

# Cy Pres Awards at Legal Services NYC:

## Providing Access to Justice for Thousands of Low-Income People

---

Legal Services NYC (LSNYC) uses cy pres awards to provide access to justice for thousands of low-income New Yorkers who would otherwise go without representation. Our dedicated advocates offer free civil legal services on consumer rights, foreclosure, tenant rights, homelessness, veterans' rights, government benefits, disability, education, discrimination, and disaster relief, among other things.

### Who We Are

Legal Services NYC fights poverty and seeks justice for low income New Yorkers. For almost 50 years, we have challenged systemic injustice and helped clients meet basic needs for housing, income and economic security, family and immigration stability, education, and health care. LSNYC is the largest civil legal services provider in the country; our staff of almost 300 people in neighborhood-based offices and outreach sites across all five boroughs helps more than 70,500 New Yorkers annually.

### Cy Pres Awards & Residual Funds at LSNYC

LSNYC has received millions of dollars in unused residual funds from class actions. LSNYC is a natural fit for such awards: just as the purpose of the class action mechanism is to provide access to justice for people who would otherwise be left without relief, LSNYC's purpose is to provide free legal services to low-income people who would otherwise go without counsel in crucial civil proceedings.

### What LSNYC Achieves with Cy Pres Awards

Every \$100,000 sent to LSNYC permits us to serve approximately 350 additional low-income New Yorkers. Key program areas that cy pres awards benefit include:

- **Consumer Rights.** LSNYC assists clients with a range of consumer issues, including bankruptcy, debt collection, student debt, privacy rights, credit report errors, banking problems, payday loans, and impermissible utility terminations.
- **Tenant/Housing Rights.** LSNYC provides legal advice and representation to tenants with a wide range of housing problems, including non-payment and holdover evictions cases, illegal evictions, and bad conditions.
- **Employment.** LSNYC assists clients with unemployment insurance and other employment related problems. We focus in particular on the re-entry problems of ex-offenders.
- **Foreclosure Protection.** LSNYC provides advice and representation to victims of predatory lending who are at risk of losing their homes. In addition to providing advice and litigating cases in court, LSNYC is sometimes able to help clients negotiate better financial arrangements with lenders.

# Cy Pres Awards at Legal Services NYC:

## Providing Access to Justice for Thousands of Low-Income People

---

- **Family Law.** LSNYC assists clients with child custody, divorce, child support, and orders of protection. Many of our clients are victims of domestic violence.
- **Veterans Justice.** LSNYC has the largest veterans justice project in the country, serving more than 800 clients every year. LSNYC provides a broad range of civil legal services for veterans, service members, and their families in all five boroughs.
- **Access to Benefits.** LSNYC helps people access and retain government benefits, ensuring they can keep food on the table and a roof over their heads.
- **Disability.** LSNYC helps people with disabilities by assisting them in retaining and obtaining disability benefits, fighting discrimination, and advocating for fair access to public accommodations.
- **Education.** LSNYC helps children secure special education plans, and challenge unfair suspensions so that children can obtain the education that they are entitled to.
- **Immigration.** LSNYC helps immigrants who are victims of violence obtain legal status, and assists with naturalization proceedings, family-based petitions, and work permit renewals.
- **Anti-Discrimination Work.** LSNYC fights discrimination that impacts low-income New Yorkers. We challenge unlawful discrimination based on race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, HIV status, English language proficiency, and other protected categories.
- **Disaster Relief.** LSNYC serves victims of Superstorm Sandy by helping provide access to food stamps, shelter, and FEMA benefits. Today, lawyers represent Sandy-affected clients in a range of storm-related matters, including housing repairs, assist with the build-it-back program, and negotiations with insurers and banks.
- **Tax.** LSNYC provides legal representation, advice and referral to low-income taxpayers who have disputes with the Internal Revenue Service and the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance.

For additional information, please contact:

Adam Heintz  
Director of Pro Bono Services  
Legal Services NYC  
40 Worth Street, Suite 606  
New York, NY 10013  
(646) 442-3582  
aheintz@ls-nyc.org

