



## **The Top Pro Bono Needs in Virginia, 2014: Survey Results from the Association of Virginia Legal Aid Programs**

In March 2014, executive directors and managing attorneys in all nine of Virginia’s local direct-service legal aid programs took part in a survey to identify the legal aid system’s top needs by case type for pro bono assistance from the private bar. The request for such a survey came from one of Virginia’s best known pro bono advocates in the private bar as way of educating the private bar about the most important needs for volunteer time.

Following, in descending order of need, are the top statewide pro bono needs identified in the survey. The list does not include all needs, just those that received the most votes for “strong need”, and needs in some local areas will vary due to local conditions. The survey also rated the relative level of client demand, time needed, and complexity for each case type, and those results are included.

This list is a starting point for understanding of the types of legal problems most often faced by low-income Virginians for which legal aid programs need help from the private bar. For more information, please contact the executive director of your local legal aid program. A list of programs with contact information accompanies these survey results.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Case Type</b>	<b>Relative Level of Demand in Client Population</b>	<b>Relative Amount of Time Needed</b>	<b>Relative Level of Complexity</b>
1.	Custody/Visitation	High	High	Low
2.	Divorce/Separation/Annulment	High	Varies*	Low
3.	Bankruptcy/debtor relief	High	Medium	Low
4.	Domestic Abuse	Medium	Low	Low
5.	Private Landlord/Tenant	High	Low	Low
6.	Support	Medium	Low	Low
7.	Federally subsidized housing	High	Low	Low
8.	SSI	Medium	Low	Low
9.	Collection (including repossession/deficiency/garnishment)	High	Low	Low
10.	Medicaid	Low	Low	High
11.	Public housing	High	Low	Low
12.	Mortgage foreclosures (not predatory)	Medium	Medium	High
13.	Adult Guardian/conservatorship	Low	Low	Low
14.	SSDI	Medium	Low	Low
15.	Unemployment Compensation	High	Low	Low
16.	Wills & Estates	High	Low	Low
17.	Advance Directives/Powers of Attorney	High	Low	Low

\* Can range from a simple uncontested no fault divorce to a contested fault divorce involving equitable distribution of marital property and spousal support.