

Minutes of the Access to Counsel in Evictions Task Force's
Outreach and Assessment Committee
November 5, 2021

Committee Members in attendance: Reena Shah (chair); Seema Iyer; Jim Johnson; Jessica Kaufman; Natalie McSherry; Sandy Monck; Danielle Meister; Alicia Myers; Cat Paul; Lisa Sarro

Task Force Members and Staff in attendance: Charisse Lue; Rebecca Guay; Leah Tulin

Ms. Shah opened the meeting and explained that the focus of discussion would be assessment and evaluation. The committee agreed that assessment of the program should include input from impacted communities. The committee discussed gathering such information through surveys and/or focus groups.

The committee then discussed what parts of the program must be assessed, and what is the best way to design the RFP. There was consensus that program assessments should gather data and evaluate the following:

- Outreach
- Programmatic data: rate of connecting people to counsel, case type, attorney caseloads and bandwidth, level of need within community
- Effectiveness of counsel (e.g., reductions in evictions, more time for a tenant to move out)
- Granular demographic data to allow for equity analysis

The committee discussed the fact that MLSC has some money that is available for infrastructure and needs to be spent by the end of FY2022. The committee agreed that MLSC should use some of that funding for an RFP to gather a baseline of information and build an evaluation from there.

Interim Recommendation to the Task Force: The Committee recommends that the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) put out a RFP at the earliest opportunity so that time-sensitive funds MLSC has already received can be used to develop the data and evaluation infrastructure necessary to implement the access to counsel in evictions program.