



VLAS STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-17:

Approved by VLAS Board of Directors 12/4/2012

Key to Abbreviations:

Approp. = Appropriations BPC = Budget & Personnel Committee CD = Communications Director DA = Director of Administration DD = Development Director ED = Executive Director Gov. Comm. = Governance Committee Implementation Priority: 3 points = implement in first year of plan 2 points = implement in second year of plan 1 point = implement in third or fourth year of plan	LL = LawLine Managing & Supervising attorneys MAs = Managing Attorneys POAs/AMDs = Powers of Attorney/Advance Medical Directives PDC = Program Development Committee RDC = Resource Development Committee Wiki = our online site for legal work standards, policies, forms
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GOALS Objectives Strategies	<i>How success will be measured</i>	<i>Who will implement</i>	<i>New costs in \$ or time</i>	<i>Implementation priority</i>	<i>When begin</i>
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<p>VLAS WILL PROVIDE THE BEST LEGAL SERVICES POSSIBLE BY: GOAL I: Meeting the most pressing needs of the low-income population in south-central Virginia</p> <p>Focus advocacy resources, including advice, case representation, partnerships, and community education, on the most critical problems identified in our needs assessment process:</p>	<p>Clients and community will see objective change in the conditions that most affect clients</p>	<p>ED, MAs, attorneys, paralegals, secretaries</p>	<p>No new costs in dollars</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>ASAP</p>
<p>❖ Housing: VLAS will protect safe and affordable housing: such work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ reducing unsafe and unhealthy housing; ○ educating and challenging landlords who have unlawful lease provisions or practices; ○ defend trailer park evictions where people own their own homes; ○ challenge self-help evictions; ○ preserve or restore public utilities when legal responsibility for payment is in dispute; ○ defend public and subsidized housing evictions; ○ defend simple evictions (private, unsubsidized evictions 	<p>Better rental housing, fewer evictions</p> <p>Increased substantive and dollar outcomes;</p>				

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<p>for nonpayment of rent, alleged lease violations, or other reasons not stated above);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ prevent mortgage foreclosures where the client has substantial equity and only one mortgage on the home; ○ enforce rent-to-own home purchases where the client has performed on the contract. 	Increased substantive outcome reporting in client satisfaction surveys				
<p>❖ Access to Health Care: VLAS will protect and improve access to health care and positive health outcomes; such work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ protecting eligibility for Medicaid, Medicare, FAMIS and new health care programs; ○ reduction of obstacles to positive health outcomes. 	<p>More enrolled in health programs from our area; less use of emergency care by our client population</p> <p>Dollar outcomes; exceed projected outcomes for grants</p>				

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<p>❖ Income and Benefits: VLAS will protect income and benefits; such work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ obtaining and maintaining government and private benefits for which clients are eligible; ○ removing barriers to employment such as drivers license restoration, garnishments, education about job seeking. 	<p>Establish benchmarks for dollar outcomes and monitor trends</p>				
<p>❖ Family Issues: VLAS will support and improve family stability; such work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ obtaining uncontested divorces including use of pro bono help as much as possible and non-attorney staff; ○ challenging inappropriate court jurisdiction in interstate custody disputes; ○ seeking change of child support for payor parents on Social Security Disability/SSI; ○ creating medical powers of attorney and general powers of attorney (use pro bono whenever possible); ○ creating simple wills and living (medical) wills when our client is age 60 or above, or has a life-threatening illness (use pro bono whenever possible); ○ creating guardianships when connected to other priorities. 	<p>Growth in uncontested divorces; maintain service similar to current in other categories</p>				

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<p>❖ Consumer: VLAS will assist low-income consumers to protect their resources; such work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ opposing predatory or abusive business practices that affect a large part of the client population; ○ claiming statutory exemptions that protect income and assets; ○ defending against claims that involve a large proportion of the client’s annual income when the client is not collection- proof; ○ improving access to financial education. 	<p>Increased dollar outcomes in recoveries and outcomes;</p> <p>Increased consumer knowledge of rights</p>				
<p>❖ Education: VLAS will protect the educational rights of children when they are significantly threatened; such work will include protection of rights in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ long-term (ten or more days) suspensions, ○ expulsions, or ○ denial of appropriate special education services 					
<p>❖ Special grants: VLAS will assist clients and provide services funded by grants that support these priorities.</p>					
<p>❖ Advice: VLAS will provide advice in cases within priority internal guidelines, and other areas approved by the executive director and will send flyers and brochures in cases that we would not accept.</p>					

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<p>❖ Emergencies and Special Circumstances: In order that clients may be assisted in emergencies or exceptional situations not anticipated by these priorities, VLAS will assist clients in situations affecting needs that do not fall within these priorities and internal guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Such cases may be accepted only if approved by the executive director. If the executive director is unavailable, acceptance may be approved by a managing attorney; if the office managing attorney is not available, the casehandler may accept the case. The applicable managing attorney or casehandler approving the acceptance must immediately document the acceptance and the reasons therefore in a memo to the executive director. ○ The executive director will report quarterly to the board of directors on the acceptance of such cases and report annually or as directed to the Legal Services Corporation. 					
<p>❖ Pro bono: VLAS will accept and place pro bono cases within and outside VLAS internal guidelines with pro bono attorneys who will accept and complete such cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will work with private attorneys and law firms inside and outside our service area to achieve the most pro bono assistance possible 					

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VLAS WILL PROVIDE THE BEST LEGAL SERVICES POSSIBLE BY:					
GOAL II: Increasing the effectiveness of our legal advocacy					
<p>1. Create one program-wide law firm that uses task forces and technology to increase efficiency and impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Allocate subject areas (housing, benefits & family, consumer) to task forces in a way that is cohesive and emphasizes Goal I. ❖ Each group has a defined leader and members, but invites all advocates including LawLine to take part in each meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each task force develops plan for problems will address, resources needed or desired, steps to be taken. ○ Task forces include admin/fundraising staff as well. ❖ Offices not required to have an advocate on each task force, but every advocate required to be active in at least one task force. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocate assignments to be made by MAs & ED with 	Increase substantive and dollar outcomes, and visible impacts, impact on new issues	Senior staff create implementation plan with a design committee; Test with pilot implementation for one group	May require new technology and more travel	Medium : will require time to design and implement	Plan Jan-March, implement pilot in April 2013

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<p>consideration of preferences; advocates can take part in more than one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Make use of technology to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attach documents to cases in case management system to promote collaboration and allow remote supervision and sharing; ○ Increase communication across program for collaboration, information sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular program-wide online staff meetings, quarterly teleconference meetings to discuss trends, patterns, issues; ▪ Data mining, trends sharing, developments; ○ Grow use of e-filing and filing by mail; ○ Promote use of teleconferencing for hearings in all courts in which we practice, including SSA hearings; ○ Enlist assistance from local and nearby law schools to assist; i.e. with public benefits administrative hearings. ❖ Obtain help in the form of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ support of Supreme Court Office of Executive Secretary for enabling electronics; ○ money to pay for hardware: capital grants to support technology plan; ○ State agencies' (e.g. VEC) agreement to adopt 					
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o teleconferencing for audio/visual in hearings; o General Assembly delegation support for OES and agency increase in electronics. ❖ Create staffing plan with order of positions to be filled and plan for getting there (see Financial Stability, below). 					
<p>2. Promote community access and engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Establish ongoing remote sites to improve access to VLAS: Borrow or rent space in local churches, law offices, agencies to interview clients either on site or remotely with GoToMeeting, Skype. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Law offices use would help us build pro bono & engagement. o Use air cards where not have local wifi. o Any space needs to be staffed because clients will need help with equipment. ❖ Create community engagement managers for local pro bono, <u>volunteers</u>, local agency contacts and outreach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Options include using staff, VISTA volunteers, law students, retired lawyers, others. o Invite Harrisonburg-Rockingham bar to present to us, or we go there, to find out how they use private attorneys to place all pro bono cases; who does what in the process. 	<p>Increased access to LawLine, increased volunteer hours,</p>				

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Explore whether to expand the board or create an advisory council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To expand outreach, advice, engagement, and support, particularly in rural counties particularly. ○ See mechanisms that work best in localities. ○ Use technology so that advisory council could get together once a year in person, other times electronically. 					
<p>3. Increase the effectiveness of LawLine and its role in VLAS advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Streamline the LawLine phone queue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local offices secretaries and pro bono coordinator pre-screen visitors and callers before putting on LawLine: type of legal problem, residence, and site of legal problem. ○ Improve publicity on services we do and do not provide. ○ Set limitations on types of cases for which LawLine will provide advice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More closely follow tiered legal work priorities ▪ No advice if legal problem not yet “ripe” ▪ Continue appropriate referrals and provide written information. ○ Continue to improve paralegals’ skills for concluding 	<p>Decreased queue time and dropped calls</p> <p>Monitor average case time and promote best practices</p>				

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<p>calls that we can't handle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advance notice to callers of information and paperwork needed before beginning intake <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publicity on website and brochures ▪ Add to phone greeting. <p>❖ Improve access to LawLine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Streamlining” objectives, above, will improve access by freeing up space and time in queue. ○ Improve access to, and use of, client handouts, especially on new VLAS website. ○ Develop “smarter” version of online application process. <p>❖ Integrate LawLine and local offices to provide more comprehensive/cohesive/consistent advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seamless entity among all advocates, LawLine and local offices. ○ Regular online advocacy meetings (quarterly) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To discuss trends, recurring issues, systemic problems to be addressed; ▪ LawLine experience and information will help inform the development of tiered legal work priorities and local office case acceptance; ▪ LawLine gains understanding of local offices’ case acceptance decisions and what’s involved in 					
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<p>extended services to clients;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local office staff gain knowledge of LawLine’s work. <p>❖ Screening (filtering) of legal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No change to current LawLine intake process. ○ Quarterly online meetings of all advocacy staff (see above) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LawLine reports on trends, patterns, recurring issues and opposing parties, frequency of calls by specific problems; ▪ Local office reports on issues they spot after receiving transfers from LawLine; will help LawLine to spot more issues in future intakes; ▪ All report on knowledge of local community issues. ○ “Data mining” in case management system: identify trends and use to guide advocacy. <p>❖ Better connect pro bono within LawLine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Closer collaboration with Lynchburg PBI coordinator for expansion of case types appropriate for PBI. ○ Pro bono attorneys to review and critique client handouts on legal topics that are more traditionally in the realm of private practice, e.g., probate, wills, real estate, 					
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homeownership, bankruptcy.					
<p>4. Improve Staff Retention and Satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ VLAS will help staff to understand the purpose and direction of the program, the contribution of each staff and board member to the program’s advocacy for VLAS clients, and how staff can influence advocacy choices and program design. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regularly solicit and utilize feedback from all staff when making program decisions that affect staff including budget and program design ○ Use staff committees to make recommendations to the Executive Director, i.e., technology committee. ○ Program design should build on individual strengths and provide opportunities for growth of advocacy skills; allow transfers between task forces when there is turnover or as otherwise appropriate; ○ ED provide monthly or bimonthly updates on fundraising/advocacy/program changes in which staff is the targeted audience ○ Ensure regular interaction and communication between casehandlers and fundraisers so that staff understand how advocacy and fundraising support each other ○ Seek new and maintain successful ways to reinforce staff satisfaction and sense of value and such as use of 	Annual survey of staff about program design, effectiveness, and job satisfaction	ED and managers	Time, but no dollar cost	3	After board approval of strategic plan

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<p>Managing Attorney discretionary fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use quarterly meetings of advocates and admin staff in new formats to discuss advocacy, purpose and mission ○ Give younger/newer advocates opportunities to present training to staff. ○ Periodic evaluations of all staff ○ Brown bag lunch presentations on work of task forces and admin office online to rest of staff 					
<p>5. Create and implement a technology plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ VLAS will create and implement a technology plan that supports and enables our goals, objectives and strategies. 	Technology speeds our work and makes it more effective	DA and staff technology committee	Planning will take time, purchasing will take money	3	After board approval of strategic plan

<p>VLAS WILL PROVIDE THE BEST LEGAL SERVICES POSSIBLE BY:</p> <p>GOAL III:</p> <p>Increasing our financial stability*</p> <p><small>*Definition: financial stability for VLAS means operational stability at three casehandlers per office and a balanced budget</small></p>					
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A. Increase Funding to Support Advocacy	Sustain level funding from 80% of current foundations	DD	Costs in time but generally not dollars	3	2013
1. Increase foundations/program grants:	Grow funding from 20% of current funders	CD, DD			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Continue and grow funding for each current foundation ❖ Acquire and develop new foundation funding ❖ Staff to inform Director of Development of local funding opportunities ❖ Task forces develop concept papers for projects 	Acquire two new foundation funders yearly	MAs Advocates			
2. Increase individual giving:	25 % increase in number of anncamp donors	DD with help of all staff and board	Time, some travel		2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Annual campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Acquire new donors ○ Grow amounts given by current donors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasize projects ▪ Cultivate new young generation of donors 					

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With impact, not newsletters ▪ Focus on angels, those who give \$5k or higher <p>❖ Planned giving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create and implement a plan ○ Meet with current significant donors first 	<p>25% increase in average gift for current donors</p> <p>Add two new planned giving commitment</p>				
<p>3. Increase private bar giving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expand what we are currently doing in Lynchburg to Suffolk ❖ Determine Farmville, Danville, Martinsville after Suffolk ❖ Ask managing attorneys/staff to speak at bar meeting about our campaigns ❖ Need dynamic leaders 	<p>% increase in number of new attorney donors</p> <p>increase in dollars raised</p>	<p>DD and BoD</p> <p>MAs</p> <p>RDC</p>		3	<p>Spring 2013</p> <p>Spring 2014</p> <p>Spring 2013</p>
<p>4. Increase local government funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sustain current funders ❖ Seek funding from localities that do not fund VLAS ❖ Local offices make presentations 	<p>Sustain existing funders, add 1 new locality</p>	<p>DD</p> <p>MAs</p>	<p>Time, some travel</p>	3	2013

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5. Use events to raise funds and prospects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Bill Quillian, April 2013, 100th birthday ❖ Porch parties, breakfasts ❖ Birthday parties for community leaders ❖ Plan 40th Anniversary event 	Raise \$10,000 from Quillian event; new donor prospects from others	DD Staff Board	Time consuming for lower dollar return	3 1	Fall 2012 for Quillian event
6. Increase United Way funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sustain current funding ❖ Increase funding amount from one UW per year ❖ Add new UW agency funding 	Sustain funding; grow new funding; add UWSHR as funder	ED CD DD		3	2013
7. Increase attorneys' fee collections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Educate advocates on the types of cases that statutorily allow attorney's fees that VLAS can handle; not making good use of security deposit fee cases now ❖ Train advocates on how to input time, draft fee petitions and memorandums in support of attorney's fees (at least once every year or every 2 years) to use in both state and federal court; and how to collect ❖ Educate LawLine on how to identify cases or situations where attorney's fees can be sought 	Amount of attorney's fees recovered; amount of cases seeking attorney's fees	Advocates & LL	No \$. Training and small amount of additional time to record time correctly and to file fee petitions	3	2013 fiscal year

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❖ Have templates available for staff to use when filing attorney's fees cases	Sustain and exceed \$40k in 2011-12				
8. Increase federal and state legislative funding ❖ Support Washington and Richmond partners in their advocacy for more funding		E.D.		3	2013
9. Seek appropriate federal and state agency grants ❖ Including LSC TIG		D.D.; D.A. on TIG		3	2013
10. Enable board members to influence giving ❖ Meet individually with board members ❖ Board members to influence new individual / foundation donations ❖ Board members collectively get / give \$50,000 over five years ❖ Continue to educate board on VLAS: basic facts: geographic area, poverty pop, staffing in offices, decline in advocate numbers, ratio of advocates to clients compared to private bar, not do criminal, priorities, mission statement, how contact LawLine, budget summary, number turned away ❖ Continue to educate board on how to cultivate donors 5-10 min video with mock donor interview; development director follow-up with individuals	100% in person individual meetings <u>by DD</u> with board members 100% of board to influence 2 new donations yearly	DD VLAS Board		3	2013

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11. Implement a donor relationship management database Ensure that prospect information up to date and annually reviewed			\$15k including software, conversion, training	1 or when funded	2015
12. Create a Gift Acceptance Policy		D.C.		2	2014

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<p>B: Increase Communications to Support Advocacy and Fundraising</p>	<p>Change in awareness in public surveys</p>	<p>Advocates, ED, DD, CD, PBI</p>	<p>Time, some travel</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2013</p>
<p>1. Make Public More Aware of VLAS</p>	<p>Increase in donations and grants</p>	<p>ED, Advocates</p>	<p>Increase in impact, but need to define how measure impact</p>		
<p>❖ Create a Community Engagement Plan integrating education, advocacy, fundraising and partnerships</p>	<p>○ Conduct workshops on legal issues, attend community events and make presentations to: community groups, resident housing associations, judiciary, medical groups, schools, church members, social service agencies, bar on what VLAS does</p>	<p>Local Staff</p>	<p>○ Develop active partnerships with community organizations by attending their meetings, hosting “brown bag lunches”, etc.</p>		
<p>○ Revise & update website to better engage communities: go-to place for ALL constituents</p>		<p>Local Staff</p>	<p>○ Distribute info on LL’s legal education handouts to public in multiple ways; direct to website</p>		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Distribute “Justice in Action” client brochures to social service agencies, courts on regular basis; need distribution plan ○ Produce “rack cards” and posters to distribute and post on wider scale than SS agencies (i.e. groceries, retail outlets) ○ Use video ○ Host fundraising events throughout service area to create public awareness ○ Expand outreach efforts (i.e. Martinsville, Halifax, Emporia) to explore unaddressed needs and engage with underserved communities 		<p>CD, Advocates & Local Staff</p> <p>DD & Local Staff</p> <p>Advocates, ED</p>			
<p>❖ Create a Communications Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hire consultant with grant funds to help create development and communications plan ○ Each advocate including LawLine will submit one client case success story quarterly, and use them in all communications and applications; notify staff how each 	<p>1 new story per quarter from each advocate</p>	<p>DC; Advocates</p> <p>All staff</p>			

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<p>story is used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuously submit email addresses to CD for receipt of e-newsletter ○ Produce and distribute quarterly electronic newsletter featuring client success stories. Actively collect email addresses to add to the database ○ Produce print newsletter or report annually and distribute electronically and by mail ○ Attend advocacy meetings to share information about newsworthy stories ○ Revise & update website to better engage donors ○ Make use of Social Media: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ create links to existing resources as well as our own ○ Submit client success stories to media; place case stories with reporters; share stories with board/staff/volunteers ○ Create copy for small-town newspapers 		<p>CD</p> <p>CD</p> <p>Advocates, CD, DD</p> <p>Community engagement manager, DD, ED</p> <p>Advocates, ED, CD</p> <p>Advocates, ED, CD</p> <p>Advocates,</p>		<p>2</p> <p>3</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>2013</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Target private attorneys and public to educate about what cases we handle. Dispel misimpressions about what we do ○ Educate judges to encourage pro bono & individual giving ○ Recruit private attorneys to write legal education pieces 		ED, PBI Advocates, ED, PBI, DD Advocates, ED, DD, PBI Advocates, ED, PBI		 2 1	 2014 2013
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APPENDIX: TIERED LEGAL WORK PRIORITIES

In our March 2007 board meeting, the board adopted the concept of “tiered” work priorities as expressed below. The tiered system gives local offices more discretion in what cases to accept, and by doing so accept a wider variety of case types and have discretion to accept a legally more compelling lower-ranked case over a more routine, higher-ranked case. The 2013-2017 Strategic Plan continues use of the tiers and modifies them only within the internal guidelines, which are part of the plan and are repeated below.

TIER ONE: Local offices will always accept new LawLine and other-program transfers of some or all of the following unless the local office is closed for new cases; case merit and the determination of the managing attorney will still determine whether the client receives advice or full representation. Tier Two cases will be accepted only after the local office is accepting transfers of all three categories of Tier One cases.

Public Benefits: TANF, Food Stamps, General Relief, Unemployment, Social Security Disability, SSI

Health Care: when the opposing party is a health care provider or public (Medicaid, Medicare, FAMIS) or private insurance provider

Housing: public, subsidized, self-help evictions, conditions cases appropriate for rent escrow

TIER TWO: Local offices may choose to accept or not accept transfers of the following case types depending on local conditions including office caseload, egregious behavior of opposing parties, and weather-caused emergencies:

Housing

Access to Health Care

Income and Benefits

Family Issues

Consumer

GOALS	<i>How success will be measured</i>	<i>Who will implement</i>	<i>New costs in \$ or time</i>	<i>Implementation priority</i>	<i>When begin</i>
Objectives					
Strategies					

Education

INTERNAL GUIDELINES:

In addition to the type of case, VLAS staff will also consider the internal guidelines below (repeating Goal I of our Strategic Plan), the merits of the particular case, the availability of other advocacy or assistance in the community, and the capacity of the program to provide services, before accepting a case. The Executive Director may impose quarterly limits on the numbers of particular types of cases described in the internal guidelines if the hours devoted to such case types are not appropriate to the type’s priority ranking.

VLAS will focus advocacy resources, including advice, case representation, partnerships, and community education, on the most critical problems identified in our needs assessment process:

- ❖ **Housing:** VLAS will protect safe and affordable housing: such work will include:
 - reducing unsafe and unhealthy housing,
 - educating and challenging landlords who have unlawful lease provisions or practices
 - defend trailer park evictions where people own their own homes
 - challenge self-help evictions
 - preserve or restore public utilities when legal responsibility for payment is in dispute
 - defend public and subsidized housing evictions
 - defend simple evictions (private, unsubsidized evictions for nonpayment of rent, alleged lease violations, or other

GOALS	<i>How success will be measured</i>	<i>Who will implement</i>	<i>New costs in \$ or time</i>	<i>Implementation priority</i>	<i>When begin</i>
Objectives					
Strategies					

reasons not stated above)

- prevent mortgage foreclosures where the client has substantial equity and only one mortgage on the home
- enforce rent-to-own home purchases where the client has performed on the contract

❖ **Access to Health Care:** VLAS will protect and improve access to health care and positive health outcomes; such work will include:

- protecting eligibility for Medicaid, Medicare, FAMIS and new health care programs
- reduction of obstacles to positive health outcomes

❖ **Income and Benefits:** VLAS will protect income and benefits; such work will include:

- obtaining and maintaining government and private benefits for which clients are eligible
- removing barriers to employment such as drivers license restoration, garnishments, education about job seeking

❖ **Family Issues:** VLAS will support and improve family stability; such work will include:

- obtaining uncontested divorces including use of pro bono help as much as possible and nonattorney staff
- challenging inappropriate court jurisdiction in interstate custody disputes;
- seeking change of child support for payor parents on Social Security Disability/SSI;
- creating medical powers of attorney and general powers of attorney (use pro bono whenever possible);
- creating simple wills and living (medical) wills when our client is age 60 or above, or has a life-threatening illness (use pro bono whenever possible)
- creating guardianships when connected to other priorities

❖ **Consumer:** VLAS will assist low-income consumers to protect their resources; such work will include

- opposing predatory or abusive business practices that affect a large part of the client population
- claiming statutory exemptions that protect income and assets

GOALS	<i>How success will be measured</i>	<i>Who will implement</i>	<i>New costs in \$ or time</i>	<i>Implementation priority</i>	<i>When begin</i>
Objectives					
Strategies					

- defending against claims that involve a large proportion of the client’s annual income when the client is not collection- proof
- improving access to financial education

❖ **Education:** VLAS will protect the educational rights of children when they are significantly threatened; such work will include protection of rights in:

- long-term (ten or more days) suspensions,
- expulsions, or
- denial of appropriate special education services

❖ **Special grants:** VLAS will assist clients and provide services funded by grants that support these priorities

❖ **Advice:** VLAS will provide advice in cases within priority internal guidelines, and other areas approved by the executive director and will send flyers and brochures in cases that we would not accept

❖ **Emergencies and Special Circumstances:** In order that clients may be assisted in emergencies or exceptional situations not anticipated by these priorities, VLAS will assist clients in situations affecting needs that do not fall within these priorities and internal guidelines.

- Such cases may be accepted only if approved by the executive director. If the executive director is unavailable, acceptance may be approved by a managing attorney; if the office managing attorney is not available, the casehandler may accept the case. The applicable managing attorney or casehandler approving the acceptance must immediately document the acceptance and the reasons therefore in a memo to the executive director.

GOALS Objectives Strategies	<i>How success will be measured</i>	<i>Who will implement</i>	<i>New costs in \$ or time</i>	<i>Implementation priority</i>	<i>When begin</i>
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- The executive director will report quarterly to the board of directors on the acceptance of such cases and report annually or as directed to the Legal Services Corporation.

- ❖ **Pro bono:** VLAS will accept and place pro bono cases within and outside VLAS internal guidelines with pro bono attorneys who will accept and complete such cases.
 - We will work with private attorneys and law firms inside and outside our service area to achieve the most pro bono assistance possible