



**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**  
Department of Housing  
Office of Housing and Community Development  
315 Iron Horse Way  
Providence, RI 02908

### **McKee Administration Announces Expanded Legal Services Program for Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention**

*Nonprofit firm Rhode Island Legal Services selected to lead statewide program aimed at eviction prevention*

**PROVIDENCE** – The McKee Administration announced today a statewide initiative to offer expanded civil legal services to low-income Rhode Islanders to avoid eviction and remain stably housed.

The Department of Housing has awarded a \$3.1 million contract to Rhode Island Legal Services (RILS), a nonprofit law firm specializing in providing free services to low-income individuals and families with civil legal problems, to administer the new program. RILS, in partnership with subcontractors the Rhode Island Center for Justice, Direct Action for Rights and Equality, and HousingWorks RI at Roger Williams University, will provide housing-related legal services to tenants whose household income is no more than 80% Area Median Income.

Services include legal representation in eviction cases and mediations with landlords, case management and counseling related to housing stability, among other activities.

“All Rhode Islanders deserve fair and equitable opportunities to secure and maintain safe, affordable housing,” said Governor Dan McKee. “As we continue to make both immediate investments in our statewide shelter capacity and long-term investments in permanent housing, this program aims to prevent homelessness by providing at-risk individuals and families with the legal resources they need to stay in their homes.”

The \$3.1 million awarded to RILS is supported by the State’s allocation of federal Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA2) dollars for housing stability services, as awarded in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

This statewide legal services program expansion comes as the Administration continues to make immediate investments in Rhode Island’s housing landscape, including \$30 million in new funding for infrastructure improvements to expand emergency shelter solutions; supporting prospective homeowners with a \$30 million first-time homebuyers assistance program; and [releasing \\$166 million](#) in funding to support affordable housing development in Rhode Island.

“Providing access to legal counsel is an effective way to reduce evictions, helping to prevent homelessness for individuals and families,” said Secretary of Housing Stefan Pryor. “We are grateful to Rhode Island Legal Services and their partners for undertaking this important work.”

“This is an unprecedented investment in housing stability for Rhode Islanders,” said Steven S. Flores, the Director of RILS Housing Law Center. “It will allow RILS and its partners to offer a range of legal help to thousands more low-income Rhode Islanders as they struggle to stay safely housed or avoid disruptive displacements, which can push families to the breaking point. The services will ultimately benefit all Rhode Islanders in the long run because they will reduce the costs for emergency services, reduce job losses due to homelessness, and facilitate more stable communities.”

People who are seeking help with legal matters requiring an attorney should reach out to Rhode Island Legal Services at 800-662-5034.

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