

5 VIRGINIA CITIES RANK IN THE TOP 10 FOR HIGHEST EVICTION RATES



US CITIES WITH HIGHEST EVICTION RATES

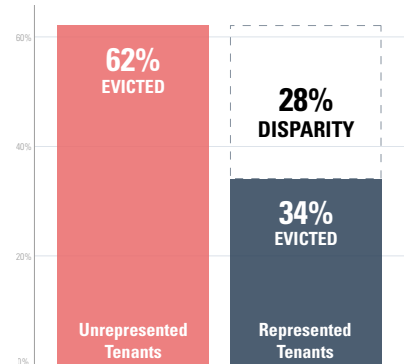
Five Virginia cities rank in the top 10 in the US for **highest eviction rate**.

Evictions destabilize families and schools in low income communities and cause higher rates of absenteeism and disciplinary issues, and lower rates of academic achievement and school accreditation.

A 2017 National Center of State Courts study found that in Virginia eviction cases, **struggling families without lawyers lost their home 62% of the time**, whereas families with lawyers lost their homes just 34% of the time. **Legal representation kept families in their home 66% of the time.**

More than 1 million Virginians are eligible for civil Legal Aid assistance, but due to insufficient funding, Virginia Legal Aid programs provide legal assistance in only 28,000 cases (1 in 35 eligible) benefiting 69,000 people (1 in 14 eligible) last year, the majority of which was only brief advice.

IMPACT OF REPRESENTATION ON EVICTION RATE* IN RICHMOND



*Percentage of Unlawful Detainers filed that result in a Judgement for Possession.

Source: The Virginia Self-Represented Litigation Study, National Center for State Courts, 2017

Governor Northam has recommended a \$2.65 million increase in funding to civil legal services for FY2020. **This would fund staffing for 35 housing attorneys in response to Virginia's housing crisis.** He recognizes that, while long-term legislative fixes are needed, **nothing will provide more immediate, positive outcomes in reducing evictions than the presence of Legal Aid lawyers in court with tenants.**

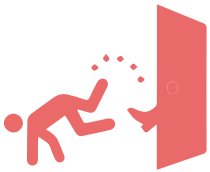


WITH INCREASED FUNDING, LEGAL AID CAN REMOVE VIRGINIA FROM A TOP 10 LIST IT DOES NOT WANT TO BE ON!

THE LEGAL AID DIFFERENCE



Approximately 6,000 or 24% of legal aid cases in 2018 involved families with housing matters.



In 5,000 or 85% of the cases, Legal Aid was only able to provide brief legal advice. Without a lawyer to represent them, often people either did not appear in court or appeared to face landlords with lawyers. The typical outcome was the loss of their home and a monetary judgment.



Only 15% of struggling families (or 900 cases) had a Legal Aid lawyer to represent them in housing court. But the result was a successful outcome for 650 clients (and almost 1,700 family members) allowing them to remain in their homes and save over \$1 million in judgments.



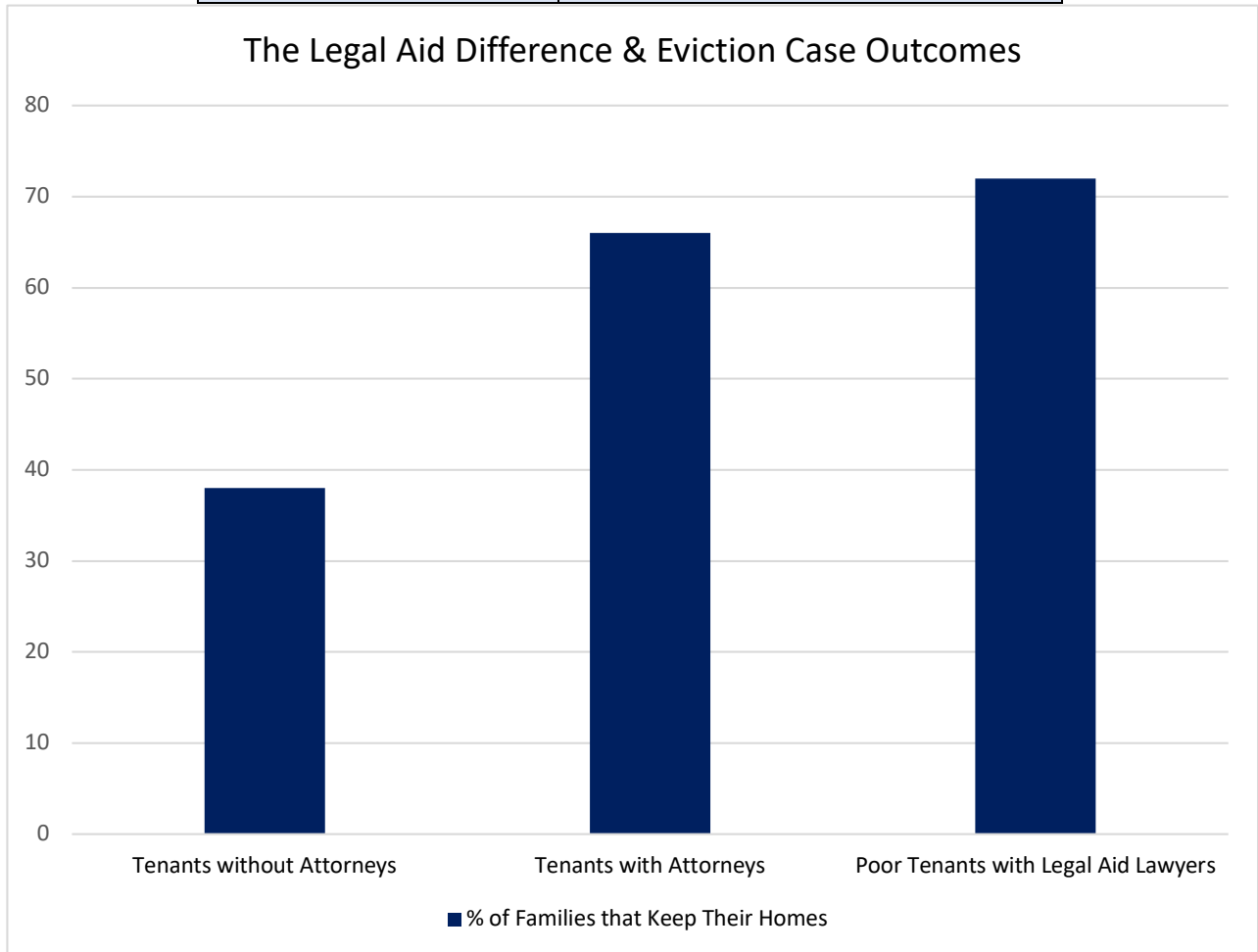
Legal Aid is uniquely situated and capable of significantly reducing wrongful evictions of low-income families across Virginia. With additional funding of \$2.625 million, Legal Aid can hire 35 housing lawyers who will:

- Provide full representation to thousands more clients and increase outreach to individuals who might otherwise have abandoned meritorious cases.
- Appear in court on eviction docket return days, file tenant assertions for unsafe living conditions, delay evictions so clients can find alternative housing, and defend against illegal or unfair charges by landlords.
- Enforce the rights of families to decent, habitable housing.

Legal Aid helps to keep Virginians in their homes, stabilizing families, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Poor Tenants Facing Eviction Keep Their Homes 72% of the Time when Represented by a Legal Aid Attorney

Tenant Representation Status in Eviction Cases	% of Families that Keep Their Homes
Tenants <u>without</u> Attorneys	38%
Tenants <u>with</u> Attorneys	66%
Poor Tenants <u>with</u> Legal Aid Lawyers	<u>72%</u>



Nothing will provide more immediate, positive impact in reducing evictions for low-income tenants than representation by Legal Aid lawyers.