



# IMPACT REPORT 2024

LEGALLINK.ORG

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW



**750**

attended Legal Link  
trainings



**94%**

saw an increase in legal  
capability following  
Legal First Aid certification



**307**

free legal consults to  
justice workers +  
their clients



**25**

legal trainings delivered to  
partner organizations



**1,465**

active members in the  
Legal First Aid network



**14,650+**

low-income families  
served through the 2024  
Legal First Aid network

**4,656**

all-time  
legal consults

**1,418**

all-time  
people trained in  
Legal First Aid

## DELIVERING LEGAL FIRST AID ON THE FRONTLINES

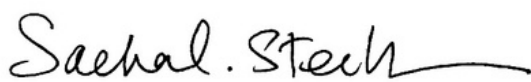
Gloria, a single mother in San Francisco had just 90 days to use her housing subsidy, but landlords were illegally turning her away. Her caseworker, freshly trained in Legal First Aid, knew what to do. Together, they asserted Gloria's rights, educated the landlords, and secured stable housing—just in time, before the subsidy expired and the family lost their shelter placement. As a result of this intervention, Gloria's children remained safely housed, and the family avoided homelessness.

This is the power of Legal First Aid: an early intervention model designed to prevent legal crises before they escalate. For low-income families, everyday challenges like housing instability, unemployment, or domestic violence often involve hidden legal issues that are overlooked—leaving families without the support they need when it matters most. Legal First Aid equips frontline, trusted community providers to identify and address those issues early, improving long-term outcomes for families.

In 2024, 423 trusted community partners completed Legal Link's Legal First Aid training, becoming frontline legal responders. Together, our Legal First Aid network supported more than 14,000 families across Northern California, offering practical, life-changing legal support. We also continued to help states across the country adapt and implement our model, while advancing policy reform in California to expand the role of trained community members in helping people navigate legal issues.

We are proud of what we've built and deeply grateful to our passionate staff, Board, and all of you who make this work possible. We are especially humbled by the growing network of Legal First Aid responders, whose tireless work and expertise are creating lasting change in their communities.

Thank you for joining us,



Sacha Steinberger + Kate Crowley Richardson  
Legal Link Co-Executive Directors



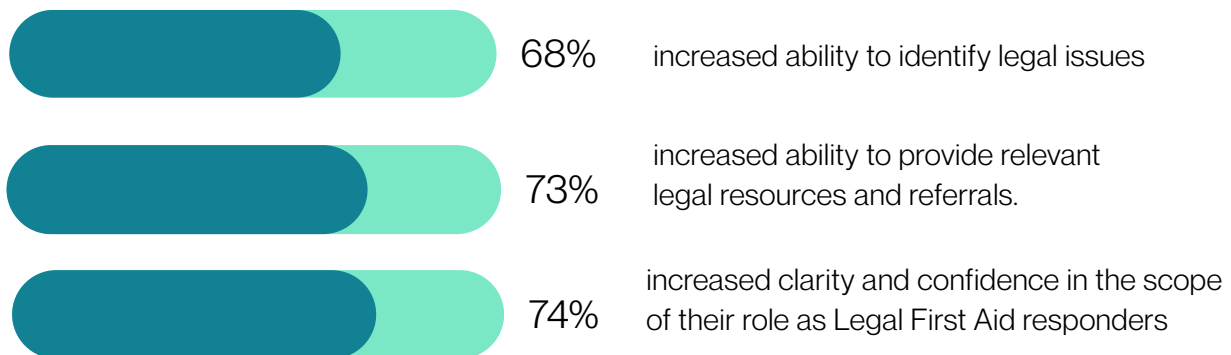


# THE LEGAL FIRST AID® IMPACT

Legal First Aid® is our flagship program—training frontline providers to spot and respond to clients’ legal issues before they escalate. It’s more than a training; it’s a gateway into our support network, offering free legal consults, digital screening tools, advanced trainings, and monthly updates to keep providers connected and empowered.

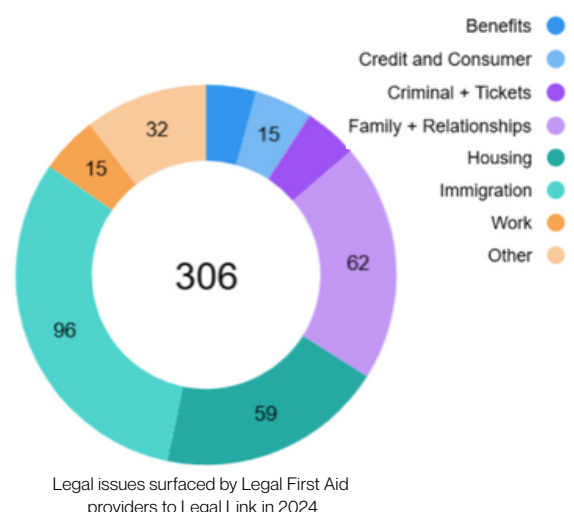
This year, we certified 423 providers in Legal First Aid from over 60 community partner organizations across ten Northern California counties. These providers are working with clients who are in critical moments, where legal problem solving is essential to their housing, economic, and family stability.

Legal Link measures each trainee’s legal capability—an emerging concept that captures the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to navigate the law, access support, and resolve legal issues. In 2024, 94% of participants improved their legal capability, with notable gains in the following areas:



A 2024 independent evaluation of Legal First Aid across three states revealed strong, consistent results: 93% of trainees increased their legal capability; the program earned a Net Promoter Score of 75—well above the legal services average of 32; and over half continued using the tools regularly three months post-training, especially on housing, family violence, public benefits, and immigration issues.

We continued to expand Legal First Aid nationwide—partnering with leaders like the New Hampshire Judicial Branch, Michigan Legal Help, Virginia Legal Aid Society, and Georgetown Law to launch new programs. We also continued supporting Oklahoma Access to Justice Foundation, now entering its third year. To reach even more providers, we built California’s Legal First Aid on a new online learning platform—and a national version is on the way.



“ The training was very informative! I didn’t know most of this information before today. I feel like I can return to my role better equipped to help my patients navigate their legal concerns.  
- SF Department of Public Health employee ”

“ The conceptualization of each of the issue areas into three sections (e.g. pre-eviction/non-eviction, eviction, post-eviction) is an incredibly useful framework for us to be able to better understand and address issues as they arise. Legal Link’s online tools are an incredible continuation of the training process and give us tangible actions... the trainers were so incredibly clear and concise with the material and have made it much easier to digest.  
- Compass Family Services employee ”

# ADVANCING COMMUNITY-BASED JUSTICE + LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

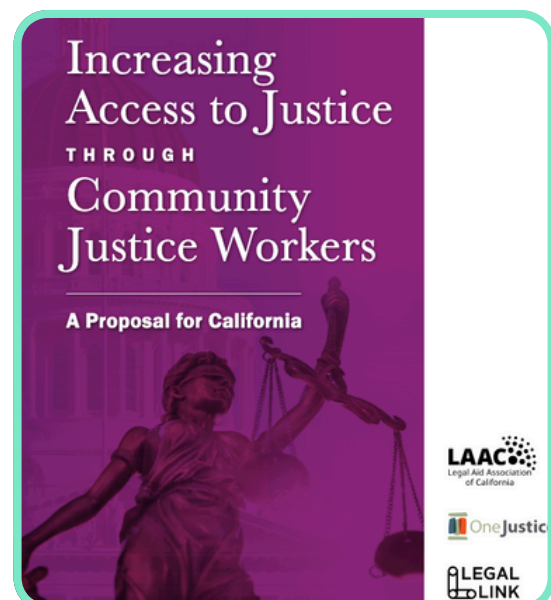


At Legal Link, we believe that legal issues are best addressed on the frontlines—where trusted community members are equipped to spot legal issues early, support their clients through complex systems, and unlock life-changing outcomes. This year, we’ve deepened and expanded that vision, advancing efforts that not only strengthen the legal capability of individuals but also reshape the systems that determine who can access legal help and how. From state-level policy advocacy to national organizing and training, we are building a more equitable legal ecosystem, grounded in community knowledge and trusted relationships. Through these efforts, Legal Link is helping to reshape the legal landscape—making it more inclusive, accessible, and effective.

## California: Advancing Justice Worker Advocacy

In California, Legal Link co-led a bold new policy initiative in partnership with the Legal Aid Association of California, OneJustice, and Stanford Law’s Deborah L. Rhode Center on the Legal Profession.

The proposal would expand the role of justice workers, allowing legal aid organizations to train and supervise them to provide their clients with help on specific legal procedures.



## National: Strengthening Legal Empowerment

Nationally, Legal Link is a core member of the U.S. Legal Empowerment Network, a coalition led by the Bernstein Institute for Human Rights at NYU Law, that unites grassroots leaders advancing community-driven justice. Together, we’re sharing frontline strategies in housing and immigration defense, building collective tools, and preparing for a 2026 convening to chart the future of legal empowerment in the U.S.



# Legal First Aid® case study:

## *preventing eviction*



Legal Link's Legal First Aid program equips frontline providers—like case managers and social workers—with the skills to recognize legal issues early and connect people to accurate, timely tools and resources. This simple, upstream support helps prevent legal crises before they escalate.

### **The Problem:**

In California, nearly 1 in 3 tenants facing eviction never respond to the court paperwork by filing the required “answer,” which leads to a quick eviction judgment that results in displacement. Many don't file an answer because they don't know that it could make a difference.

### **The Solution:**

With Legal First Aid training, community providers can help tenants identify an eviction as an urgent legal issue. They can encourage them to take action and can walk them through an online tool to file an “answer” to the eviction—often in minutes.

### **The Impact:**

The impact is real. In San Mateo County, Stanford Law School found that tenants who filed an answer to an eviction lawsuit were significantly more likely to avoid the most harsh consequences - an eviction judgment or lockout.

We don't need to wait for families to show up in court with a sheriff's notice in hand. By then, it's already a crisis—painful, destabilizing, and expensive. Legal First Aid is an upstream, commonsense solution that helps people before crisis hits. It equips case managers and community providers—the trusted people families already turn to for help—to spot legal issues early and act fast, often preventing the court case altogether.

### **The Social Return on Investment:**

The return on investment is clear: every \$1 spent on housing stability yields \$4 in public benefit. That means fewer shelter nights, fewer ER visits, more stable families, and more manageable caseloads for overstretched legal aid attorneys.

Legal Link doesn't add more players to a crowded system—it helps the system work smarter. It strengthens legal services by reducing crisis-level demand and connecting people to the right help at the right time. Legal First Aid isn't just effective—it's efficient. It's how we make justice preventive, not reactive.



# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE BROADER LEGAL LINK COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORTING OUR WORK

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Zach Zarnow



Mimi and Peter Haas Fund



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF  
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT





# THANK YOU TO OUR TEAM + PARTNERS

WE ARE HONORED TO WORK WITH OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND DEDICATED LEGAL FIRST AID RESPONDERS. THANK YOU TO LEGAL LINK STAFF, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ADVISORY BOARD, INTERNS, AND VOLUNTEERS FOR MAKING THIS WORK POSSIBLE.

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## LEGAL FELLOWS, INTERNS + VOLUNTEERS

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**Amanda Byrne** - Legal Intern 2024  
**Carree Michel** - Volunteer 2024

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**Lauren Lofton**, Senior Staff Attorney  
**Kate Crowley Richardson**, Co-Executive  
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**Sacha Steinberger**, Founder & Co-Executive  
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# THANK YOU

