



DENVER EVICTION LEGAL DEFENSE PILOT



Pilot Origins

All thirteen Denver City Council members have pooled \$131,500 in donations from their office budgets and a personal contribution to launch a pilot eviction defense program for Denver Residents. The program will be coordinated by Colorado Legal Services, which has decades of experience providing eviction defense to a small number of very vulnerable clients living in public housing or utilizing vouchers. The program will also utilize networks of volunteer lawyers and make other referrals. Strong community demand for legal defense funding emerged during the development of Denver's Housing Plan, and was a priority for stakeholders convened by the City Council Housing and Homelessness Work Group.

Why Legal Representation?

- Denver tenants are represented by an attorney in only 1-3% of the cases involving major landlords, while landlords were represented in virtually 100% of the same cases. (*Research by the Colorado Center on Law and Policy and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless*).
- Attorney representation significantly improves tenants' chances of remaining in their home.
- Attorneys can reduce the number of tenants receiving an eviction judgement or improve the terms of stipulated agreements, including money owed, even when they cannot keep tenants' in their current home, lowering barriers to finding their next housing.
- Eviction legal defense is an emerging best practice in cities across the country, including Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, Berkeley, Boston, Milwaukee and others.

Purpose

- Reduce displacement and homelessness.
- Where families cannot remain in their homes, improve the terms of legal stipulations or judgments to minimize barriers in finding future housing.

Pilot Timeline and Goals

- Launch estimated early second quarter of 2018.
- Funding estimated to last approximately 6-9 months, to serve approximately 200 people (some full representation, others with quick legal advice and/or referral).
- Pending positive results, advocate for city funding for continuation and expansion.

Eligibility

- Denver residents.
- Full representation from Colorado Legal Services: household incomes below 200% of poverty. (Less than \$24,120 for single person - \$49,200 for a family of four).
- The pilot may be able to provide light advice/referral or representation through other providers to households up to 250% of poverty.

Pilot Evaluation

- Who was served.
- Client outcomes.
- If possible, estimated return on investment based on other city expenditures avoided.

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DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY



DENVER EVICTION LEGAL DEFENSE PILOT MODEL

