



# NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

## ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

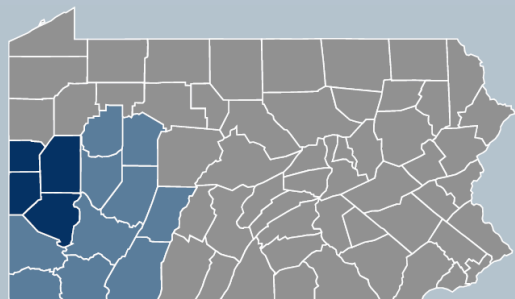
**800** Total Participants  
**14** Counties  
**120** Partner Organizations

- Community member surveys (English & Spanish)
- Partner organization engagement
- Staff surveys
- Focus group meetings
- One-on-one interviews

Nearly **4 in 10 respondents** report household income near or below the legal aid eligibility threshold

**33% of households** rely on public benefits such as SNAP or Medicaid

Many working households continue to experience **financial instability**



### COST OF LIVING PRESSURES:

Rising costs of housing, utilities, food, & healthcare increase legal vulnerability

### 6 OUT OF 10 SUMMIT COUNTIES

Have Poverty Rates Higher than the State Average of 12%

### 9 OUT OF 10 SUMMIT COUNTIES

Median Income is Lower than the State Median Income of \$97,349

## TOP LEGAL NEEDS IDENTIFIED

By community members, partners, and staff

### HOUSING

- Evictions
- Unsafe conditions
- Habitability issues
- Foreclosure risk

### FAMILY SAFETY & STABILITY

- Domestic violence
- Custody
- Divorce
- Protection from Abuse

### ECONOMIC SECURITY

- Debt collection
- Utilities
- Public benefits access & retention

## BARRIERS TO ACCESSING LEGAL HELP

Barriers often compound, making it difficult for people to seek or complete legal assistance

**Do not know where to go for help**

**Believe legal help is unaffordable**

**Transportation challenges**

**Childcare responsibilities**

**Behavior or mental health barriers**

## WHAT THE DATA SHOWS OVER TIME

Looking at trends over time helps distinguish persistent needs from emerging pressures



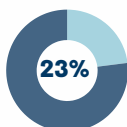
Summit Legal Aid experienced a 10% increase in intakes since 2022

**30%** Increase in Consumer & Public Benefits intakes since 2022

**INTAKES IN 2024** **28%** Housing  
**55%** Family  
**17%** Other

## FOCUS POPULATION: OLDER ADULTS

Opportunity: expand elder-focused outreach & partnerships



Residents in the service area are aged 65 or older

**24%** Projected increase of adults age 65+ by 2040

### Common legal needs to address

- Housing repairs & safety
- Benefits access
- Debt collection
- Estate planning & end-of-life documents
- Protection from exploitation

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Strengthen housing & family law capacity
- Integrate transportation, childcare, & behavioral health into service design
- Increase outreach, community education & awareness of legal aid
- Expand and foster partnerships
- Use data to guide priorities & resource alignment