

**City of Longview
2013 Community Development Block Grant
Project Design**

Applicant: Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid (CWLA) **Contact Person:** Lori Bashor-Sarancik

Title: Self Help Plus Program **Title:** Program Coordinator

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Non-Profit Status: NO ___ YES X ___ **IRS Tax Identification Number** 91-1945347 _____

Type of Project: Please check one:

- Housing
- Community Facility
- Public Facility/Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Prevention or Elimination of Slum & Blight
- Match
- Public Service
- Planning

PROJECT TITLE: Self Help Plus Program: Legal Aid for our most vulnerable citizens

CDBG Funding Requested: \$ 5600

**COWLITZ WAHKIAKUM
LEGAL AID**

February 4, 2013

Dear Honorable Counselors,

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Attached you will find an application from Cowlitz-Whakiakum Legal Aid for CDBG funds. Our agency provides free legal services and representation to low income residents of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties. The agency was incorporated in 1999 and served 390 new clients during 2012.

Our agency has a relatively stable main funding source, The Legal Foundation of Washington and is supported with funds from The United Way as well. We have an experienced staff, a stable office location and 61 volunteer attorneys on our roster to provide pro bono legal services to the community. Our local Bar Association is very involved in the activities of CWLA.

Our Board of Directors has supported the creation of a program that would pay an attorney a reduced amount per hour to provide legal representation for a targeted population meeting these criteria:

Low Income residents of the City of Longview

And

Veterans – for legal matters related to benefits, family law, Collections and drivers license issues, or

Domestic Violence victims – for legal matters relating to family law, or

Third Party Custody clients – for legal matters relating to Family law.

We believe this program will help us serve more clients in a meaningful way in our community, providing full representation to clients without the cognitive or administrative skill to handle the complex nature of their legal matter. The program will also offer the only certified attorney in Cowlitz County who can handle claims to the VA for benefits. Our Program Coordinator and Board members solicited input from many agencies and researched the program during its development. Many of the research resources are attached to this proposal.

From a cost standpoint, this program is essentially a direct pass-through to the contracted attorney who will be providing representation to residents of Longview. The agency expenses for the project will be less than 2%.

Thank You for considering this program for your funding in 2013. We know it will make a significant difference in the lives of the people who are accepted into the program.

Sincerely,



Amy Wade
Board President



Lori Bashor-Sarancik
Program Coordinator

Problem/Opportunity Description / Executive Summary

1. Give a *brief* overall summary of your project.

The Self Help Plus Program provides free legal representation to Longview's most vulnerable citizens: Veterans, Domestic Violence victims, Relatives of At-Risk Children. The targeted population is low income and without the cognitive or administrative skill required to navigate complex procedures and paperwork which are barriers to advancing their lives. Services will be provided by attorney-contractors paid at about half their typical hourly rate. Attorney-contractors will prepare documents and represent Self Help Plus clients in court, rather than just provide advice as in the majority of our cases. Funds requested will be essentially passed through our agency to pay for the time of the attorney-contractors. CWLA is a non-profit 501c(3) agency, providing free civil legal services to low income citizens in our community since 1999.

2. Briefly describe the project noting the problem(s) or opportunity(s) that will be addressed. Quantify it in terms of cause, extent, location, frequency and duration.

Problem: The Legal process presents barriers that must be overcome for self-sufficiency, obtaining employment, or securing stable housing.

Cause:

- **Veterans:** disability, medical condition, mental health, lack of understanding of the legal process, substance abuse.
- **Domestic Violence victims:** abuse, and behaviors manifested in the victims.
- **Non-Parental custody:** substance abuse, criminal activity, unemployment, medical or mental health conditions (parents).

Extent / Frequency: (referrals in one year-estimate): 120 Veterans, 12 Domestic Violence Victims, 12 Third Party Custody Clients. CWLA is requesting funding from several sources to address the anticipated demand.

Location/Duration: Services will take place at our current location. The requested funding will pay for approximately 50 hours of legal representation, or between 5 and 10 residents of Longview. Our office is located at 1338 Commerce, Longview.

3. List the specific CDBG objective information from the "5 year Strategic Plan" within the 2009-2013 Longview-Kelso Consolidated Plan. (See website information under Instructions).

Objective Code and Number: SL – 1.31

Objective Title: Legal Aid to Vulnerable Citizens

Objective Proposed Accomplishments & Outcomes: Improve community appearance, safety and vitality through active partnerships between local government, non-profits, community

organizations and neighborhoods. Provide public services to compliment community-wide efforts to serve those most in need of assistance.

Self Help Plus provides supportive legal services to Longview's most vulnerable low income citizens in three targeted populations: Veterans, Domestic Violence Victims, and Relatives of at-risk children. The project represents local government (City of Longview) working with non-profit agencies to focus extra help for citizens who do not have the cognitive or administrative skills to overcome the legal barriers which may be holding them back from establishing more productive futures.

Project Readiness

4. Describe what specific steps need to be completed before the project will be ready to proceed? (Projects must be under construction within 12 months of signing your CDBG Contract or funding will be deobligated.)

In order to proceed with this project, CWLA must secure \$15,000 in funding for start-up. CWLA has applied to multiple sources for this funding and will primarily rely on the United Way and Fundraising efforts for the start-up funds. Once the funding is secured, we can begin meeting with our referral sources and holding clinics with volunteer attorneys. We will implement separate data tracking sheets for referrals to the Self Help Plus program once we start seeing clients in our clinics. Simultaneously, we can publish the opportunity for an attorney contractor, and assist them in attending a continuing education class specific to the legal needs of Veterans, and a certification from the Veterans Administration. We expect to complete these things by September of 2013. By the end of October of 2013, we expect that an attorney contractor can begin meeting with prospective clients and start the intake process using the CDBG Intake Forms and guidelines.

Since CWLA is already well equipped to deal with the types of legal issues presented by most Domestic Violence Victims and Non-Parental custody clients, the only infrastructure we need to develop relates to handling cases for the needs of Veterans. Insurance is already in place, office location, computer equipment, and a private place to meet with clients. We are currently set up to handle document production and copying of multiple legal forms. There are three former military licensed attorneys in Cowlitz County who have already agreed to help out with the project as well. Barring any unforeseen barriers, the project will be ready to proceed immediately after the funding is available.

5. Please list start and completion date by Month, Day and Year:

Complete the "Project Timeline" (included at the end of this application) detailing project tasks and dates. This will be a part of your contract goals should your project be selected.

Project Start Date (09-02-2013) September 2013

Project Completion Date (07-31-2014, indefinite – we intend to continue it on an ongoing basis)

Problem Impact and Severity / Needs Assessment

6. What is the effect on the community as a whole or upon individuals? Note current and anticipated consequences if the problem continues. Also list the number of low and moderate households affected.

Problem Impact and Severity:

After 14 years providing civil legal services and gathering data for low income litigants in our community, Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid (CWLA) is uniquely poised to observe trends and barriers in the targeted population for the Self Help Plus program. Our simplistic observations are that some of our clients have more complex legal matters than others, and that some of our clients do not have the cognitive or administrative skills to complete the required legal paperwork on their own. It is to address these issues that Self Help Plus is being proposed. Our clients cannot afford to hire attorneys. So, without the help they need to overcome their legal matters, the population targeted in our proposal may give up on the challenge. CWLA proposes to offer free legal representation to a targeted population after they have met screening guidelines. With the services of an attorney, our clients can break through the legal barriers that prevent them from moving on with their lives in a productive fashion. Here, we will discuss why CWLA is the right agency to offer these services, and the unique profiles and risks faced by each type of client we want to include in Self Help Plus.

Over the past three years, our agency has opened 1071 new cases. Clients either reside in Cowlitz or Wahkiakum Counties, or they have a legal matter filed in one of these counties. Our clientele is below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guideline (\$22,400 annually for one person). Below is a comparison of the income eligibility for our current program and the income guidelines required by the CDBG program.

Federal Poverty Guideline			Median Family Income, \$59,100			Difference at MAX
Per Household	100%	200%	30%	50%	60%	
1	11490	22980	12450	20700	33150	-10170
2	15510	31020	14200	23650	37850	-6830
3	19530	39060	16000	26600	42600	-3540
4	23550	47100	17750	29550	47300	-200
5	27570	55140	19200	31950	51100	4040
6	31590	63180	20600	34300	54900	8280
7	35610	71220	22050	36650	58700	12520
8	39630	79260	23450	39050	62450	16810

Between 1/1/2010 and 12/31/2012, CWLA received zero case referrals through the CLEAR Hotline that were outside of CDBG guidelines. This means that all of our case referrals through CLEAR were in the highlighted portion of this chart. So, our current client intake method aligns exactly with CDBG income.

From a geographic standpoint, our current clients reside, mostly, in either Cowlitz or Wahkiakum counties. Reporting from our online case management system indicates that, within the past two years, 793 new cases have been opened in our office. Of those, 368 resided in Longview, or approximately 46%. Applying that percentage to our new case count for 2012, CWLA opened an

estimated 180 cases for clients who resided in Longview. Following is a summary of the types of legal matters our clients face:

Type of Matter	% of total cases	note
Family Law	77%	Divorce, Custody, Support
Bankruptcy/Collections	9%	
Wills/Estates	4%	
Landlord/Tenant	4%	
Deed/Homeownership	1%	
Adult Guardianship	2%	
Employment	1%	
Mortgage	1%	
Consumer Protection	1%	
Public Benefits	1%	

It is important to note that both Domestic Violence Victims and Non-Parental custody clients are dealing primarily with Family Law matters like dissolution, child custody, visitation and child support issues. The vast majority of our clients currently have this kind of matter. Therefore, our staff and our volunteer attorneys are most familiar with this type of matter. The second most prevalent type of legal matter for our organization is Bankruptcy and Collections. We anticipate we can leverage our volunteer attorney roster to help Veterans with this type of legal matter.

Our funding comes from four main sources: The Legal Foundation of Washington 57%, The United Way 20%, Fundraising 17%, and a donation from the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Bar Association 6%. Funding from The Legal Foundation has slowly declined over the past few years and funding from The United Way has slowly increased. Fundraising income has increased as an overall percentage and the donations from our local Bar Association have remained consistent. Volunteer Attorneys provide our legal services, in addition to our staff of two part time non-attorney associates. Of the 100 or so attorneys that are members of the local Bar Association, 61 are signed up on our roster as volunteers. During 2012, legal services were offered or provided to 390 clients. Legal Services we offer are as follows: general legal information over the phone or via email, free legal forms, weekly workshops to aid in filling out legal forms, legal clinics/consultations where clients receive free advice and coaching from licensed attorneys, and full legal representations. 33 clients were accepted by volunteer attorneys for full representation in 2012. Over the past two years, 68 clients have received full representations from our local volunteer attorneys. Many of these cases remain open and attorneys continue to provide representation. Most of our local attorneys have no problem donating a selected number of hours for a clinic, but will only handle one or two full representation cases pro bono, due to the demands of the rest of their practice. Because so many of them have taken full representations over the last few years, many of them are at their limit. The outlook for placing many more new full representation cases in the near future is not good, as we are reaching ‘critical mass,’ so to speak, with the usage of our volunteers. Self Help Plus will employ an attorney-contractor to handle nothing but full representation cases. Though we are proposing a small contract, we are optimistic that it will be beneficial as a supplement to an existing law practice and that there will be several local attorneys interested in the opportunity.

Primarily, our client intake takes place through the CLEAR Hotline operated by Northwest Justice Project. A client calls in to a toll-free number and speaks with a trained intake specialist. They

are screened for income eligibility and legal case type. For the more serious and urgent matters, like emergency domestic violence issues involving children and possible loss of housing, a client may be given full representation by a licensed attorney through Northwest Justice Project. Northwest Justice Project currently has one attorney in their local office. The attorney at Northwest Justice Project provides full representation for the urgent cases that fit their criteria. For all other clients, cases are referred to CWLA. Many clients do not fit their criteria, or Northwest Justice is already handling one party of the case and cannot, due to conflict, handle the other side. The 390 cases that CWLA received as referrals from the CLEAR Hotline last year are examples of cases that did not fit the criteria of Northwest Justice Project, or cases for which Northwest Justice had a conflict.

Example of a client/case that Northwest Justice Project cannot handle:

Our client Jean (not her real name) is a married 30 year old mother of two who is low income, deaf, and communicates through American Sign Language. She uses an electronic relay system to communicate over the phone. Her main income is Social Security Disability and she does work on a temporary basis as a laborer whenever possible. There was a complaint to CPS regarding her ability to care for her children. She complied with the advised instructions from CPS and attended parenting classes according to their recommendation. A relative of hers has filed a custody claim for her children and is trying to remove them from Jean. She called the CLEAR Hotline for legal help. Her case was referred to CWLA because Northwest Justice Project is representing Jean's relative who is attempting to claim custody of the children. With Jean's barriers to communication and her inability to comprehend instructions on how to fill out papers and file them, it is obvious that she will have little success in fighting an action from her relative effectively in court on her own. CWLA will try to place her case with a volunteer attorney for full representation due to the barriers Jean faces with the hundreds of documents required in an action like this.

For clients who do not have access to a telephone or have issues with a disability, we can also provide intake in our office. Currently, about 98% of our new cases are referred through the CLEAR Hotline. Our agency complies with Equal Opportunity guidelines for handling cases and hiring. Our office is located in a building equipped with an elevator, making it fully accessible for all clients, even those with mobility issues.

To our knowledge, there are no other legal services organizations in Cowlitz County. We know that the Emergency Support Shelter (ESS) offers excellent support and has counselors who help their clients obtain and fill out many legal forms. We are not aware that they provide the services of a licensed attorney, however. So, the services offered at ESS do not duplicate the Self Help Plus program.

Client Profile / Needs-Risk Assessment: **Veterans**

There are approximately 11,000 Veterans in our Congressional District. The local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post estimates that they provide help to 220 Veterans per month. They are one of

two agencies in our area that provide support to Veterans in their attempts to access VA benefits, including medical benefits. The VFW handles claims and appeals. Most of the time, the VFW is successful in overcoming obstacles presented by appeals. This can take many years. Two of the Veterans we interviewed for this project mentioned that it took over 5 years to receive medical benefits once their claim was submitted. During this time, they either waited to treat their medical problem, or paid for medical care in some other way. In about 10% of appeals have issues presented by the VA that are too difficult to overcome and those Veterans go without their well deserved benefits. A current trend observed by our local VFW post are Veterans who display symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to their recent combat experience. This condition creates behaviors that are hostile and many time outside the norms of society. Hostile and unusual behavior can lead to misdemeanor criminal charges for aggressiveness and if these Veterans are placed in jail, they will be denied all VA benefits entirely. The challenge for Veterans with this condition is proving that they actually have PTSD. We know that the services of a licensed attorney, earlier in the appeals process, can speed the process by the VA. This allows Veterans to access their deserved benefits more quickly. (See Letter from Elton Strange VFW in the Appendix).

From interviews with case managers at The Longview Housing Authority's Veterans program, we know that they are working with 35 Veterans to help them establish stable housing. In addition to VA benefits, we know that Veterans in this program have had legal issues with child support, drivers licensing and collections. If a child support modification is not made in the court when someone has a drastic reduction in income level, and payments for child support are not made as they should be, a drivers license privilege is suspended by government authority. This makes it difficult for these Veterans to obtain employment, without adequate transportation. A Veteran may also have issues with Collections if they have been unemployed and without stable housing. No employment and a credit report displaying collections problems can be barriers to both employment and obtaining housing from a traditional landlord who screens tenants with background checks and credit reports.

CWLA does not specifically track Veteran status as it relates to child support matters, and CWLA does not currently handle cases involving VA benefits. So, in this client profile, we cannot establish how many of these clients our organization has served in the past.

We know that there are several resources for Veterans to utilize that will help them apply for benefits and process claims and appeals. The local VFW Post is an excellent example of this in our community, as is the local DAV Post. There are licensed attorneys available in several areas of the state, including Olympia and Vancouver, WA. There are not, however, any attorneys certified to handle VA claims in Cowlitz County. Self Help Plus proposes to obtain certification for one licensed attorney for this service. Veterans must drive at least 40 minutes to see a licensed attorney who is certified by the VA to handle the more difficult appeals.

In order to estimate the number of referrals we could receive for Self Help Plus from local Veterans organizations, we have come up with the following matrix:

220 clients per month = 2640 clients
50% of these are denied and must prepare appeals = 1320 clients
10% of these appeals are not resolved and require more help = 132 clients
Using the same percentage of CWLA clients who reside in Longview 46% = **60 clients per year.**

An estimated 60 clients that would be referred to the Self Help Plus program at CWLA and go through intake and screening.

Risks for this client profile relate to the financial burden our community must bear for medical care, housing and basic human needs. While they wait to access medical care, Veterans who have dedicated a portion of their life in service of our country will go without care, many times advancing a medical condition. If they are able to obtain free care in our community from the hospital or the free clinic, the cost burden is on the medical institution or the tax-payer. Many of these Veterans would like to work, but cannot be hired due to issues with their background investigation and their inability to drive to job interviews and the job itself. Finally, unless problems with their credit report can be overcome and they can have stable jobs, it will always be difficult for traditional landlords to rent to this population.

Client Profile / Needs-Risk Assessment: **Domestic Violence Victims**

The Emergency Support Shelter housed 383 persons from 184 households in 2011. Many, if not all, of these families will be involved in some kind of family law matter, protection order or restraining order through the court system. Most clients are able, with the support of the excellent staff at ESS and other agencies in our area, to complete the legal forms themselves and file them. Or, they are able to muster the funds to hire an attorney. Still, because of the effects of abuse on their confidence and ability to act for their own goals, and because of the cognitive challenges of some of their clients, some will not be able to fill out the forms and further their legal matter on their own. From interviews with their director and staff, we anticipate that 24 to 36 clients per year are in this situation. We can only estimate that a similar percentage of these clients will be residents of Longview as our own clients at CWLA. So, using our percentage of Longview clients, 46%, we would expect that **11 to 16 clients per year** would be considered both low income and in need of the extra help to be provided by Self Help Plus. (Data from city of Longview web site and study included in Appendix called “Women. Domestic Violence and PTSD.”).

Clients in this category must prepare documents for anything from a basic divorce with no property and no children (about 50 pages of documents), to a divorce, parenting plan and child support documents (about 160 pages of legal documents). For complicated issues, contested matters and multiple reports and witnesses, the number of pages of legal documents to prepare could be well over 300 pages. These are complex forms with many legal terms and wrong answers can impact the ability for independent living in the future. Multiple court appearances, filing fees and correspondence with agencies and organizations may be required. Court appearances are particularly challenging for victims of Domestic Violence, as they have to face their abuser in court and deal with all of the feelings that arise.

Within the past two years, 24 cases have been referred to CWLA where the client was a victim of Domestic Violence. Using the same percentage of our overall Longview cases, 46%, we can approximate that we would receive 12 cases per year overall and that approximate 5 of those would reside in Longview. Adding this to the 13 (approx.) that ESS would probably refer (see paragraph

above), we anticipate an opportunity to serve up to **18 clients per year** with the services offered by the Self Help Plus program.

The risk in these situations is that the legal issues may go unresolved because the client is unable to handle the documentation or the court appearances. They cannot afford an attorney to move the process forward. This client faces either continuing in a situation with no income or housing, or existing until their opportunity for housing vouchers and support ends. Many of these clients have children that stay with them at ESS. There is a risk of becoming homeless and involved with the resulting drug abuse and crime, or losing custody of their children. These clients are not financially able to support themselves and their children without finding a way to access the assets or financially due in their marriages. Unmarried Domestic Violence Victims with children face many of the same issues obtaining child support. Nearly all of these clients will have some kind of protection or restraining order to file so their family will remain safe. Without completing these legal matters, these victims must be supported by society, or become homeless.

Client Profile: Domestic Violence Victim

Our client Linda (not her real name) was married to a man for 19 years. They had two sons together and she worked part time during the duration of the marriage and while raising her children. Once the children moved out of the house for college, her husband began abusing her. She looked for more full time work, hoping she could move out and start a life after a divorce. Unable to find work after a year, her husband apologized and offered that she go back to school to obtain a more advanced degree which would allow her to get a better job. She agreed and began to attend school. The abuse continued, however, and she soon realized that her only option was to move out. She had no income, however, and her student loans were looming for payment. She moved in with her sister and started a divorce action. Her husband, who had always been the main provider, was able to hire an attorney. Linda faced the attorney in court as a self-represented litigant. She is running into some complicated issues now, as the matter makes its way through court. She is due maintenance from her husband and should also be awarded a portion of their family home and the retirement account that was built during their marriage. Accessing the retirement account is a complex legal matter and not something that can be handled without an attorney. In order to begin her life as a single person, it is vital that she retain as many assets as possible. So, she must save her spousal maintenance, her only income, in order to hire an attorney to help in this matter. Or, she must move on with her life without the asset. Self Help Plus can help this client realize all of the assets she is due while she continues to look for work.

Client Profile / Needs-Risk Assessment:

Non-Parental Custody client

Within the past two years, CWLA opened 128 cases involving some kind of child custody, 42 of those were Non-Parental custody matters. So, an estimated 21 per year. We have noticed an increase in

the number of these cases in the past six months, however. So, the referrals are on the rise. Using the same percentage of clients residing in Longview, 46%, that is an estimated 8 clients per year who are being referred to CWLA from Longview through the CLEAR Hotline. In our research for this program, we have interviewed the Director of the CASA program and resources inside CPS. These interviewees attend meetings on a regular basis where individual cases are discussed and placement with relatives is considered to be a valid option. Many of these are grandparents stepping in to help when the parents no longer provide a stable, safe environment for their children. Our resource inside CPS estimates that 20 to 25 cases like this in one year are situations that meet our eligibility criteria. These are low income relatives who want to provide a home, but cannot afford an attorney to help with the legal process. Using the same percentage of clients residing in Longview, 46%, that would be an estimate number of **8 clients per year**. Since many of our current Non-Parental Custody cases are coming as referrals from CPS, we think this number is a pretty good estimation. (See Letters in the Appendix and News Articles in the appendix).

The minimum number of pages of legal documents required to complete a Non-Parental custody case is 99 pages. It is unusual that it would be so few, however. The typical case like this is more than two hundred pages, three or four court appearances, and \$400 in court-related fees. These cases are the most complex of any we are discussing for this project. The average person with average administrative abilities would not be able to complete a case like this on their own. Again, the witness statements and correspondence with multiple agencies is overwhelming. Many cases have children with Native American descent which creates another complicated legal process and the need for correspondence and documents.

Client Profile: Non-Parental Custody client:

Pam (not her real name) is the grandmother of two school-age children. Her son, unfortunately got involved in criminal activity and is incarcerated. Her daughter-in-law became involved with the same crowd of people and has become involved in the drug culture. She lost her job and her housing. Pam received a call from CPS reporting that her daughter-in-law was living, with the children, behind JoAnn's Fabrics in a tarped structure with no running water or heat. Pam agreed to take the children. Now, Pam must complete hundreds of legal documents and send correspondence to multiple states, agencies and an Indian Tribe. She must complete a background investigation and parenting classes ordered by the court. Pam is 67 years old and lives on Social Security and a small pension from her deceased husband. She cannot afford to hire an attorney, but must complete this process so she can consent to medical care for the grandchildren and obtain support for them through CPS for food and state medical care.

The risk for these clients is that they will simply give up on the legal process. The children have usually already been placed with them. Typically, there is an order in place through the court that prevents the parents from taking the children back for a period of time. If the order expires, the parents can regain custody. The relative must return to court to recreate or extend the court order. The addition of the children into the household puts an added burden on the finances of these clients. If the children experience a medical problem or they need consent for an activity, the Non-Parental relative is often not allowed to sign required documents. These already low income clients could be at risk to lose their housing or some other basic need that they were able to afford before taking on the children.

7. How does this problem create a hardship for residents, a neighborhood, or economic development? How have local or state authorities noted the severity of the problem? Note public health and safety issues.

In all of these client scenarios, a hardship is created for residents of the city. The clients in these matters experience a tremendous hardship because they are not able to fully realize their potential. They cannot move on with their lives because legal matters are looming over their heads. They feel the result of unresolved legal matters when trying to get a job or obtain, or keep, stable housing. Local and state authorities have noted the trends and the resources for this can be found in the appendix for this project.

Past Effort

8. What effort has your organization or other organizations made to resolve the problem?

Past efforts by CWLA have been related to providing legal services, clinics and full representations to our clients. In the past two years, 68 clients received full representations, 502 clients attended legal clinics with a licensed attorney and 165 clients attended our workshops. These services, however, are reaching critical mass and are simply not enough to help the targeted population proposed for the Self Help Plus program.

In addition to CWLA, Northwest Justice Project provides free legal representation to a limited number of clients who meet their highly-urgent case criteria. They currently have one attorney, and, once again, their efforts are commendable but simply not enough.

The Emergency Support Shelter provides personnel to support their clients as they attempt to obtain and fill out legal documents. Their actions provide a valuable service, however, the clients targeted by Self Help Plus frequently require more help than ESS can provide.

Local attorneys, on their own, provide pro bono services to many clients on a regular basis. While some are helped this way, the demand for free and low cost legal services far outweighs the time that attorneys can dedicate.

Solution / Program Design

Project Development

9. Did you attempt to collaborate the development of this project with other agencies? Which agencies were contacted and what was the outcome? What role is each agency playing?

Yes. We have interviewed and discussed this program with a variety of agencies:

Cowlitz County CASA: Their director was interviewed and recognizes the problem. We anticipate we will receive referral calls from this agency on a regular basis once the program is up and running. CASA mentions that they receive 3 to 5 calls a week regarding Non-Parental custody cases.

The Emergency Support Shelter: We currently receive referrals from this agency and expect that our targeted population will be referred to us by phone or email once the program is up and running.

CPS: We currently receive referrals from this agency and expect that we will begin to receive personal referrals by phone or email once the program is up and running.

VFW Post: We have discussed the program with this agency and they will begin sending us referrals by phone as well.

Longview Housing Authority: Case managers were interviewed as we researched this program and we expect to receive referrals from this agency as well.

United Way: We have applied for funding from this agency and we expect to receive referrals from partner agencies as we inform and market the new program in this community as well.

Cowlitz Wahkiakum Bar Association: This group will be informed as the program comes to life. The contract opportunity will be published to its members and we expect to receive regular referrals from members of the bar for this program as well.

10. How do you propose to solve the problem? Please be specific, itemizing the various tasks you will undertake to solve the problem.

Once the funding is secured, we will finalize the language in our attorney contract and publish the opportunity to the local bar and on the Washington State Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises Web Site.

We will communicate the details of the program to CASA, ESS, CPS, VFW, DAV, the Longview Housing Authority, the United Way, the Cowlitz County Bar Association Board and members, and Northwest Justice Project. In this communication, we will clearly explain the criteria for eligibility and the services Self Help Plus will provide.

As we are in the process of hiring the attorney-contractor, we can begin to schedule legal clinics for our targeted population, publish the dates and times for those clinics, and begin screening clients for placement in Self Help Plus. We will have training sessions with our staff, Board and volunteer attorneys so that their roles in the process are clearly defined.

We must hire our attorney contractor and ensure they receive the required legal education and certification.

The attorney-contractor will receive training on our online case management system, the documents required for intake and setting up and maintaining files in our office.

The attorney-contractor will help define specific goals and outcomes for the program.

Once clients are screened by our staff and our volunteer attorneys, the new attorney-contractor can begin seeing Self Help Plus Clients, preparing documents and providing full representation to the clients who are accepted into the program. The attorney will work no more than 10 hours per month on these cases in the first year.

After the program runs for several months, the attorney-contractor, our Board of Directors and our staff will assess the success of the program, its outcomes and goals. Decisions will be made to secure further funding for the future.

Within one year, we expect to provide **48 hours** of full representation to clients who reside in Longview at this level of funding. If each client requires only 4 hours of service, that will equate to 12 clients. It must be noted that every case is unique and the number of hours required for each client will vary. Specific case data and outcomes will be recorded and on file for all of these clients. All data will remain confidential.

At the request of the CDBG program, CWLA will provide reporting as to hours spent, agency expenses realized and case outcomes.

11. List all persons who would be involved during the development of this project and describe their project responsibilities. (Include names, titles, phone and e-mail.) (Responsibilities should include grant administration, project manager, developing partnerships, acquisition, overseeing construction, maintaining records, Davis-Bacon compliance, etc.)

Grant administration – Lori Bashor-Sarancik– Program Coordinator - 360-425-2579 – cwlap@live.com
New Contracted Attorney – yet to be hired

Project Management – Lori Bashor-Sarancik – above
Board of Directors of CWLA
President is Amy Wade – 360-562-6446 – AmyMWadeLaw@gmail.com
New Contracted Attorney – yet to be hired

Developing Partnerships -- Lori Bashor-Sarancik – above
Board of Directors of CWLA
President is Amy Wade – 360-562-6446 – AmyMWadeLaw@gmail.com
New Contracted Attorney – yet to be hired

Maintaining Records
Lori Bashor-Sarancik – Program Coordinator – above
Eva Barker – Administrative Assistant – 360-425-2579 – cwlap@live.com

New Contracted Attorney- yet to be hired

Project Operation

Process

1. Potential client is identified by CWLA or an agency listed above.
2. Client is referred to CWLA via phone, email or the CLEAR Hotline.
3. Initial intake takes place using our traditional screening methods.
4. Client is invited to a workshop or legal clinic. Staff at the workshop or a volunteer attorney at a legal clinic notes that the client is a candidate for the Self Help Plus program.
5. Client is offered a one on one meeting with new attorney-contractor.
6. Attorney-contractor interviews the client, filling out the required program intake sheets and verifying income and place of residence.
7. Attorney-contractor discusses legal matter with the client in depth and assesses the potential legal issues that must be overcome by this client.
8. Attorney-contractor recommends the client to the Board of Directors and staff of CWLA.
9. Once the client is approved, attorney-contractor begins representing the client.
10. A separate file will be maintained for clients of the Self Help Plus program.
11. Representation continues until the case is closed or the contract ends.
12. Attorney-contractor, staff and Board of Directors will monitor the work flow of the program and make ongoing decisions if more clients can be taken each month.
13. Outcomes and case progress will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
14. All traditional financial reporting will be produced and a separate P and L will track the financial operation of the Self Help Plus program.

12. Are you partnering with other organizations or businesses in this project? Will you have contracts with them? What roles will each organization or business play after the project is completed? Please submit letters from partnering agencies and/or businesses as supporting documentation.

We are not partnering, but will receive referrals from other agencies who recognize clients who may fit the target population for this initiative.

13. List all persons involved in the operation of this project when completed and describe their responsibilities. (Include names, titles, phone and e-mail.) (Responsibilities should include case management, day-to-day management, partnerships in serving clients, etc., operations manager, and project owner.)

Project Owner: Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid

Case management / Day to Day Management / Operations Manager:

Lori Bashor-Sarancik – Program Coordinator – 360-425-2579 – email cwlap@live.com

And, new attorney-contractor, yet to be hired.

Partnerships in Serving Clients – 65 Volunteer Attorneys, and Board of Directors,

In addition to the resources named above and

Eva Barker – administrative assistant – 360-425-2579- cwlap@live.com

16. How will this project improve the quality of life for low- and moderate-income persons in relation to the stated needs or problem? OR How will this project improve the neighborhood or area? Note short-term and long-term outcomes.

Short term outcomes: Clients in our targeted population will immediately receive more attention as they will be attending clinics and being initially screened for placement in the Self Help Plus program. Through the time in the clinics, clients receive advice and coaching from licensed attorneys. So, they will already receive some direction as to what they must do next or the steps to being successful with their legal matter. The lives of these clients will be improved if they follow the instructions of the attorneys and assemble the proper documents, file their paperwork, etc.

Long term outcomes: Clients who are accepted into the Self Help Plus program will receive the full representation of a licensed, certified attorney. Documents will be prepared for them, and appearances at the necessary hearings and court dates. Clients will receive VA benefits sooner than they might without the help of an attorney. Family law matters will move forward and reach resolution so clients can move forward in their lives. Child support issues will be resolved so that drivers licenses can be restored and these clients may have the ability to successfully land a job because they can now drive a car to get to an interview or to work. 48 hours of full representation will be provided to Longview residents in one year at this level of funding. Should funding be secured from the other sources mentioned in this proposal, the outcome could be much larger. We anticipate providing up to 32 hours per month at full funding, which could provide help for up to 8 clients per month (at 4 hours per client). Since other funding sources will ensure services for residents of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, Longview residents will be included in the above-mentioned 8 clients per month. If we use the same estimated percentage of our clients from the Longview area, 46%, it means that 3 – 4 clients per month from the City of Longview could benefit from this program at full funding. The number of clients receiving services will increase as the funding for the program increases, as the funds pass through directly to hours of work from an attorney-contractor. The lives of the clients who are given full representation improve dramatically as their legal matters are resolved.

17. What activities would still need to be undertaken after the project is completed in order for the problem to be fully addressed? Quantify where possible.

If the Self Help Plus program receives all of the referrals for services that we estimate and anticipate, it is possible that up to 86 clients who reside in Longview could meet our eligibility requirements. Further funding sources will have to be sought to grow the program to this level, and we may need to implement further screening criteria in order to narrow the referrals. A larger office location, more computer equipment, more supplies and more staff would be required in order to support a program of this size.

Households Benefiting

18. Area Benefit: What is the total number of all households that will benefit from this project? (Area-wide benefit must cite low-income 2000 U.S. Census Tract as noted in the HOME/CDBG Consolidated Plan).

This project is not an Area Wide benefit for the scope of this proposal.

19. Individual Benefit: What is the number of low-income individuals or households by median income that will directly benefit from this project? Use current HUD Income Limits for family size.

Individuals or Households (*circle one*)

At or below 30% Median Income: _____

At or below 50% Median Income: _____

At or below 80% Median Income: 5 – 10 Households in the City of Longview

Total number Low-Income Served: 5 – 10 Households in Longview

The 2000 U.S. Census notes a total Longview population of 34,660, of which 47% can be estimated as low income. This means 16,290 would qualify as it relates to their residence and their income. From the consolidate plan, it can be noted that the following number of households may experience several factors that are contributors to homelessness, all of which relate directly to legal issues that can be solved by Self Help Plus:

Domestic Violence Victims	84 Households in 2009
Family Breakup	84 Households in 2009

And, the following issues that impact Veterans:

Unable to pay rent	115 Households
Poor Credit Rating	78 Households

Medical Costs
Misdemeanor Charges

40 Households
26 Households

Budget

20. Explain why CDBG funds are appropriate for your project. If this application is for a program currently receiving CDBG funding, discuss what action you have taken and what other funding sources have been investigated in the last 12 months to reduce your organization's dependence on City of Longview CDBG funds.

CDBG funds are appropriate for this initiative because it addresses the needs of low, extremely low and low to moderate households and homeless residents in addition to those at-risk of homelessness. Self Help Plus will address the legal issues that can push residents over the edge into homelessness like family breakups, domestic violence, collections and medical benefits. Our agency will have a deeper connection with the City if this initiative is funded as well. Also, the initiative is unique tailored to address targeted populations within the city who are in the highest level of need. Several local agencies will refer clients to the program, so it represents a collaboration among agencies. Legal Services are listed as a Medium Level need in the Consolidated Plan and as a Public Service, Self Help Plus addresses several objectives: SL1.7, Early Intervention services; SL1.28 Senior services; SL 1.29 Disabled Services, Employment, Child and Health Care. CWLA is an agency that is supported by The United Way that provides funds to agencies that provide supportive services for at-risk and homeless populations. CWLA is an incorporated 501 c(3) non-profit agency able to receive CDBG funds.

21. What agency funding will you commit to this project? If none, why not?

The following expenses will be carried by the existing CWLA operation: space rent, insurance, staff time at 50 hours per week, telephone and internet capability, maintenance of computer equipment. This represents the majority of our agency expenses which can be found in the budget area in the appendix.

In addition to our traditional expenses, we intend to conduct a fundraising campaign to support the Self Help Plus program within the legal community and to hold a new fundraiser in 2013 with Self Help Plus as a central theme.

22. If one or more funding sources listed below is not realized, what impact would this have on your project? Explain what changes would be considered to its scope or design, including the number of families served, structure(s) constructed, delays in construction start date, etc. and whether your project would exist without CDBG funding.

If all of the funding sources for which we have applied are realized, we will be able to provide legal representation for 30 hours per month in the first year. That could mean that 36 total clients could receive representation (if their legal matter can be handled within 10 hours per month). For the amount of funding we propose from City of Longview CDBG, \$5600, Self Help Plus can provide approximately 4 hours per month of Legal Representation for Longview residents, a total of 48 hours per year. Assuming a legal matter can be handled within 10 hours, that means approximately 5 City of Longview clients could receive legal representation in one year.

The number of hours of legal representation provided will simply adjust to the amount of funding we receive. So, the project will begin as planned and then adjust up or down according to the amount of funding we receive. The impact of less funding would mean that fewer clients will receive full representation, but they can still avail themselves of our other legal services.

23. Complete and attach the separate CDBG Budget Form.

Complete the budget form showing all sources and uses of funds related to your project.

24. Sources and Uses Fund Statement / Budget Form Narrative

a. Please list all funding source(s), intended uses, and amounts from your budget form. Identify if the source is Federal, State, Local, or Private.

Funding sources for Self Help Plus:

City of Longview CDBG	\$5600	Local Govt - proposed
United Way (applied but not committed)	\$14000	Foundation - proposed
Health Care Foundation(applied not comm.)	\$12000	Foundation - proposed
US Bank (will apply in March 2013)	\$4000	Business - proposed
Fundraising (planned for 2013)	\$2000	Local - proposed
Total	\$37,600	

From the City of Longview CDBG funds, the following expenses will be realized

Contract Attorney services	\$5200
Other Admin Expenses:	\$400
Training, Certification,	
Office Supplies, Staff Time,	
Communications, Printing,	
Proj Mgmt, Grant Admin	
Total:	\$5600

Attachments

25. Required Attachments

X Project Timeline *(Note: Funding is available in November following project submittal. Please plan accordingly.)*

X Project Budget *(Note: Show all funding sources and note if they are committed or not committed. List date when commitment will be confirmed.)*

X Project Documentation *(See Below)*

X Agency Financial Audit by e-mail *(Most current independent audit.)*

Documentation to support your project. (Provide in order listed. Staff may limit the number of documents to the most important for Council to base its decision.)

- **Sources of Funds**
 1. Include commitment letters with all terms and conditions for all mortgages, loans, grants, subordination agreements, private fundraising, bridge (interim) loans and investment tax credits (historical low-income, if applicable);
 2. Provide a formal Certification letter signed by the Agency Director or Owner listing the amounts and type of all governmental assistance (Federal, State, and Local) which will be used in this project.
 3. If you (the applicant) are a partnership, or will enter into a partnership to undertake this project (including services) provide a copy of the partnership agreement, which will indicate the cash contributions by the general partner(s) and/or limited partner(s).
- Documentation for Narrative Statements
- Private fundraising commitments
- Letters from local, state, or federal agencies directing the repair or creation of a specific project
- Documentation of project cost estimates
- Partnering Agency documentation letter
- Low/moderate income documentation for benefit
- Letters attesting to the subject problem
- Letters of Support
- Current News Articles

Project Timeline

Detail Tasks for Project	Start Date	Completion Date
	Month Day Year	Month Day Year
Secure Funding	1/1/2013	5/31/2013
Finalize Attorney Contract	6/1/2013	6/1/2013
Publish Contract Opportunity w/Bar	6/15/2013	7/1/2013
Publish Contract Opportunity w/ MWBE	6/15/2013	7/1/2013
Select attorney candidates	7/1/2013	7/1/2013
Interviews w/ Board and candidates	7/15/2013	7/20/2013
Select and hire a candidate	9/1/2013	9/1/2013
Enroll attorney in training for VA	9/15/2013	9/15/2013
Attorney submit application to VA for certification	9/30/2013	10/31/2013
Meet with referral agencies	9/1/2013	9/30/2013
Schedule legal clinics for initial consultations with volunteer attorneys	9/1/2013	11/1/2013
Train Board and staff on the program	9/1/2013	9/30/2013
Train attorney contractor on legal server, required screening documents, record keeping and filing system	10/1/2013	10/31/2013
Attorney develop specific goals related to full representation	10/1/2013	10/31/2013
Attorney present goals to the Board	11/1/2013	11/30/2013
Attorney begin meeting with potential clients for Self Help Plus	10/1/2013	10/30/2013
Once attorney is certified by the VA, begin meeting with Veterans – expected one to two months after applying.	12/1/2013	12/31/2013
Assess program progress with statistics and financial reports	Monthly	
Secure funding for the ongoing program	12/1/2013	2/1/2014
Attorney, staff and board assess success of the program	7/1/2014	7/31/2014

SUBMIT THIS FORM WITH THE APPLICATION

CDBG Budget

Commitment Dates	Project Duration Months:					Total
	Source 1	Source 2	Source 3	Source 4	Source 5	
	CDBG					
	2013	United Way	Health Care Foundation	US Bank		
		(Requested)	(Requested)	(Applying in March 2012)		
Project Management (Project Manager, Consultant Fees, Subrecipient Fees)						
Architectural Fees						
Engineering Fees						
Acquisition						
Related Costs & Fees						
Demolition						
Relocation						
Architectural Barrier Removal						
Housing Rehabilitation						
Water / Sewer Side Connections						
Sewer Improvements						
Water Improvements						
Street Improvements						
Fire Protection						
Public Facility						
Community Facility						
Commercial/Industrial Facility						
Economic Development						
Micro Enterprise						
Special ED Activity (loan/grant)						
Comm Based Development Org						
Revolving Loan Fund Program						
Historic Preservation						
Prevent/Eliminate Slum & Blight						
Public Services	\$5,200.00	\$12,600.00	\$10,800.00	\$3,620.00		\$32,220.00
Planning						
Local Match to State/Fed Grant						
Other, List: Permits/Fees						
Other: Training, Certification, Office Supplies, Staff Time, Communication, Printing, Project Management, Grant Admin	\$400.00	\$1,400.00	\$1,200.00	\$380.00		\$3,380.00
Other, Sales Tax						
Contingency						
Total:	\$5,600.00	\$14,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$4,000.00		\$35,600.00
Date Completed:						

CWLA

2013 Revised Budget Form without Self Help Plus

Organization Name: Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid

Fiscal Year (m/d/y – m/d/y): 1/1/2013 - 12/31/2013

Name of Person Completing Revised Budget: Lori Bashor-Sarancik

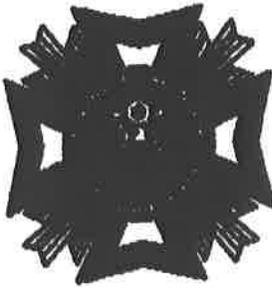
	A	B	C	D
EXPENSES	LFW Funds Requested	Funds Requested from Other Sources	Value of In-kind or Non-cash Support***	Total Budget (A+B+C=D)
Salaries: List each staff position funded by this grant (e.g.: Attorney, Administrative Assistant etc.). Attach extra sheet as needed.				
1 Coordinator	25992	1838		27830
2 Admin Asst		9000		9000
3				
4				
SALARY SUBTOTAL	25992	10838		36830
Employee Benefits		2800		2800
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS	25992	13638		39630
Office Space		3900		3900
Equipment Rental				
Office Supplies/Expenses		2400		2400
Communications		1700		1700
Travel				
Training				
Translation/Interpretation				
Library				
Lobbying: Direct				
Grassroots				
Other				
Insurance		545		545
Dues & Fees		120		120
Audit		1500		1500
Litigation				
Capital expenditures				
Contract Services				
Other				
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL COSTS		10165		10165
TOTAL	25992	23803		49795

CWLA

2013 BUDGET WITH COMPLETE SELF HELP PLUS PROGRAM

Organization Name: Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid
 Fiscal Year (m/d/y – m/d/y): 1/1/2013 - 12/31/2013
 Name of Person Completing Revised Budget:

	A	B	C	D
EXPENSES	Legal Foundation	Funds from United Way, Health Care Foundation, CDBG and other sources	Value of In-kind or Non-cash Support***	Total Budget (A+B+C=D)
Salaries: List each staff position funded by this grant (e.g.: Attorney, Administrative Assistant etc.). Attach extra sheet as needed.				
1 Coordinator	25992	2138		28130
2 Admin Asst		9900		9900
3				
4				
SALARY SUBTOTAL	25992	12038		38030
Employee Benefits		600		600
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS	25992	12638		38630
Office Space		3900		3900
Equipment Rental				
Office Supplies/Expenses		4080		4080
Communications		1700		1700
Travel				
Training		400		400
Translation/Interpretation				
Insurance		545		545
Dues & Fees		320		320
Audit		1500		1500
Litigation				
Capital expenditures				
Contract Services - Proposed Self-Help Plus Program		32220		32220
Other - Value of Attny Hours and In-Kind Donation			140,600	
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL COSTS		60903		36665
TOTAL	25992	57303	140,600	83295



01/24/2013

To whom it may concern,

I am Elton L. Strange, the Post Service Officer of Cowlitz Valley VFW post 1045. I am responsible for managing the Veteran's Service Office located at 4307 Ocean Beach Highway, Longview, WA, phone 360 577 6757. Our service office assists veterans in filing VA benefit claims, which include service, and non-service connected disabilities as well as health care enrollment and unable to pay co-pay assistance. We also assist veterans and their spouses in obtaining aid and attendance (long term care in a nursing home or assisted living facility). We assist the veterans file notice of disagreements when their claims are denied and help them appeal the VA's decisions. Our success rate is at present at 90% but unfortunately it takes up to 6 or 7 years for the claims to go through for the benefits the veteran has earned.

Please note that our office is run by volunteers. We see an average of 220 veterans walk-ins and receive over 110 phone calls per month. As of this writing we have brought in \$12.5 million dollars for our veterans and their families here in Cowlitz County in the last 26 months. According to the Washington Department of Veteran Affairs there are 11,000 veterans here in Cowlitz County.

We also assist those veterans who do not qualify for VA benefits because they have less-than-honorable discharges due to some act related to PTSD that resulted in a behavioral problem and sometimes a conviction of a minor offense or courts martial. In those instances we assist those veterans who now are discharged obtain VA benefits through upgrading their discharges.

From my experience 50% of veteran claims from this county are initially denied and through our efforts and tenacity 90% are finally granted as stated above. We are seeing many cases of PTSD that would not have been recognized or treated in the past. Having an attorney to assist the veteran to obtain medical assistance and navigate the VA would be beneficial. Most importantly, we need legal assistance in aiding the PTSD veterans in getting their discharges upgraded so they may obtain the necessary VA health care benefits they so desperately need. Our office would appreciate the Cowlitz Wahkiakum County Legal Aid to give us legal assistance for our deserving veterans.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Elton L. Strange in black ink.

Elton L. Strange, Maj, USAF (ret)

Post Service Officer



Longview Housing Authority

Christina M. Pegg, Executive Director

Making our Communities More Livable for Everyone

January 4, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to my attention that Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid is proposing a new program call Self Help Plus Program. Within this program, attorney services will be provided for no charge to veterans.

We currently operate three homeless veteran programs at Longview Housing Authority (LHA) that provide assistance to 45-50 veterans a year. These veterans have many barriers in their lives and legal problems can rank at the top of these barriers. Facing these legal challenges can be overwhelming and for many of the veterans instead of facing these problems, they may choose to ignore them. The effects of not addressing these issues in their lives begin to snow ball and spiral out of control. Unpaid fines, child support, driving issues, and collection charges all play a significant role in leading a veteran into homelessness. In many cases these veterans simply cannot afford legal assistance in these matters. We have very limited options in our community to help address these legal issues.

The legal services available through the Self Help Plus Program would be a tremendous asset for our veterans and their families. These legal services could help our case- managers unravel the damages of the past and begin to tear down the walls of despair in our veteran's lives.

I support a program like this in our community. Please consider it in your funding decisions for 2013 grant cycle.

Sincerely,

Christina M. Pegg
Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director
Longview Housing Authority
Joint Pacific County Housing Authority
820 11th Ave.
Longview, WA 98632
360-423-0140, ext. 15



January 31, 2013

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to support the application for funding from Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid for their new program called the Self Help Plus Program. Within this program, attorney services will be provided for no charge to Military Veterans as they face legal challenges related to obtaining benefits and overcoming issues with healthcare, employment and housing.

I have devoted much of my professional career to providing healthcare to soldiers and their families as an Army nurse. I am thankful Legal Aid is taking on the work to help veterans who who need assistance, and am committed to helping them in this mission.

The Self Help Plus Program will provide one-on-one assessments by a licensed attorney and will allow those that have served our country to make concrete steps toward overcoming barriers. Medical and other benefits through the Veterans Administration sometimes require complicated appeals and cause many years to go by before well-deserved services can be provided. In addition, Veterans face issues with family law, collections, securing housing and consistent employment. Many are denied benefits due to the effects of PTSD which manifests in criminal misdemeanors and other disturbances. All of these issues can be aided with the advice, counseling and efforts of an attorney. Veterans experiencing these issues in our community typically cannot afford an attorney.

I strongly support this program which will provide services to the veterans in our community and I ask that you fund this program for 2013.

Respectfully,



Kristine K. Campbell RN, PhD

Brigadier General (ret)

January 31, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I strongly support the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid application for a grant to provide services to veterans. As Mr. Strange's letter demonstrates, veterans in Longview need assistance in seeking to obtain benefits from the Veteran's Administration. For many of them the process is too difficult. In championing their causes and facilitating the process we should be able to obtain resources which will not only assist them, but also will alleviate the strain on local funds and programs. I am convinced that if we can get this program started, local attorneys (some being veterans themselves) will rally to provide *pro bono* services. To date Mr. Strange and a few others have carried this heavy workload without the assistance of legal counsel. We need to add this additional component to ensure that veterans get a full and fair resolution of their claims.

Very Respectfully,

James J. Stonier

Washington State Bar #4890



Emergency Support Shelter

*support * validation * safety * hope*

P. Box 877
1 Cowlitz Way
Iso, WA 98626
vw.esshelter.com

360-425-1176
Fax 360-425-3970

January 25, 2013

To whom it may concern,

It has come to my attention that Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid (CWLA) is proposing a new program for 2013 which will provide much-needed legal services for low-income clients called The Self-Help Plus Program. This program is targeted to help clients with specific legal needs and careful screening by staff and volunteer attorneys.

Domestic Violence victims who are using the services of the Emergency Support Shelter represent one of the intended beneficiaries of these services. Many of the clients who need Legal Help are able to gather the forms, fill them out and navigate their way through the legal system on their own. There are, however, a number of clients who do not have the capability to get through this process during this emotional and chaotic time in their lives.

Legal issues regarding dissolution, custody and support often arise as we are working with clients who are attempting to break free from an abusive relationship and move forward in their lives. We anticipate that this program will address the legal requirements for 24 to 36 clients per year who need a higher level of support to navigate the legal system. These clients will be identified by our staff and the staff at CWLA, and will be screened by licensed attorneys before receiving the additional support. So, we know that the services will go to only those clients with the greatest need.

I strongly support a program like this in our community and I ask that anyone reviewing this program for funding give it full consideration. It will help our most vulnerable citizens move on to experience lives that are free from continued violence and abuse.

Sincerely,

Sherrie Tinoco
Executive Director



B. Jo Brewer

1240 Sycamore Place
Longview, WA 98632
(360) 751-1114

February 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been involved with the Emergency Support Shelter for many years – from being the first testimonial speaker at the first fundraising breakfast, to providing accounting assistance and consulting advice, to serving on the Board of Directors and as Board Chair. Throughout this time I have witnessed the need for legal assistance for the residents and clients of the Shelter.

During the emotional and chaotic time that a victim is escaping and healing from the trauma of domestic violence, the need for many legal services arises – restraint orders, dissolution, custody, support, etc. Some clients are able to navigate the legal system on their own. They are able to identify the legal system's requirements, obtain the necessary forms and complete them. However, due to the experience of abuse and the resulting emotional and chaotic turmoil, many need assistance.

Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Legal Aid (CWLA) is proposing a new program called the Self Help Plus Program which will help low income individuals with specific legal needs. They have targeted Domestic Violence Victims as one of three segments of the population that would receive free legal services. It is anticipated that this program would assist 24 to 36 DV clients per year. These clients would be identified by the Emergency Support Shelter staff and the staff at CWLA and would be screened by licensed attorneys before receiving additional support to navigate the legal system.

I strongly support the proposed Self-Help Plus Program and request that you consider it when deciding CDBG funding. This will help vulnerable victims heal and move forward to experience productive, abuse-free lives as valuable members of our community.

Sincerely,

B. Jo Brewer, CPA, MBA