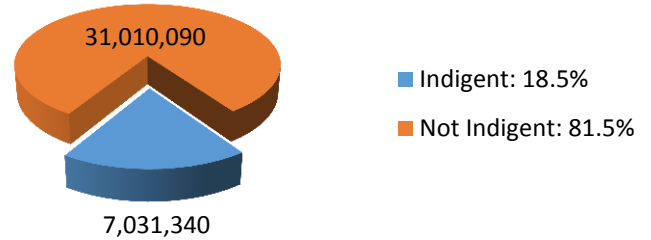


The Justice Gap: A Crisis on the Courthouse Steps

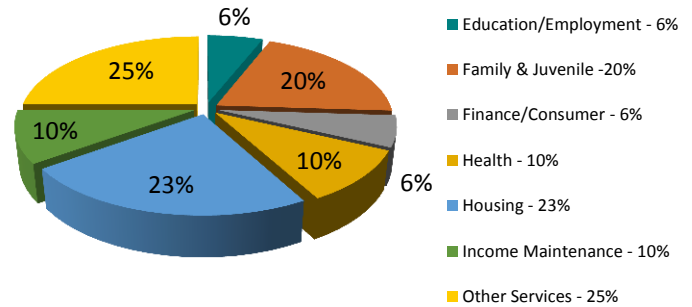
California’s legal system is in crisis. We are drowning in unmet need for legal help. Our courthouses are clogged with people painfully unprepared to handle their own legal problems. They demand excessive court time and judicial resources, and still they cannot achieve their goals. Leaving them to their own devices perpetuates injustice and degrades the role of an entire branch of government.

Here’s a view from the tip of the iceberg:

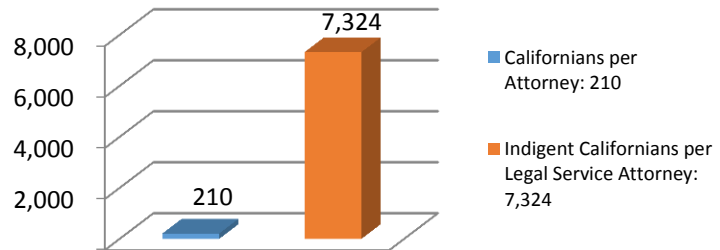
There are over 7 million people in California who are considered “indigent” – nearly 20% of the state’s population. This means a household income of less than \$30,000 per year for a family of four. These people all qualify for free legal services funded by State Bar grants under Business & Professions Code sec. 6210 et seq.



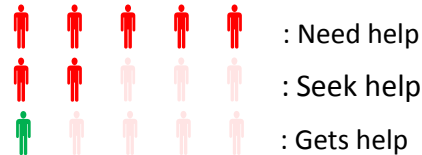
Every year, 47% of poor people face a broad range of civil legal problems. In California, those problems break down like this. In unlawful detainer actions, 81% of proceedings include at least one party who is self-represented. In domestic violence proceedings, that figure is 90%.



There are approximately 180,000 attorneys now licensed to practice law in California, for a ratio of about 210 lawyers per Californian. There are about 960 legal service attorneys in California providing free help to indigent people. That means there are more than 7,300 potential clients per legal aid attorney.



Legal service attorneys are able to offer aid to about 20% of those who need help. Half the people who come to them seeking services, are turned away due to lack of resources.



Less than 5% of California’s attorneys participate in the State Bar’s efforts to increase resources to support legal assistance programs. Many others give of their time *pro bono*, or have found other ways to help. But the “justice gap” between the legal assistance that is needed, and the amount that is being provided, is deep and getting deeper. You can use your dues bill (line 10) or your internet browser to cut that gap. Justice may be blind, but it should be a guide for us all. We need your help to make it a reality for those who need it most.

Donate online at www.CAforJustice.org/donate. Learn more at www.CAforJustice.org or by calling the State Bar’s Legal Services Trust Fund Program at (415) 538-2252.