

About the Endowment for Equal Justice

The majority of Americans who go to court do so without legal aid. They may be left by their economic circumstances to face life-altering events – such as losing a home or custody of children, or escaping domestic violence or elder abuse – on their own.

In addition, those individuals and families who come into contact with or leave the criminal justice system face a range of civil legal issues. A victim of abuse may need a protection order, or a formerly incarcerated individual may need a driver's license reinstated in order to get a job. Access to civil legal aid can help put people on a path to self-sufficiency, lead to better outcomes in the civil and criminal justice systems, and enhance the safety and strength of our communities.

But, currently, only one in four people who need legal aid in Washington can access it due to a lack of resources.

The Endowment is working to change that equation. As the nation's largest investment fund dedicated to providing legal aid, the Endowment for Equal Justice aims to provide a stable, reliable source of funds for people in need of legal service and over the last five years, has distributed more than \$4.8M to help people in need of legal aid in Washington State.

Reach 20 is the fundraising initiative now underway to get the fund to reach \$20M by the year 2020 in order to distribute at least \$1M a year to legal aid programs in Washington.

The Endowment for Equal Justice:

- Provides funds for 23 volunteer and specialty legal aid programs
- Supports programs that work to change systems and policies that perpetuate poverty
 - Last year advocacy and impact litigation funded in part by the Endowment was responsible for changing policies and laws that will positively affect over **two million** Washington residents
- Is an increasingly important source of funding for annual legal aid grants in Washington (\$4.8M disbursed over the last five years)
- Is the largest endowed fund supporting civil legal aid in the United States

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