Civil legal aid is free legal advice, representation or other legal assistance provided to low-income and vulnerable people who cannot otherwise afford legal help. The responsibility for meeting the civil legal needs of Louisiana’s poor falls primarily on a network of nonprofit, civil legal aid providers who serve our poorest citizens with free civil legal assistance. Declines in federal and state funding combined with Louisiana’s high poverty, place our already challenged civil legal aid system in crisis.

The Louisiana Bar Foundation conducted an Economic Impact and Social Return on Investment Analysis for fiscal year 2018. The study included data from 42 civil legal aid providers. Social return on investment (SROI) is an internationally standardized and accepted process for measuring and understanding the financial impact of social services organizations.

For every $1 invested in Louisiana’s civil legal aid services, these programs deliver $9.13 in immediate and long-term financial benefits.

The net economic impact value resulting from Louisiana civil legal activities during the 2018 fiscal year totaled $95,124,000.

The total net social return on investment for Louisiana’s civil legal aid programs during the 2018 fiscal year was 913%.

“This Analysis shows that dollars spent on Louisiana’s civil legal aid providers are well spent and deliver unmistakable economic returns to the state. Continued funding of the civil legal aid providers will provide a substantial impact to the state.” - Chief Justice Bernette J. Johnson, Louisiana Supreme Court

Highlights

| Total number of cases handled in Louisiana during fiscal year 2018 | 22,727 |
| Total net economic impact value of services | $95,124,000 |
| Total tax-based funding for Louisiana civil legal aid operations | $10,419,000* |
| SOCIAL IMPACT RETURN on INVESTMENT | 913% |

* Funding sources include the Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) and the Federal Legal Services Corporation (LSC). The LBF is the largest state funder of civil legal aid and has distributed more than $78 million throughout Louisiana to help address the legal needs of indigent citizens. In 2018, the LBF awarded $6.7 million to 63 civil legal aid providers and public interest attorneys. LSC is a nonprofit established by Congress to provide financial support for civil legal aid to low-income Americans in every state.

Investing in civil legal aid is a powerful way to help people solve critical problems and prevent events that are personally harmful and expensive for society. Schools, businesses, government agencies and the state as a whole benefit from resolving civil legal problems.
Louisiana’s civil legal aid organizations assisted in 22,727 legal matters. Services were provided in over 100 types of civil legal problems.

## Major Areas of Services and Types of Legal Matters

### Family Law
- adoption
- domestic violence
- divorce & separation
- custody and visitation
- guardianship

### Health Care
- Medicaid
- Medicare
- private insurance
- home & community care
- long term care

### Public Benefits
- social security
- Medicare
- Medicaid
- food stamps
- unemployment

### Consumer Protection
- bankruptcy
- debt/wage garnishments
- tax issues
- debt collections
- repossessions

### Employment
- discrimination
- wage claims
- fair labor standards
- employment rights

### Housing
- eviction
- foreclosure
- public housing
- landlord/tenant
- sub-standard housing

### Community Support
- driver’s license
- reinstatement assistance
- education
- mental health
- disabilities
- immigration
- wills & estates

## About Community Services Analysis LLC

Community Services Analysis LLC (CSACO) is a leading provider of Social Value Return on Investment analysis and reporting and has completed over 220 Economic Impact and Social Return on Investment analysis projects for individual organizations, association groups, and state governments nationwide. CSACO serves as the exclusive provider of SROI services to the National Legal Aid & Defender Association.