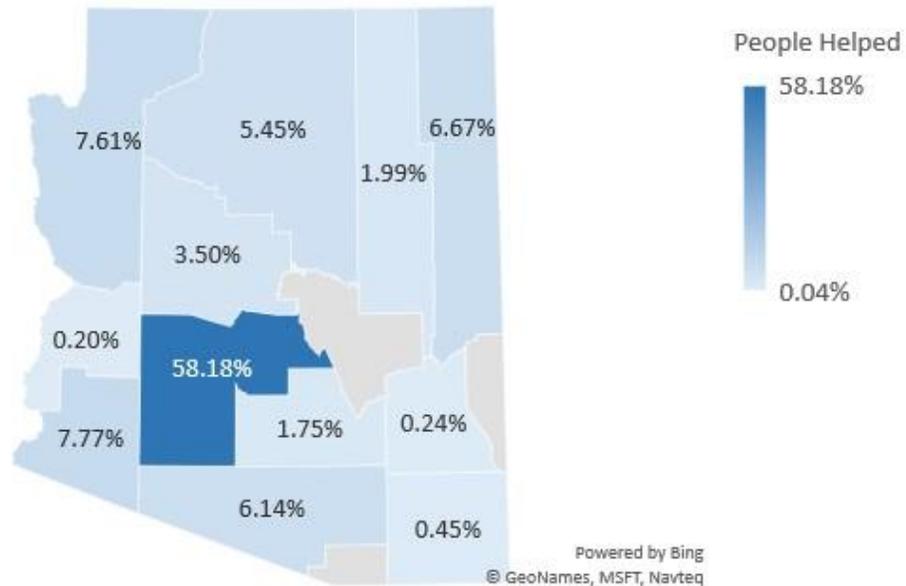


Consumer Spending and Its Impact on the Economy - The Balance
<https://www.thebalance.com/consumer-spending-definition-and-determinants-3305917>

⁴ <https://www.azcentral.com/story/money/business/consumers/2018/02/01/arizona-veteran-wanted-car-loan-but-credit-bureau-said-he-dead-credit-bureau-errors/1070878001/> retrieved 12/04/2018

⁵ <https://www.azag.gov/press-release/ag-brnovich-kicks-az-consumer-protection-week-march-4th-10th> retrieved 12/04/2018

Consumer Law Problem 2017 People Helped



Matters of the Heart – Family Law (Domestic Relations)

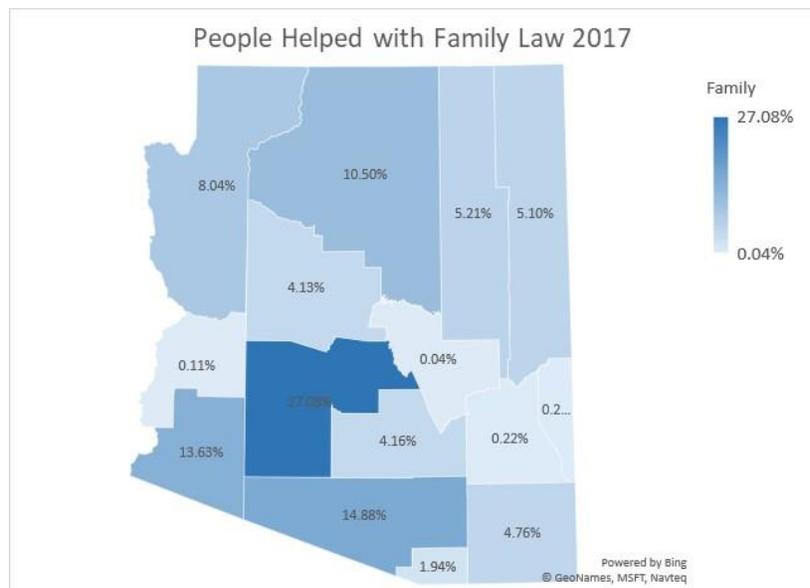


The Arizona Superior Courts reported that during FY 2017, Domestic Relations cases accounted for most filings with 27.2% of the total filing caseload.⁶ The Legal Aid agencies reported that 27.6% of their caseload was under Family (domestic relations) law. The Survey responses were over 33% reporting family law concerns. In the survey responses, outside of the label “other”, the highest needs were as follows: Custody/visitation at 25%; Divorce/annulment/separation at 17%; and Child support at 14%.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s 2018 report, a family needs to be earning \$18.46 per hour to afford the rent on a two bedroom home. The minimum wage in Arizona is cited at \$10.50 per hour, so it is easy to see how a single parent with children would struggle to make ends meet and how the impact that receiving the co-parent support would have for the stability of the children involved.

How Legal Aid Helped.....6,364 cases, Over \$264,000 economic benefit to families

In 2017, the Legal Aid agencies assisted 6,364 families with Family Law concerns. 742 were families dealing with custody, visitation, and support issues where they needed help with the court process and understanding their rights. 29 of these families were helped in recovering back support with a cumulative total of over \$198,000 (5 families < \$1,000; 15 families \$1,001 to \$5,000; 2 families \$5,001 to \$10,000; 7 families > \$10,000). In addition to the back support, Legal Aid attorneys helped 23 of these families increase their child support on an average of \$440 per month (cumulative monthly total of \$6,615). There were also 4 clients who were being asked to contribute more than what they could afford, Legal Aid attorneys helped one relieve a back debt of ~\$375 and the other over \$60,000. Plus, two other clients were able to save monthly \$222 and \$300. Legal Aid attorneys do not choose cases based upon the ‘amount’ of the claim, but rather the needs of the clients and, as the map shows, they help families across the state.



⁶ <https://www.azcourts.gov/Portals/39/2017DR/SuperiorCourt.pdf#page=3> retrieved 12/05/2018

I Can't Lose My Job – Employment Law

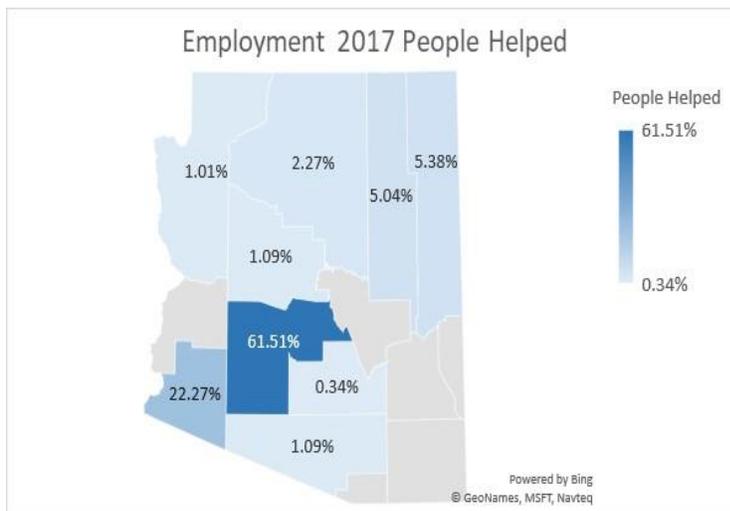
The Arizona labor market is showing signs of growth. The Arizona labor statistic report cites the slight increase in the unemployment rate but also shows the Arizona non-farm employment numbers increasing over a twelve month period from October 2017 to October 2018.⁷ The increase is not helping all workers in obtaining or keeping their employment.

In the 2017 Study, 314 individuals, who also had struggled with homelessness, reported that they had problems keeping a job. 355 individuals reported that physical or mental disabilities caused them to have trouble finding a job, 169 had to deal with being treated unfairly at their job, and 357 were struggling to keep their jobs. Sixteen people reported they had legal status to work but were prevented from getting a job. They were all working or seeking work but faced a barrier where Legal Aid attorneys could have possibly helped keep the unemployment numbers lower. (e.g., clearing up credit mistakes, helping obtain identification and/or a driver's license, setting aside a conviction, clarifying an employer's obligation to make reasonable accommodations, etc.).

How Legal Aid Helped.....465 cases, Nearly \$1 million economic benefit to families

In 2017, Legal Aid attorneys did assist with 465 cases dealing with employment concerns. The top employment issues were: errors in tax withholdings; discrimination; and wages not being paid.

For 56 of the 465 cases, there was a direct financial impact for the family. A cumulative total of nearly one million dollars (\$990,315.33) was kept in the pockets of those who earned their dollars because of the help received by Legal Aid attorneys. The following map shows how Legal Aid attorneys are reaching across the state to help wage earners keep their paychecks for their families.



⁷ <https://laborstats.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/emp-report.pdf> retrieved 12/10/2018

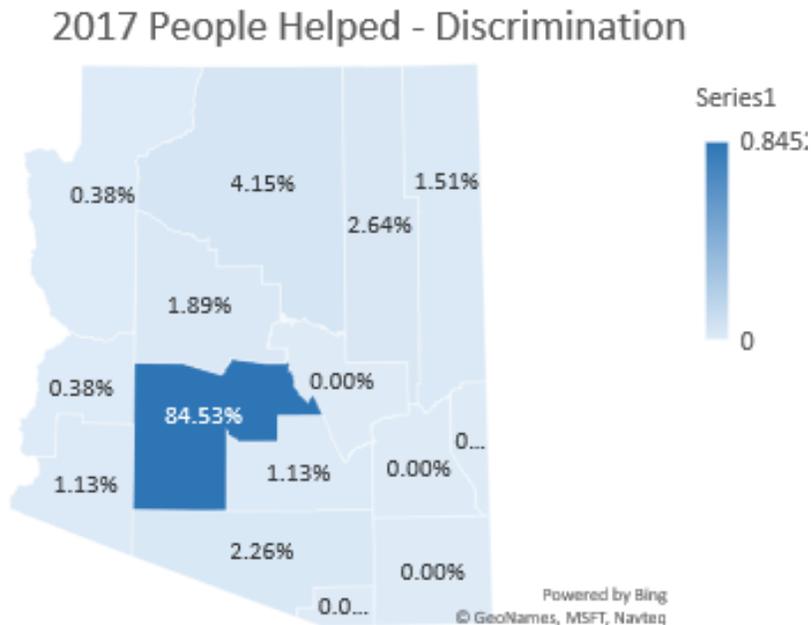
Does 'for all' include me? – Discrimination

The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reports that in 2017 Arizona had 1,988 charges of discrimination. With more than one basis for each charges, some of the top basis included 696 disability, 656 sex, 437 race, 429 age, and 264 natural origin.⁹ The HUD Fair Housing 2017 annual report states there were 219 fair housing complaints from Arizona.¹⁰

Survey respondents reported discrimination and with similar basis as the EEOC reports: 179 disability, 95 sex, 124 race, 92 age, and 31 natural origin. The Survey respondents also report discrimination in housing: 279 reported discrimination when trying to rent a home, and 96 when trying to purchase their home or getting financing to purchase a house.

How Legal Aid Helped.....115 cases, \$49,030 economic benefit to families

In 2017, Arizona Legal Aid agencies had 115 cases that helped 270 people with legal problems concerning discrimination. Out of the 115 cases, eight of the families received a direct economic benefit of \$49,030. The others were helped in multiple ways to address the unlawful discrimination and having their rights available to them. The map shows the assistance with people facing discrimination in Arizona.



⁹ https://www1.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges_by_state.cfm#centercol retrieved 3/08/2019

¹⁰ https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/FHEO/images/FHEO_Annual_Report_2017-508c.pdf retrieved 3/08/2019

Abuse

Victim of Abuse			
No, there has been no abuse	2,127	Physical abuse	582
Mental or emotional abuse	915	Sexual abuse	250
Was the victim a...			
Adult	844	Elderly (over 65)	54
A child(ren)	268		
Problems with...			
No problems	577	Getting an order of protection or restraining order	119
Other	173	Getting into or staying at a domestic violence shelter	76
Enforcing an order of protection or restraining order	122		

2017 Survey Respondents Demographics

The Survey was replicated in Spanish and the results kept separately for each of the languages and it was separated by direct responses to the website posting or hard copy delivered by Legal Aid agencies and those referrals from community partners. The first chart breaking down participation by counties will show the totals of each of the four conduits for responses. The

County	Total Public (hard copy and electronic)	Total from Community Partner referrals	Spanish Public (hard copy and electronic)	Total Spanish from Community Partner Referrals	Total	Percent	AZ 2017	AZ Percent
Apache	22	2	0	3	27	1.02%	71,606	1.02%
Cochise	99	0	1	0	100	3.78%	124,756	1.78%
Coconino	30	7	0	0	37	1.40%	140,776	2.01%
Gila	29	0	0	0	29	1.09%	53,501	0.76%
Graham	17	0	0	0	17	0.64%	37,466	0.53%
Greenlee	6	0	1	0	7	0.26%	9,455	0.13%
La Paz	5	9	1	0	15	0.57%	20,601	0.29%
Maricopa	1091	15	36	3	1145	43.22%	4,307,033	61.39%
Mohave	96	0	0	0	96	3.62%	207,200	2.95%
Navajo	32	3	0	1	36	1.36%	108,956	1.55%
Pima	739	29	26	5	799	30.16%	1,022,769	14.58%
Pinal	154	23	1	0	178	6.72%	430,237	6.13%
Santa Cruz	14	2	8	0	24	0.91%	46,212	0.66%
Yavapai	84	1	2	0	87	3.28%	228,168	3.25%
Yuma	38	2	7	5	52	1.96%	207,534	2.96%
unknown	3,181		172	1	3,354			
	5,637	91	255	18	6,003			

other charts and tables will show the cumulative totals.

The chart above that Survey respondents' percentages are within one percent of the Arizona population percentages except two counties: Maricopa and Pima. There is a much lower response from Maricopa and much higher representation from Pima.

	Surveyed Arizonans	Arizona Poverty total
Asian	0.97%	1.84%
African American/Black	7.59%	4.48%
Caucasian/White	56.09%	51.11%
Hispanic/ Latino	25.20%	34.83%
Native American	1.87%	7.74%

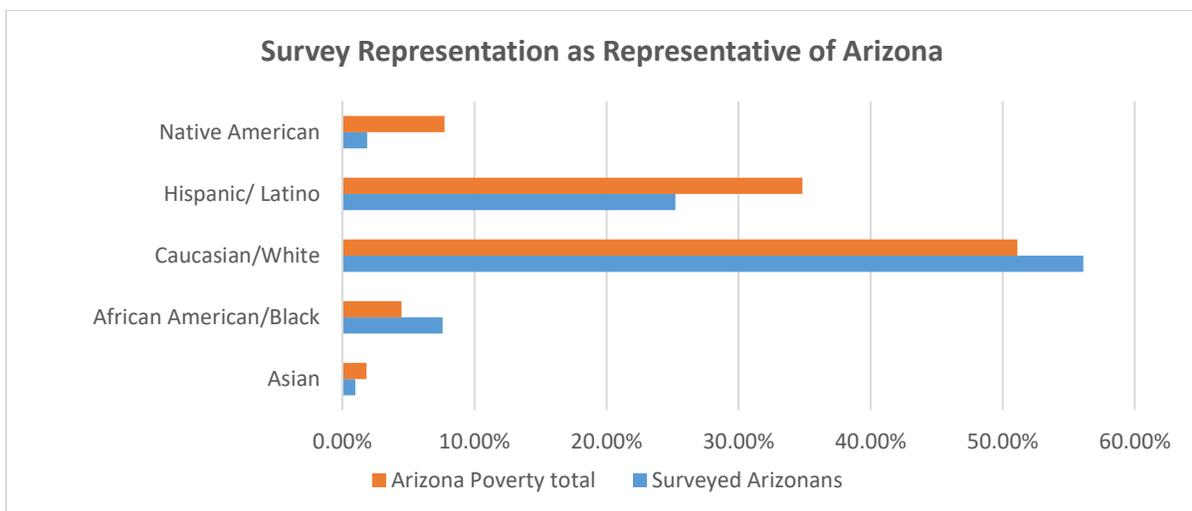
Note: The Arizona population statistics were taken from-

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

The 2017 Survey respondents' percentages were compared to the Arizona poverty population since the lower income (under 150% of federal poverty guidelines) is the restriction set by the Legal Aid agencies largest federal funder, the Legal Service Corporation even though the Arizona Legal Aid agencies are allowed to assist people up to 250% of federal poverty guidelines when there is designated dollars from a separate source and under special conditions.

A chart and table are being presented to make certain the information is clearly shown. There is lower participation in the 2017 Survey by minority populations than the percentages of minorities of Arizona poverty totals.

In order to adjust for the lower survey participation, the Legal Aid agencies held forums in their service communities and those results are documented in a separate section of this report.



Note: Arizona poverty statistics were taken from – <https://talkpoverty.org/state-year-report/arizona-2017-report/>

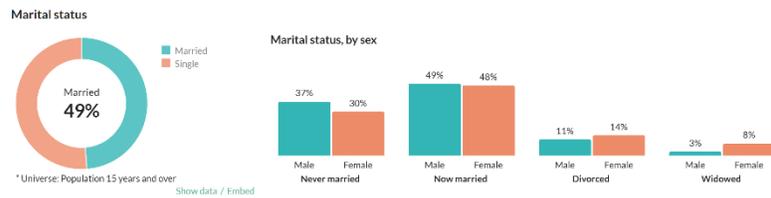
Gender	Study Respondents
Female	70.2%
Male	29.7%
Transgender	0.08%

The Study respondents had a higher female representation than the general Arizona population: female 50.3% and male 49.7% according to 2017 census statistics.¹¹ This is a significant variance which should be considered when analyzing the results.

The type of household recorded in the survey is outlined in the following table. A comparison to the general Arizona population is a little difficult as more options than what the census offers were available for the 2017 Study. The same comparison difficulty arose with the income categories so rather than try to estimate direct ratios the information below is separated according to the sources for a general review.

The Arizona general population statistics for household and income were taken from - <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/04000US04-arizona/>

Household type	Survey Respondents
Single female	18.84%
Single male	11.84%
Single no gender chosen	0.72%
Single female w/children	21.18%
Single male w/children	3.66%
single no gender chosen w/children	0.28%
Married or Partner	14.55%
Married or Partner w/children	18.08%
Multi generational adult children	4.81%
Multi generational (grandparents, parents w/children)	6.04%



The total percentage of Survey respondents identifying as Single is 52.86% and 32.63% identifying as Married. Identifying as Single female, the percentage is 48.02% compared to the Arizona general stats of 44% (never married, divorced, and widowed). Identifying as Single male, the percentage of Survey respondents is 15.5% compared to the Arizona general stats of 51%.

The Survey respondents recording they were married or with a partner equaled 32.63% which is lower than the Arizona general stat of 49% married.

The Survey also offered the family type option of multigenerational with adult children or multigenerational living of grandparents and parents with children: This option was chosen as the one best fitting their situation by 10.85% of Survey respondents.

¹¹ <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

Income

\$29,420

Per capita income

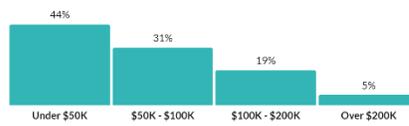
about 90 percent of the amount in United States: \$32,397

\$56,581

Median household income

a little less than the amount in United States: \$60,336

Household income

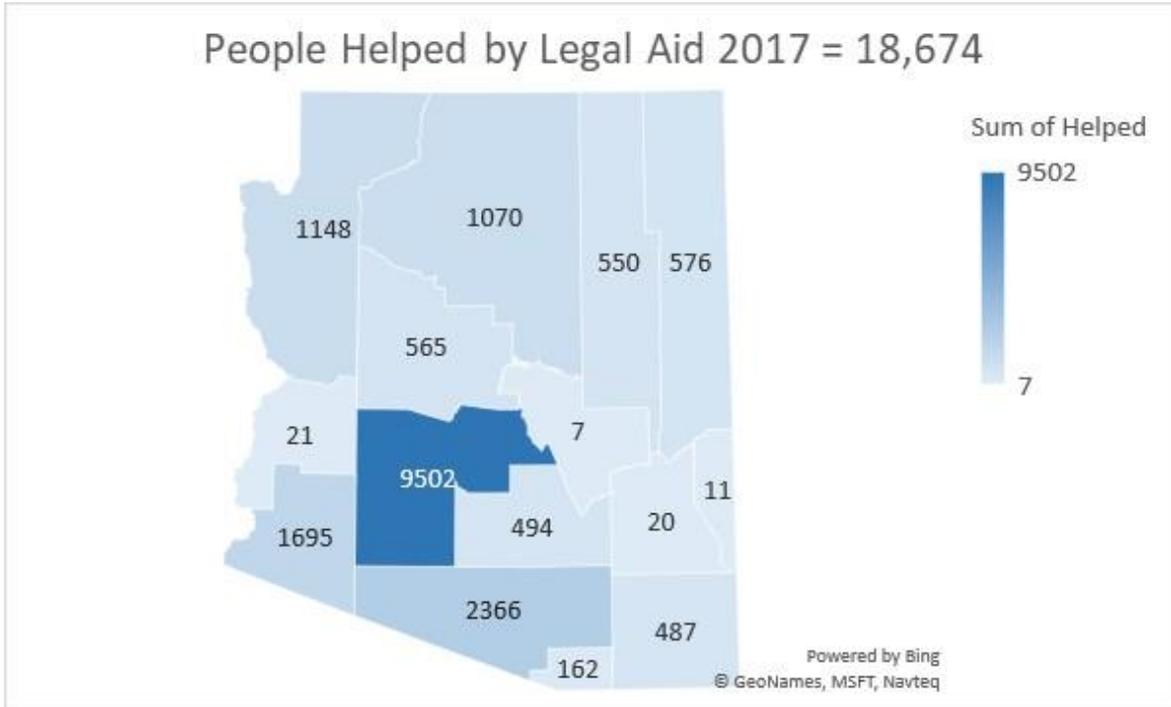


Arizona general population has 44% of households are making under \$50k a year. The 2017 Survey respondents reporting income show 88.6% making under \$40k annually. The legal needs reported are clearly biased toward those with lower incomes.

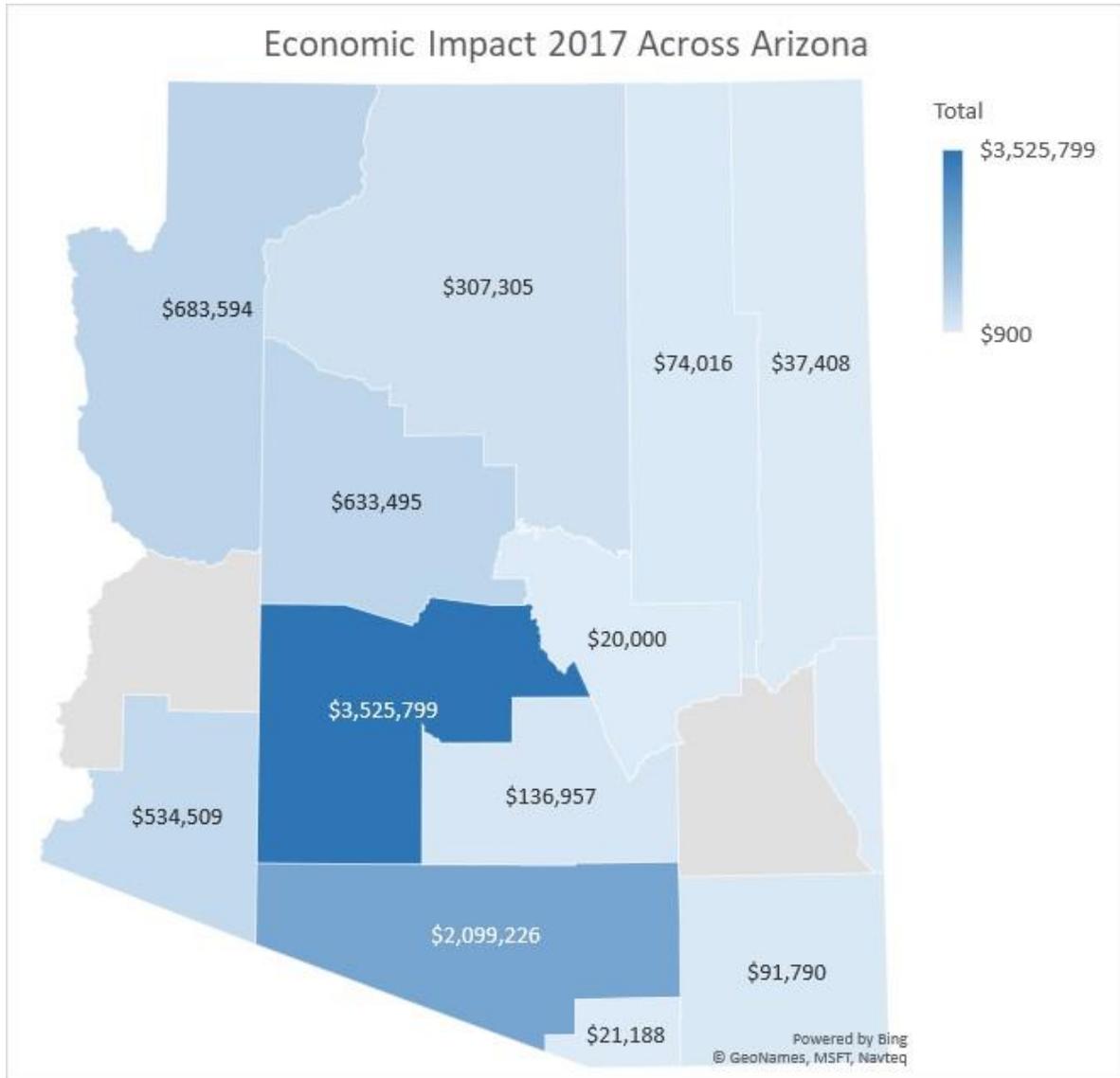
Survey Respondents

Income	Percent
under \$10k	39.4%
10+ to 20	26.9%
20+ to 40	22.3%
40+ to 60	7.8%
60+ to 80	2.4%
80+ and above	1.2%

Legal Aid Helping Arizonans



In 2017 Over \$8 Million for Families assisted by Legal Aid Agencies



100% Access Goals recommended by Conference of Chief Justices

1. Resource Planning – The major perceived Access to Justice barrier is lack of resources. Developing a nuanced long term strategy for ensuring sufficient resources is key. Any Justice for All strategy will need to reflect state realities and embrace flexibility and innovation in resource planning.
2. Technology Capacity – Technology capacity exist within the organizations of the individual stakeholders, but there is often a need for more coordination and integration. There is universal agreement that without technology, there will be no cost effective system to work towards 100% access. Building technologies that are scalable and integrated with multiple stakeholders will be critical to this work.
3. Triage, Referral & Channel Integration - States must deploy a component that assess what services each individual and situation needs, and then makes the appropriate and verified referrals. Many states are talking about a “portal” concept for triage, referral and channel integration. The idea is to create “no wrong door” through which people with legal problems access the system.
4. Community Integration & Prevention – Access to Justice is not court-centric. Adopting a user’s point of view and addressing civil legal issues before they worsen can save time, money, and avoid what can be a burdensome court process. Research shows that most civil legal issues never make it to the court system. Facilitating relationships with community stakeholders and integrating them into the ATJ response can dramatically impact the scope of outreach for legal information and services.
5. Judicial & Court Staff Education – A judiciary willing to lead and inspire not just the courts, but also the may ATJ constituencies and partners, is key to achieving meaningful access to justice for all. Equally important is an access-friendly courtroom environment, presided over by a judge who knows how to handle every kind of case, from the heavily-lawyered to the entirely self-represented.
6. Broad Self-Help Informational Services – Demystifying the system and explaining it to self-represented litigants in plain language is critical to achieving ATJ. The better the job done on this, the more successful will be the self-represented litigant and the less strain it will put on resources to help them succeed in the process.
7. Plain Language Forms – Implementation of standardized plain language forms with protocols for assessing and updating forms and testing for comprehensibility and usability.
8. Language Services Integration – Language access services at all points of contact between LEP users and all legal system components (e.g., provision of qualified interpreters and translators, multilingual staff, written and audio-visual tools in languages other than English).
9. Alternative Dispute Resolution Integration – Provision of information about ADR modes and processes, substantive ADR law, and consequences as an integrated part of the triage system.
10. Compliance Assistance – Providing both timely information and explanations of information through a variety of court stakeholders (e.g., judge, self-help center, clerks) and through various media including proactive court text or e-mail messages about next steps and upcoming events.

11. Courtroom Assistance Services- Can range from videos providing information about understanding the court process to hiring staff as court navigators. Wide range of options in this area.
12. Expansion & Efficiency Improvements of Full Service Representation – It is clearly important to support as much full service representation through legal aid and the private bar as resources will allow, especially when a legal issue is particularly complex, where the stakes are particularly high (e.g., safety or homelessness), or where mental health, age, or other capacity issues impeded the person’s ability to fend for himself or herself.
13. Unbundled (Discrete Task) Legal Assistance – Need the court rules in place to allow unbundled legal services, combined with lawyers willing to provide the services and a way to match the willing lawyers with the triage system.
14. Simplification – The current system was designed by lawyers for lawyers. Courts need to review and simplify court rules and processes when possible to eliminate unnecessary appearances and filings.
15. Role Flexibility for other professionals – Services in addition to lawyers, including allowing legal practice by allied professionals (e.g., LLLT) or court navigators.

Addendum A to “Tried: Arizonans’ perspective on Access to Justice”

Community and Governmental Organizations Surveys

During 2017 and 2018, 24 representative organizations responded to a request for identifying legal needs of their clientele. The participating organizations included the following:

Duarte Trellis, Channel 15 – “Let Joe Know”, Arizona Dept. of Housing, Housing Authority of Maricopa County, City of Phoenix, State Innovation Exchange, Behold Housing, Save the Family, Native American Connections, UMOM, Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation – Housing Division, Housing Solutions of Northern Arizona, Furnishing Dignity, Community Integration, Terros Prescott Valley, Prescott Police Department, Verde Valley Sanctuary, Prescott Valley Police Department Victim Services, YFAC of Prescott Valley, Yavapai Family Advocacy Center, Prescott Valley Police Department, and Area Agency on Aging Prescott Valley.

The responses given ranked Housing as the highest legal need with 22 agencies identifying this issue, Family law was second with 17 responses, Consumer and Employment law tied for third with 11 responses, and there were 7 responses in the Other category that included public benefits, criminal law, and discrimination. The issues of Housing, Family and Consumer law were also highest ranked among respondents to the 2017 legal need study.

While the 2017 legal need study did not have a separate question for Employment law, there was an expressed need by the respondents. In the study, 314 individuals, who also had struggled with homelessness, reported that they had problems keeping a job. 355 individuals reported that physical or mental disabilities caused them to have trouble finding a job, 169 had to deal with being treated unfairly at their job, and 357 were struggling to keep their jobs. Sixteen people reported they had legal status to work but were prevented from getting a job. They were all working or seeking work but faced a barrier where Legal Aid attorneys could have possibly helped keep the unemployment numbers lower. (e.g., clearing up credit mistakes, helping obtain identification and/or a driver’s license, setting aside a conviction, clarifying an employer’s obligation to make reasonable accommodations, etc.).

The 24 organizations were also asked to list the 5 most critical needs for the population they serve. Evictions and landlord/tenant issues were listed in the top five most frequently, 7 times. Lack of affordable housing in the community, including lack of housing for people with disabilities, was listed 6 times. Employment issues of people being taken advantage of by their employers was listed 3 times. Family law, bankruptcy/debt, domestic violence, criminal issues, and public benefits were each mentioned twice. The list of other issues mentioned at least once were immigration, mental health, HOA issues, phone/computer scams, title loans, and failure to honor warranties on large purchase items.

The critical needs identified were issues identified by survey respondents and further confirm the legal needs results of the 2017 study.

Community Forums

During 2017 and 2018, there were nine community forums held addressing the legal needs of each group. The forums were held in the Whiteriver Apache community, Gila River Indian community, Showlow, Lakeside, Sacton, Tucson, Bisbee, various places in Maricopa County, and in Yuma. The forum representatives included

community partner agencies, bench and bar members, law enforcement, and members at large, some of whom were eligible under the Legal Service Corporation guidelines. The forums held in Southern Arizona yielded a common result that lack of affordable housing and evictions were the greatest concerns. In one Maricopa county forum landlord/tenant and fair housing issues were mentioned as the greatest needs. In the other Maricopa forums, immigration issues and solar/consumer fraud were the mentioned as the highest concern. The Yuma county forum shared as the greatest concern was family law cases and the need for more “hands on” lawyering in those cases.

The feedback from the community forums and the 2017 study results were consistent.