

## **National Association of Legal Services Developers (NALSD): Providing needed legal assistance and elder rights advocacy under the Older Americans Act**

**For more information contact: (In 2002-2004)  
The National Association of Legal Services Developers**

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### **What is legal assistance?**

Under the Older Americans Act the term legal assistance means legal advice and representation provided by an attorney to older individuals with economic or social needs and includes...counseling or other appropriate assistance. Paralegals or legal assistants under the direct supervision of licensed attorneys can also provide assistance.

### **What is a Legal Services Developer?**

A Legal Services Developer is the individual in each state who is responsible for providing leadership in developing legal assistance programs for persons 60 years of age and older and plays a key role in assisting states in the development and the provision of a strong elder rights system. The Developer provides oversight of the Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III B legal assistance programs and assures that at-risk older people have access to the civil justice system. The activities of these legal programs and the legal services developer help in supporting those most vulnerable older people enabling them to retain autonomy, remain in the community and assists in the prevention of many kinds of abuses against older people.

### **What is the legal assistance program under Title III B of the Older Americans Act OAA?**

The role of the Title III B legal assistance program is to identify and serve the civil legal needs of those older people who are most vulnerable due to social and/or economic circumstances, particularly those who are frail, isolated and/or minorities. This may be provided through legal information, legal community education and/or direct legal representation.

## **What is the role of a Legal Services Developer?**

The Legal Services Developer ensures:

1. Leadership in securing and maintaining legal rights of older individuals;
2. Coordination of the provision of legal assistance;
3. Provision of technical assistance, training and other supportive functions to area agencies on aging, legal assistance providers, ombudsmen, and other persons as appropriate;
4. Promotion of financial management services for older individuals at risk of conservatorship
5. Assistance to older individuals in understanding their rights, exercising choices, benefiting from services and opportunities and maintaining the rights of older individuals at risk of guardianship; and
6. Improvement of the quality and quantity of legal services provided to older individuals

## **What is the National Association of Legal Services Developers (NALSD)?**

NALSD serves as a unified voice for the development of legal services programs for the vulnerable elderly as funded by the Older Americans Act. By doing this, NALSD improves access for the elderly to legal services and assists in meeting the legal needs of those most at risk socially and/or economically.

## **What types of legal services are provided?**

- ❑ Maintaining adequate income—Medicaid, other Public Benefits
- ❑ Securing Health Care Benefits—Medicare, and other Medical Plans
- ❑ Keeping safe and affordable housing—Foreclosure, Eviction, Utility shutoff
- ❑ Preventing and finding relief from fraud, abuse, neglect and exploitation-home repair scams, revoking powers of attorney, restraining orders and other remedies
- ❑ End of life care communications—Advance Directives, Do-Not-Resuscitate issues
- ❑ Maintaining the rights of at-risk older persons—Guardianship and Conservatorship defense, Residents Rights protections

**To locate the Legal Services Developer for your state/territory or to contact the National Association of Legal Services Developers (NALSD), please visit [www.tcsg.org/lspdpage.htm](http://www.tcsg.org/lspdpage.htm) under the category of Listings of Legal Services Developers and Elder Law Programs.**