

2023 IOLTA Grants

The Rhode Island Bar Foundation 2023 Interest on Lawyers' Trust Account (IOLTA) Grants totaling \$373,109

This year's recipients are:

Rhode Island Legal Services (RILS)

RILS is Rhode Island's major civil legal aid provider, providing aid to low-income individuals and families, the elderly, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, and those affected by the foreclosure crisis in Rhode Island. For the past 52 years, RILS has provided civil legal aid to well over 150,000 individuals and families. IOLTA Grant Funds are used for the Volunteer Lawyer Program primarily to help support the Family Law and Housing Units. Cases handled include divorce, custody, domestic violence, visitation, evictions, and landlord/tenant issues.

Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island

Funds are used to continue the Citizenship & Immigrations Services' Immigration Law-Project. Since 1987, this project has provided free and low-cost comprehensive immigration legal services and education, advocacy and outreach on immigration laws and issues to thousands of immigrants and refugees in the state, as well as the community.

Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Funds are used to continue the Superior Court component of their Domestic Violence Victim Advocacy Program in order to help victims seek civil and criminal relief from domestic violence.

Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless

Funds are used to fund the Homeless Legal Clinic to enable homeless Rhode Islanders access to pro bono legal services through attorneys who volunteer at homeless shelters and drop-in sites.

Center for Mediation & Collaboration Rhode Island (CMCRI)

CMCRI provides mediation and dispute resolution services to community residents and organizations regardless of their ability to pay. CMCRI staff and volunteers assist in disputes, both in the community and Small Claims Courts, assist with family and parent-teen conflicts, court-involved juveniles, neighbor-to-neighbor, organizational and workplace disputes, landlord-tenant, human rights cases, and small claims matters.

Rhode Island Legal Education Foundation

Funds are used to help support the administration of the 2023 Rhode Island Mock Trial Tournament.

Rhode Island Bar Association Legal Information and Referral Service for the Elderly

The primary objective of the Rhode Island Bar Association's Legal Information and Referral Service for the Elderly is to make legal services readily available to senior citizens ages sixty and over.

The goals of this program encompass providing legal services that parallel the economic and social needs of senior citizens, many of whom face financial crises brought on by catastrophic illnesses, family abandonment, forced retirements and physical and emotional abuse by family members and/or caretakers. Volunteer attorneys pursue the rights of senior citizens, providing representation in many areas of law, including landlord/tenant, guardianship, probate, health and income maintenance, consumer finance, civil, real estate, family law and foreclosure. Additionally, seniors receive free advice from volunteer attorneys at scheduled community outreach programs held at senior centers and organizations throughout RI.

Rhode Island Bar Association Pro Bono Project

The Pro Bono Project responds to civil law cases including family law/domestic violence, guardianship, bankruptcy, collections, wills, tort defense, landlord/tenant, foreclosure, etc., as well as conflict cases referred from RI Legal Services. The primary objective is to provide critically needed legal assistance to poverty level clients through the volunteer Lawyer Program. Placing eligible clients with critical legal matters such as domestic violence is prioritized.

Day One

Funds are used to help support the advocacy services program providing support and legal advocacy for victims of sexual assault, providing victims with information and legal advocacy as their case proceeds through the criminal justice system.

Rhode Island Center for Justice

The Center for Justice is an independent non-profit public interest law center created in cooperation with Roger Williams University School of Law. Their mission is to ensure justice for vulnerable individuals, families, and communities through the provision of free legal services and advocacy. IOLTA funding is for the support of its Lifeline Project in the provision of direct free legal assistance to low-income utility consumer households both in administrative proceedings before the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers and in Administrative Procedures Act appeals at the Superior Court. The Lifeline Project is dedicated to providing free legal advocacy and representation to medically vulnerable, low-income households who have experience or are at risk of termination of electric and gas utility service.