

Southern Nevada

SLP

SENIOR LAW PROGRAM

**Proudly Serving Senior Residents
of Southern Nevada Since 1978**

2022 ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

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snslp.org**

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Near Sahara and Buffalo

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2022

Senior Law Program was able to implement a number of program enhancements in 2022 because of additional funding through the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) related to the ARPA CARES Act available funding, funding from the Nevada Bar Foundation and restructuring organizational work flows to increase our capacity to serve seniors.

- SLP transitioned to a new case management system, LegalServer, funded by ADSD, designed to support legal aid organizations and with customization options that have generated significant operational efficiencies.
- SLP engaged a professional marketing company for an Outreach and Marketing Campaign, funded by ADSD, that allowed us to upgrade to a new website, update our collateral material, create some Spanish/English materials, supported the visibility of our program services to seniors and expanded the visibility of our program for caring attorneys to volunteer pro bono through the Senior Advocates Program.
- SLP increased our recruitment of Senior Advocate pro bono attorneys, supported by a Nevada Supreme Court Certificate of Recognition in May 2022, which created momentum of awareness of pro bono opportunities at SLP and contained the invaluable encouragement of the Supreme Court Justices in directing estate and probate attorneys to become involved in supporting SLP in our mission. SLP strengthened our pro bono recruitment efforts in December, as a result of critical funding from the Nevada Bar Foundation.
- SLP introduced Power of Attorney Health Care Clinics (POAH) in June 2022, as a strategy to reduce the average 6-month wait time for basic estate planning services appointments. The clinic format provides education related to basic estate planning and the opportunity to have seniors complete their POAH—with 70% of clinic attendees completing this critical document. Current wait time for basic estate planning services is now 4.5-months.
- SLP became an approved agency by the UNLV School of Social Work and welcomed our first social work practicum student in August 2022, which has expanded our abilities to more holistically help our clients with legal and social services needs. This is in addition to the Boyd Law School Externs, the Northwest Career College Legal Assistant Externs, and the two volunteer attorneys (retired) who work in our office one half-day each week.



NUMBERS FOR 2022



Clients Served in 2022

2129

Assisted Without Litigation

2017

Represented in Litigation

112

Participants in Clinics

435

Participants at Seminars

387

Placed with Pro Bono Attorneys

10

Clinics with Pro Bono Attorneys

38

TYPES OF CLIENT MATTERS

Estate Planning

949

Guardianship

44

Evictions/Housing

646

Civil Litigation

35

Scams/Fraud/Contract Disputes

220

Real Property

17

Income/Public Benefits

132

Other

124

SUCCESS STORIES




Many of the vulnerable seniors being evicted are faced with extreme, unavoidable financial hardships and need time to find a new place to reside. Mr. H (72 years old) and Mrs. W (69 years old) are such individuals who never thought they would face the threat of eviction for non-payment of rent and needed assistance from SLP. The recently married couple were facing the threat of homelessness and were overwhelmed. The

couple stopped paying rent because the landlord would not renew their lease after October, and they needed to save money to afford moving to another home. Throughout the appointment, the couple kept repeating “we are looking for another place we can afford,” “we cannot find anything,” and “we are not ready to leave our home after seven days.” An overarching theme amongst many tenants facing evictions, is that they want to pay their rent; however, they do not have the money to pay an increased rate, cannot afford to move, and cannot afford to stay at their current residence. Mr. H and Mrs. W had been looking for a new place, but could not find affordable housing. Our SLP attorney, Nik, took the time to listen to their fears/concerns, advised them on responding to the eviction notice, and eased their immediate panic of being evicted after seven days. We also provided them with housing and social services resources to ease some of the burdens surrounding their eviction scenario. Having a caring attorney listen to them respectfully and provide a legal means to stave off eviction for a period of time, they expressed that SLP was “a blessing” and “lifted an unbearable weight” from their shoulders.



Carmen is a 77-year-old recently widowed immigrant, who relied on her husband to handle all business matters. With her husband's sudden death, Carmen was plunged into managing her finances and budgeting her expenses.

Inexperienced in money issues and suffering from depression/suicidal tendencies, Carmen stopped paying her bills and began isolating herself from the outside world. The anxiety over her growing financial woes resulted in Carmen refusing to open any letters/bills from her credit cards. One day while using her debit card, she noticed that \$300 in her bank account had been removed. When Carmen inquired about the missing money, her bank informed her that a credit card company had taken the money. Needing answers on how to recover the money, Carmen decided to contact SLP where our attorney then reviewed the documentation from the bank, the multitude of letters from various creditors, and researched any court cases filed against her. The SLP attorney then advised Carmen on the next steps regarding the money being taken out of her bank account and her overwhelming debt with her credit cards.



However, the legal advice is only the start of Carmen's story. While reviewing her documents, our SLP attorney, Chelsea, talked to Carmen about her life. Crying, Carmen struggled to tell Chelsea about her loneliness, issues with her cat, and loss of her husband. By listening to Carmen and not judging her circumstances, she confided in SLP and Chelsea that she cannot read English and was ashamed by her financial situation. Chelsea comforted her about her financial woes and told her to reach out to her if she cannot read anything from a creditor. This offer surprised Carmen and she began to cry with gratitude. Comfortable in talking with Chelsea, Carmen inquired about various social issues she was facing, such as her inability to pay her energy bill, afford food, and car issues. SLP provided Carmen with various counseling/support services, food resources, pet resources, job options, and transportation assistance. After the interview, Carmen felt relieved and comforted by the kindness of SLP. She "had a safe space to talk to someone about her issues" and felt "strong enough" to reach out for help.

GOALS FOR 2023

Seek funding support to add staffing of a bilingual attorney and a bilingual paralegal, in addition to the current two SLP staff members who are bilingual.

Increase the number of Hispanic seniors served by SLP to align more closely with the percentage of Hispanic population in Southern Nevada.

Continue to seek improvements in how SLP collaborates with other legal aid organizations and community organizations.

Expand the Senior Advocates Pro Bono Program with external attorneys committing to volunteer a minimum of 6 hours annually, including Spanish speaking attorneys, and increasing internal staffing to support the administrative responsibilities related to a robust pro bono program.

Launch tri-annual “Will-a-Thon events” that utilize pro bono attorneys who are affiliated for a group activity, for example; CCBA, Young Lawyers’ Section of the State Bar, Public Lawyers, etc., along with senior centers located in areas of high need, to increase the reach of legal services support to vulnerable seniors.

