



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2022-2023

LFIR # 1331

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

4. **Project/Program Description**

Founded in 1997, the Haitian Lawyers Association (HLA) is a 501(c)(3), non-profit voluntary bar association in the State of Florida. HLA's members include judges, lawyers, law professors, and law students of Haitian, Haitian-American descent, as well as those who are not of Haitian descent but have a vested interest in issues affecting the Haitian community. HLA is an organization dedicated to protecting and advocating for the legal rights of the Haitian and other minority communities in the State of Florida. HLA's Pro Bono Project provides free legal services to low income-individuals and families in the areas of family law, landlord tenant, contracts, and small claims matters. There is also a need for Creole and French speaking attorneys and paralegals to assist Florida residents with filling out legal forms such as divorce forms and small claims forms.

5. **State Agency to receive requested funds**
- State Agency contacted?**

6. **Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2022-2023**

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	417,500
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>417,500</b>

7. **Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 (including matching funds available for this project)**

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	417,500	79%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	100,000	19%
Other	10,000	2%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2022-2023</b>	<b>527,500</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?**

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2017-18	0	45,000	1042	No

9. **Is future funding likely to be requested?**

a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**

b. **Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.**

Grants from local counties and cities; funds raised from licensed Florida Bar attorneys and various other donors



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**10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?****If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.****11. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended**

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits	The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing the entire project, and supervising all legal services provided through the Program. This includes overseeing staff attorneys, volunteer attorneys, and conducting outreach in the community.	65,000
Other Salary and Benefits	The Office Manager is in charge of making sure that the office's daily operations run smoothly. Administrative functions include communication, marketing, basic accounting, record keeping, maintenance of files, and tracking all legal cases in our case management system.	40,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	We will hire a marketing company to conduct outreach in the community to inform potential clients about our organization as well as to help recruit volunteer attorneys. Additionally, we will hire a technological support company to monitor the Organization's computer system and assist with any technology issues that are encountered.	20,000
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits	We will hire full-time and part-time staff attorneys, paralegals, administrative assistants, and support personnel.	260,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Filing fees, litigation costs such as, court reporters, process servers and court translators. Travel costs when traveling outside of Miami Dade County. Office Equipment: computers, printers, scanners, and office supplies. Office Furniture: conference table, desks, chairs.	32,500
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>417,500</b>

**12. Program Performance****a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?**

Increased access to the Court system and greater understanding and appreciation of our judicial system will be achieved by providing pro bono assistance to low income individuals and families, Creole / French speaking residents throughout the State of Florida, victims of Human Trafficking, and economically disadvantaged persons. Our free legal services will also help smooth the workload of the county clerks offices, judicial staff, and various legal aid organizations. We are assisting individuals and families regain personal stability, join the work force and become contributing members of our State. The cumulative result of our pro bono services is that we strengthen our State as a whole.

**b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?**



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Any and all competent legal representation deemed necessary. We will provide free legal services and representation in various areas of law including: Family Law, Landlord Tenant, Contracts, and Small Claims. Our staff and volunteer attorneys provide direct legal representation to low income individuals and families; and to Creole / French speaking residents of Florida. We will conduct regular outreach across the State as well as hold various CLE seminars to train and mentor volunteer attorneys that will be representing clients pro bono. These funds will help empower the most vulnerable members of our State through legal services so that they can become contributing members of our State.

**c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?**

Services will range from full direct court representation across multiple areas of law, to legal services with filling out documents to help the clients proceed pro se, to legal counsel and advice. Assistance to Creole / French speaking residents of Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Orange, Hillsborough, and Osceola Counties. Our attorneys and staff are all bilingual and can assist the county clerks, who cannot give legal advice on how to prepare certain forms such as landlord tenant and divorce forms.

**d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?**

Low-income individuals and families; vulnerable individuals in our communities; the elderly; jobless; and economically disadvantaged. With increased funding and additional staff, we hope to serve 1500 - 1800 individuals throughout the State of Florida.

**e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?**

By providing pro bono assistance to those who need it most in our local communities, we can affect positive change, which will have a far-reaching impact. We intend to provide representation or assistance in excess of 300 cases and with filling out various forms such as divorce forms and other small claim matters. We will monitor our case representation and pro bono legal assistance using our case management system. We have in the past provided clean deliverables in the number of cases and consultations that we can provide with funding available. We have also partnered with various legal aid organizations such as Dade Legal Aid and Broward Legal Aid to provide similar services in the past.

**f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?**

If deliverables are not met, money will be deducted from the total amount due to the agency as detailed in the contract.

**13. The owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.**

N/A



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#### 14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name  Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number  Ext.

#### 15. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

#### c. Organization Type

- ☐ For Profit Entity
- ☒ Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- ☐ Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- ☐ Local Entity
- ☐ University or College
- ☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

#### 16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number