WASHINGTON STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE OF MILITARY AND VETERAN LEGAL ASSISTANCE DATA 2023

OVERVIEW OF DATA

In 2023, the Office of Military and Veteran Legal Assistance (OMVLA) received requests for help from 522 community members, an increase of 123% over 2022. Of those requests, 436 of the community members qualified for our help. A qualified request means that the community member:

- Is a **veteran, service member, or their family member**
- **Lives in WA** and has a **non-criminal legal issue in WA**
- Makes at or under **400% of the federal poverty level**

The top area of need was family law, followed by consumer law, landlord-tenant or property law and wills, trusts and estates

WHOM DO WE HELP?

OMVLA asks each community member for information on our online intake form to determine whether they are eligible for our help, track demographics, and identify areas for improvement. The data below is for qualified community members. Demographic data is optional, with the exception of data used to determine eligibility.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- Nearly **eighty percent of community members are veterans**. Service members make up 10% of OMVLA's requests. Family members make up the remainder of requests.
- Over **36% of community members requesting OMVLA's help are BIPOC**.
- Women, non-gender conforming, and non-binary community members make up less than 1/3 of OMVLA's requests for assistance.
- Approximately 20% of requests for assistance in 2023 were from a community member over the age of 60. Ten percent of requests came from community members under the age of 30.

Over 80% of community members reported that they have a disability.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

On average, community members who were qualified for help made 176% of the federal poverty level. In 2023, the federal poverty level was $2,138 per month for one person and $4,400 per month for a family of four. For OMVLA's purposes, "income" includes federal veterans benefits, social security, and other public benefits.

Average Federal Poverty Level by Group	
Veterans (341 Total Requests)	173%
Military (41 Requests)	197%
Military Family (7 Requests)	147%
Veteran Family (47 Requests)	183%
All Community Members with Disabilities (304 Requests)	173%
BIPOC Community Members (128 Requests)	158%
Rural Community Members (90 Requests)	150%

WHAT LEGAL ISSUES DO COMMUNITY MEMBERS NEED HELP WITH?

OMVLA received nearly **150 qualified requests for assistance with a family law issue in 2023- more than twice the number of requests than received for any other issue area**. OMVLA received the most requests for help in the areas of family law, housing law, and consumer law.

Family Law	Housing Law	Consumer Law
Divorce, Separation, and Annulment	Landlord-Tenant Issues (Private)	Miscellaneous (Debt Issues, Complaints About Businesses, Etc.)
Parenting Plans, Custody, and Visitation	Homeownership and Property	Collections, Repossession and Garnishment
Child Support	Eviction	Bankruptcy

WHERE DO COMMUNITY MEMBERS LIVE?

OMVLA received requests for help from 29 of 39 counties in Washington in 2023.

- Island County had the most requests of any rural county. This is a trend over several years.
- Just over 1 in 5 of the community members who requested OMVLA's help lived in a rural county.
- **OMVLA received requests for help from four counties for the first time in 2023**: Asotin, Kittitas, Stevens, and Walla Walla.

CASE REQUESTS AND PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

OMVLA added 34 attorneys to its pro bono roster in 2023, as well as several new Vet Hero partnerships with large law firms and corporations. Pro bono attorneys accept approximately 15% of OMVLA's cases for assistance.

- OMVLA's cases are open, on average, for 20 days from the time a community member completes an intake until the case is closed by referring the community member to a pro bono attorney or legal aid organization, sending them self-help materials, or connecting them with a social service group.
- OMVLA received the most requests in March, with 64 requests. OMVLA averaged 44 requests for help per month (36 qualified requests).