



# New Covenant Legal Services

2019 Annual Report

*New Covenant Legal Services (NCLS) provides legal services to individuals on fixed incomes who cannot afford legal services. Our mission is to demonstrate that Jesus Christ's love and justice are sovereign in the world. This mission will be accomplished through a Christ-centered approach to solving legal problems and achieving justice in partnership with churches in the metropolitan St. Louis area.*

## 2019 Staff

**Al W. Johnson** – Executive Director/Head Attorney  
**Bethany Tope** – Legal Assistant  
**George Boden** – Law Clerk  
**Keannah Moore** – Law Clerk  
**Kurt Eisleben** – Finance Team  
**Susan Johnson** – Finance team

## 2019 NCLS Board

**Hal Bush** – Professor, St. Louis University  
(Chairman of the Board)  
**Ted Boldin** – Associate Pastor at Metro  
Christian Worship Center  
**Kurt Eisleben** – Retired, First Bank  
**Melissa Elliott** – Co-Owner, J-KEM, Inc.  
**Priscilla Gunn** – Attorney at Law  
**Eddie Jones** – Program Manager Litzsinger  
Road Ecology Center  
**Brandi Miller** – Attorney at Law  
**Aaron Henning** – Director of Harambee  
**Eric Bronner** – Attorney at Law

"LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE A RIVER AND  
RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE A NEVER-FAILING STREAM."  
**Amos 5:24**

## New Covenant Legal Services

### 2019 Summary

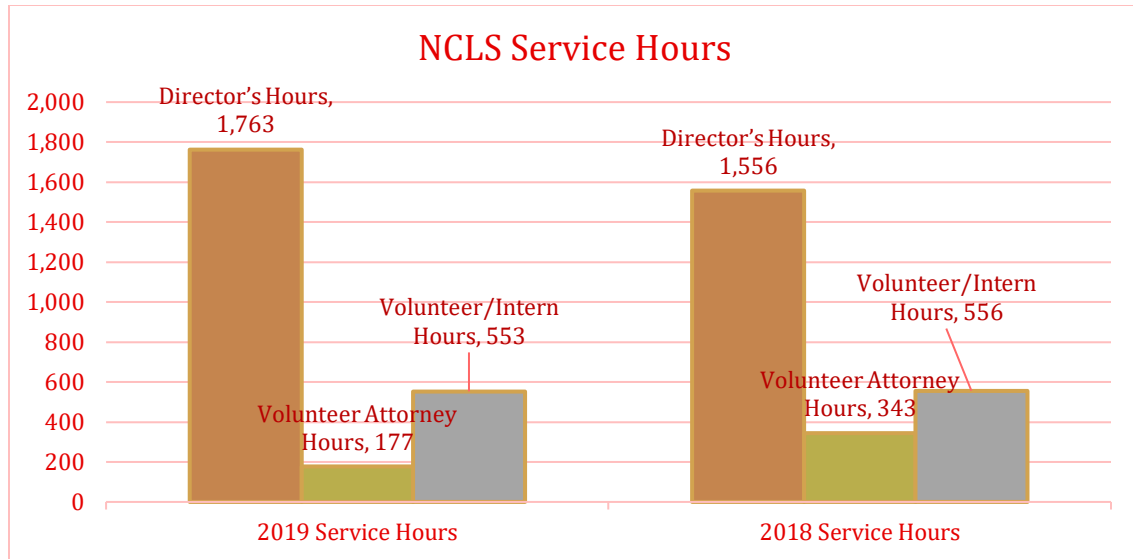
New Covenant Legal Services has thrived this year. We have 40 cases that are currently open, 25 of which are carried over from previous years. We closed 42 cases during the 2019 year. Of those cases closed 16 were landlord/tenant, 6 were lemon car/car insurance, 8 involved debt collection, 2 were traffic ticket, 1 was an expungement, 1 was a police misconduct case, 1 was a guardianship case and one involved a child support case. The remaining 4 cases were either consult related or closed early due to unforeseen circumstances.

### Service Hour Summary and Comparison

NCLS has been very blessed by our regular volunteers. We have been able to utilize the expertise of our volunteer attorneys by both sending clients to them or gaining their help at our legal clinics and courthouse project. We have also had the privilege of having wonderful interns and in office volunteers who have been able to help with the expansion and growth. The new office space means that we are able to have a place for counseling sessions, an intern. The only area where we have experienced a decline in service hours is attorney volunteer hours. This was due to the loss of an attorney who was spending 8-10 hours per week at the office in 2018 but had to reduce his commitment dramatically due to new employment commitments.

### NCLS Service Hours

	2019 Service Hours	2018 Service Hours
Director's Hours	1,763	1,556
Volunteer Attorney Hours	177	343
Volunteer/Intern Hours	553	556



We expect to see continued growth in clientele, staff, and volunteers in the next several years.

## New Covenant Legal Services 2019 Case Load Summary

We divide our work into two distinct categories:

1. **Litigation matters:** These are cases where NCLS opens a file and normally enters an appearance as attorney of record for an individual who either has been sued or requires a lawsuit to protect their rights.
2. **Consults:** Consults are when individuals come to NCLS looking for representation and are either referred to another attorney, given direction by our attorneys (but not taken on as clients), or are told that we are unable to take their type of case. Many of our consults happen directly in the St. Louis City Courthouse during our Court Project mornings.

## Types of Cases Handled

While NCLS handles a wide variety of matters we do not take all cases we are presented with. Currently we handle:

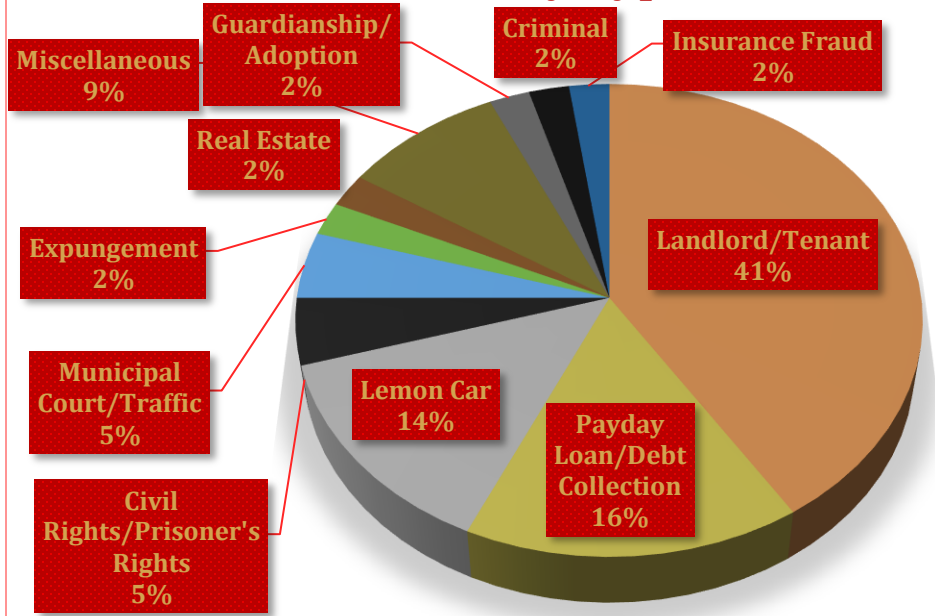
- Consumer Fraud
- Landlord/Tenant Issues
- Debt Collection Cases
- Sexual Exploitation
- Minor Criminal Cases
- Expungements
- Racial Discrimination
- Driver’s License Revocation

NCLS has been working on a handful of large landlord/tenant cases. These have included several cases against the company TEH. We have also settled a percentage of the cases allowing our clients to receive money to cover the damages incurred during their tenancy. We are also continuing to work diligently on the prison sentence commutation case for the young man with the 45-year prison sentence for a non-violent offense. We are hoping to bring some resolve to this important case in an upcoming court date. We have continued out to administrative heads of the Department of Corrections, Senators, and other city and state leaders to move the process along.

### I) 2019 NCLS Litigation Caseload Summary

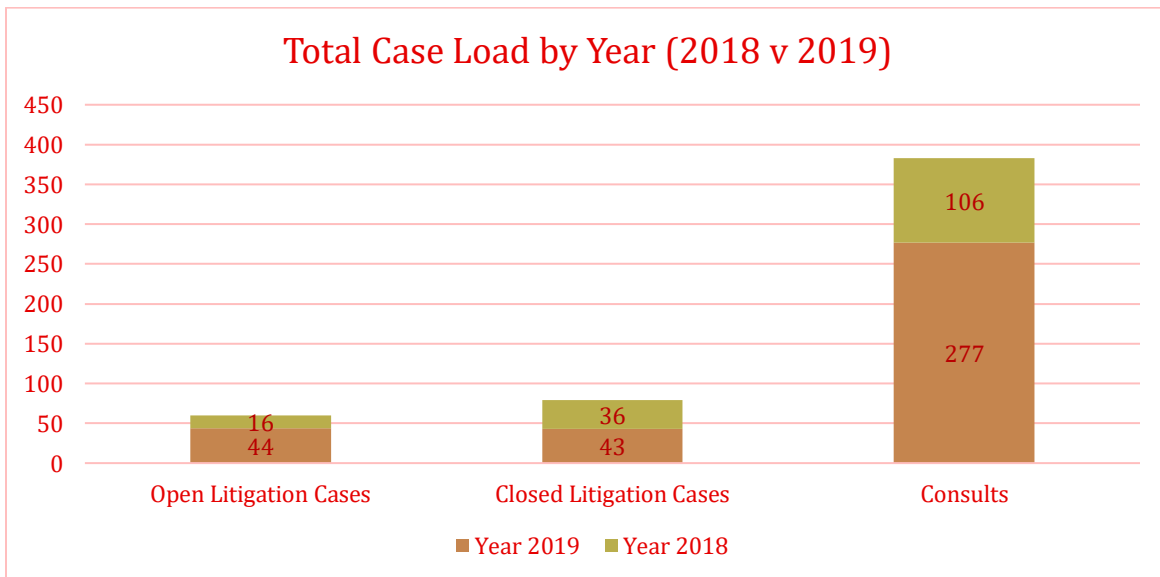
Case Type	Number
Landlord/Tenant	18
Payday Loan/Debt Collection	7
Lemon Car	6
Miscellaneous	4
Civil Rights/Prisoner's Rights	2
Municipal Court/Traffic	2
Expungement	1
Real Estate	1
Guardianship/ Adoption	1
Criminal	1
Insurance Fraud	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>

## Case Consults by Type Number 2019



## 2) 2018-2019 Consults

This year has brought tremendous growth. One growth area in particular is our consults. The accompanying chart shows our increase in consults from 2018 to 2019.



Consults include office visits, phone conferences, and attorney consults with individuals in the St. Louis City Courthouse. This number is conservative as we have been a part of legal clinics and are actively working in the City Court House. We are working diligently to record all consultations, hours worked by volunteers/interns, and all hours worked by volunteer attorneys.

Most of our cases continue to come to us through church referrals, word of mouth, and referrals from other not-for-profit legal entities in the area who are overwhelmed with the number of people seeking help. We have also received many referrals from the Judges and court personnel causing our clientele to grow exponentially.

## Client Surveys

One of our main sources of feedback from our clients is through our client survey. Since we started measuring client satisfaction, approximately 95% of our clients provide favorable reviews of the services NCLS provided on their client surveys. We have prepared a brief seven question survey that covers whether the client felt empowered, how they felt about our service, and whether they feel they gained skills that will help them avoid future decisions that will result in another similar lawsuit.

*“[Felt] very supported – liked the Christian aspect. Godly people!”*

*“[NCLS] made me feel empowered.”*

## Financial Report 2019

Income	
<b>Foundation Grants</b>	\$ 16,100
<b>Attorneys' Fees Paid by Settling Defendants</b>	\$ 24,910
<b>Special Events Income</b>	\$ 875
<b>Contributions</b>	\$57,940
<b>Service Reimbursement</b>	\$6,650
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 106,475</b>

Expenses	
Staff Expenses	\$82,564
<i>Director</i>	\$55,250
<i>Legal Assistant</i>	\$27,314
Office Rental	\$19,155
General Office Expenses	\$8,048
Investigative Services	\$3,929
Computer Expenses	\$4,328
Telephone Expenses	\$5,769
Accounting Fees	\$2,168
Insurance	\$1,346
Depreciation	\$7,173
Miscellaneous	\$7,890
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$142,370</b>

<b>2020 Carry Over</b>
<b>\$24,105</b>



## Looking Ahead

In 2019 our expanded office space helped us grow our client base, volunteers and staffing. We were blessed to have more interns and volunteers in 2019 than any previous year. It also provided our clients with more privacy and access to other amenities – a volunteer counselor, more places to meet and work on cases with clients.

Our continuing increase in workload creates a need for more help and resources. We look forward to having more communications with our donors and foundations in 2020 as we are hoping to increase our staffing to fill the growing need for attorneys to work on these cases. Be on the look out for more calls to action in our emails, more educational seminars and hopefully a fundraising event or two in the near future.