

AMERICAN SAMOA LEGAL AID OFFICE
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AMERIKA SAMOA



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POLICY RESOLUTION NO. 24
AMERICAN SAMOA LEGAL AID, INC.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRIORITIES OF AMERICAN SAMOA LEGAL AID, INC.

Approved as amended on December 29, 2020

PRIORITIES BASED ON ASSESSMENT OF LEGAL NEEDS, LSC REGULATION 45 CFR
 1620,
 LSC GUIDELINES AND PRESENT ASLA CAPACITY

PRIORITY AREAS	TYPES OF CASES & MATTERS	TYPE OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED (COUNSEL AND ADVICE; LIMITED ACTION; EXTENDED REPRESENTATION; MEDIATION; COMMUNITY EDUCATION)
Maintaining Economic Stability for Families and Individuals	Social Security disability and retirement	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Food stamps	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	WIC	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation

	<p>Unpaid wage claims (victims of abuse)</p> <p>Employment discrimination</p> <p>Worker's Compensation</p> <p>Small estates</p> <p>Public utility problems (no injury or property damage)</p> <p>Debt collections(collection abuses)</p> <p>Consumer fraud</p> <p>Small claims</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation, upon referral from private attorney(s) unwilling to take case</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice or limited action and provide community education</p>
<p>Obtaining Necessary Health Care for Families and Individuals</p>	<p>Access to Medicare</p> <p>Access to Medicaid</p> <p>Access to mental health services</p> <p>Children's Health Insurance Program</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p>

	Payment of medical bills	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
Preserving Safety and Stability of Families	Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence and/or Stalking	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Elder Abuse	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Divorce and associated child custody, child and spousal support:(1) to protect DV, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence and/or Stalking victim; (2) to protect client from being homeless; (3) when representation is uneven – other party has counsel; or (4) when client needs counsel given her/his ability	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Divorce when both parties agree	Mediation involving the use of private attorneys under ASLA’s Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) Plan
	Prevention and loss of child custody when DV, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence and/or Stalking	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Obtain and enforce child support and spousal support order when violating spouse	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation

	<p>is not low income</p> <p>Paternity</p> <p>Guardianships/Powers of Attorney/Affidavits</p> <p>Name change</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p>
Supporting Educational Opportunities	<p>Special Education Services</p> <p>Student Financial Aid</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p>
Preserving the Home	<p>1602 housing access and eviction</p> <p>Home Foreclosure (prevent from being homeless)</p> <p>Housing discrimination</p> <p>Eviction (prevent client from being homeless)</p> <p>Housing conditions</p> <p>Utility cutoffs</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p>
Protecting People with Special Vulnerabilities	<p>Disability</p> <p>Civil rights</p>	<p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p> <p>Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation</p>

	Immigration	extended representation Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation of victims of abuses or human trafficking.
Protect and Support Veterans	Veterans Benefits	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Veterans' Healthcare	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
	Discharge upgrades	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation
Assisting Victims of Disasters	Disaster related matters, including: FEMA Benefits; Insurance Benefits; SBA Loans; Replacement of Important Documents; Consumer Issues; Debt; Landlord Tenant Issues; Home Loans; Affidavits, Powers of Attorney, and Other Legal Documents; Other Disaster Related Issues	Provide counsel and advice, limited action or extended representation; Community education

Emergencies: ASLA will handle non-priority cases or matters that require immediate legal action to: (a) Secure or preserve the necessities of life, (b) Protect against or eliminate a significant risk to the health or safety of the client or immediate family members, or (c) Address other significant legal issues that arise because of new and unforeseen circumstances.

Overall Considerations When Deciding To Accept A Case Assuming Applicant For Services is Otherwise Eligible for Services:

1. The merit of the claim(s) or defense(s) and the likelihood of success;
2. The skill and expertise required to competently provide legal assistance to the applicant for services;
3. The available time and resources of ASLA staff to assist the applicant, given the obligations to current clients;
4. Whether the opposing party is represented by counsel;
5. Whether the applicant for services is capable of representing herself or himself, after being provided limited service.

Strategic Advocacy: Each attorney will choose one area of law or issue per year spending up to 10% of their time on impact or island wide institutional change that will assist low income persons. This may include litigation and community education. Preference for partnering with local organizations.

Some examples of cases we will not take except under exceptional circumstances: Personal injury; products liability; fee generating cases with exceptions where statutory fees and case is declined by the private bar; criminal; probate middle to large estates; juvenile delinquency matters; foster care for children.
