



## **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Needs Assessment for the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.

Date Issued: January 17, 2025

### **Overview**

The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc. (LASMNY) is a Legal Services Corporation (LSC)- funded, not-for-profit organization headquartered in Utica, New York. We serve thirteen counties in central New York with six offices and a telephone HelpLine. We also operate a statewide program serving agricultural workers and their families. We seek proposals from qualified consultants to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the legal needs and service gaps for both our general client population and the uniquely vulnerable agricultural worker community.

The findings of this needs assessment will guide LASMNY's strategic planning efforts, shape resource allocation, and inform service delivery.

### **Organizational Background**

Established in 1952, LASMNY's mission is to provide free legal assistance to low-income individuals facing civil legal problems that impact the basic needs of life. Through legal advice, emergency legal services, extended legal representation and community legal education, we help low-income people stabilize their finances, protect themselves and their children from domestic violence, obtain access to healthcare and education, stay housed, and increase household income. We also focus on specific vulnerable populations with our services, such as senior citizens, victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, people with disabilities, refugees and immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community, veterans and agricultural workers.

### **Purpose of the Needs Assessment**

LASMNY seeks a needs assessment to:

1. Identify the most pressing legal needs of low-income individuals in LASMNY's service area.
2. Understand the unique challenges of New York State agricultural workers and their families.
3. Determine whether language, technology, or other barriers limit access to LASMNY's services.
4. Evaluate service duplication and consolidation possibilities.
5. Evaluate gaps in current service delivery and opportunities for pro bono expansion.
6. Identify opportunities to educate organizations and community groups about LASMNY's services.
7. Provide feedback from stakeholders about LASMNY's proposed strategic plan, which is under development now.
8. Provide actionable recommendations for addressing unmet legal needs and improving access to justice in LASMNY's service area.

## Scope of Work

LASMNY expects the consult to provide the following services:

1. Data Collection and Analysis
  - a. Review existing grant activity reports, demographic data, proposed strategic plan, and other relevant materials.
  - b. Collect both quantitative and qualitative data using methods such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and stakeholder meetings.
  - c. Ensure representation from diverse groups, including low-income individuals, agricultural workers, community partners, the local legal community, and LASMNY staff.
2. Stakeholder Engagement
  - a. Collaborate with the LASMNY's staff and leadership to identify key stakeholders.
  - b. Engage agricultural worker communities and advocacy organizations in the process.
  - c. Involve stakeholders in offering insight and critique of LASMNY's proposed strategic plan.
3. Needs Identification
  - a. Assess the most pressing legal needs in areas such as housing, employment, immigration, family law, public benefits, and consumer issues.
  - b. Identify the specific needs and barriers faced by agricultural workers and individuals with disabilities or limited English proficiency.
4. Gap Analysis
  - a. Evaluate current service delivery to identify gaps in resources, capacity, or geographic reach.
  - b. Consider barriers to accessing services, including language, technology, transportation, and cultural considerations.
5. Final Report and Recommendations
  - a. Develop a comprehensive report summarizing findings and actionable recommendations, including modifications to LASMNY's strategic plan.
  - b. Provide recommendations tailored to the LASMNY's general client population and the agricultural worker community.

## Timeline for Deliverables

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
RFP Release	January 17, 2025
Proposal Submission Deadline	March 7, 2025
Consultant Selection	March 14, 2025
Kickoff Meeting	March 31, 2025
Data Collection Completed	April 18, 2025

Stakeholder Engagement Completed	May 16, 2025
Draft Report Submitted	June 13, 2025
Final Report Delivered	June 27, 2025

## **Proposal Requirements**

Proposals containing reasonable deviations from the proposed timeline will be considered. Proposals should include:

1. A cover letter, including a brief introduction to the consultant or firm.
  - a. Describe relevant experience with needs assessments, legal services organizations (particularly LSC-funded providers), or agricultural worker populations.
  - b. Outline the methodology for data collection, stakeholder engagement, and analysis.
2. Provide a proposed timeline for deliverables, aligned with the timeline provided.
3. Provide a detailed cost estimate, including hourly or flat rates, travel expenses, and other anticipated costs.
4. Provide samples or case studies of similar work projects that the applicant has completed.
5. Provide the contact name, title, affiliated organization, phone number, and email address of three contacts for whom the applicant has conducted similar work in the past five years.

## **Submission Instructions**

Submit proposals electronically to Christina Reilly at [christina.reilly@lasmny.org](mailto:christina.reilly@lasmny.org) **by 5:00 p.m. EST on March 7, 2025**. Include "LASMNY Needs Assessment Proposal" in the subject line.

Proposals received after 5:00 p.m. EST on March 7, 2025, will not be considered.

## **Selection Criteria**

LASMNY will evaluate proposals based on:

1. Relevant experience and expertise (30%)
2. Proposed methodology (30%)
3. Understanding of the agricultural worker population and other vulnerable populations (20%)
4. Budget and cost-effectiveness (15%)
5. References (5%)

## **Questions and Additional Information**

Please direct any questions to Christina Reilly by email at [christina.reilly@lasmny.org](mailto:christina.reilly@lasmny.org), or by telephone at (315) 793-7081, by February 28, 2025.