

Our challenge is to find people who share our commitment to building a more just society.

Do you fit the bill?

Do you recognize that there are few "quick" fixes to deep-rooted cultural and legal injustices?

Are you committed to social change?

Would you like to live in a society in which justice really is for all?

Make a donation. Cash, stock, credit card, checks are welcome.

Monthly payment options are available.

Online contributions appreciated.

Consider including PJC in your estate plans with a legacy gift.

United Way number 6393.

Public Justice Center, Inc.
500 East Lexington Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
www.publicjustice.org
(410) 625-9409

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"The Public Justice Center is a flexible vehicle for new approaches to solving systemic legal problems."

○ **Immigrants' Rights:**

On behalf of Maryland's rapidly growing immigrant population, the PJC advocates for equal access to the courts and government as well as recognition and acceptance in what is often a hostile political environment. The PJC is a founding member of the Maryland Latino Coalition for Justice which, in collaboration with the PJC, recently **succeeded in obtaining legislation requiring language access in state agencies and a Court of Appeals rule mandating courts to provide competent interpreters.**

○ **Workers' Rights:**

The PJC represents groups of low-wage workers who suffer workplace injustice and discrimination. Our work includes immigrant, migrant, and seasonal workers. **We have recovered millions of dollars of wages for poultry workers on the Eastern Shore, stopped the illegal collection of undisclosed fees and commissions from teachers recruited in India and protected the rights of Latino warehouse workers fired for making a collective complaint to their boss. We are one of seven organizations representing plaintiffs in Dukes v. Walmart, the largest class action gender discrimination lawsuit ever filed against a private employer.**

○ **Health Rights:**

The PJC acts as a "watchdog" for poor people who need health care, by advocating to open the doors to care with the agencies that administer the programs, and to simplify the procedures necessary to receive medical assistance. The PJC is a founding member of the Medicaid Matters! Maryland (MM!MD) Coalition, a statewide, cross-constituency coalition which supports full funding of Medicaid.

○ **Prisoners' Rights Project:**

The PJC is the only civil legal services group working on behalf of detainees within the walls of the Baltimore City Detention Center (BCDC.) Our purpose is to bring about long-term, systemic improvement in the conditions of confinement in Maryland. We advocate for individual detainees, **focusing on denial of access to medical attention for conditions** including HIV/AIDS, asthma, diabetes and mental health issues. **We co-counsel with the ACLU to enforce a class action consent decree that requires the State to remedy unconstitutional conditions of confinement at the jail.**

○ **Appellate Advocacy Project:**

The PJC has become the regional center for appellate advocacy. We aim, through this unique project, to influence the shaping of civil rights and poverty law in state and federal appellate courts by representing clients and by participating as amicus curiae in family law, civil rights, employment, discrimination, disability, housing and administrative cases. The PJC provides a home for annually selected Murnaghan Appellate Advocacy Fellows, and also **brought the first case in the nation that tested the entitlement of poor people under a state constitution to be appointed a lawyer in certain civil cases. This landmark case has propelled the PJC into a national leadership position in the "Civil Gideon" cause, forming a national advocacy coalition.**



Making an
IMPACT
since 1985

For more detailed information, news articles and briefs, visit our website www.publicjustice.org.

Our Guiding Principles

Injustices that have been accepted as status quo do not crumble easily. The PJC has the expertise and commitment necessary for complex litigation as well as long-term legislative and policy initiatives. Our staff is highly-qualified and dedicated. Our board brings to the PJC a wealth of experience in law, medicine, public policy, education, community and labor organizations.

Many hands make lighter work. An integral part of the PJC's strategy is to form alliances with groups that share similar objectives and clients, and to forge strong collaborative relationships with the private bar. Such entities not only assist us in addressing our clients' immediate problems, they also provide the institutional foundations upon which lasting change can be built.

Effective advocacy requires the insightful and flexible use of all of the tools in the lawyer's toolbox. The PJC uses diverse strategies and services—often in layered combinations—to advocate reform. These strategies include: individual, group, and class action litigation to establish legal precedent and change harmful practices; legislative advocacy to protect and expand rights; governmental and business policy advocacy to guarantee implementation of rights; client education to ensure access to justice; and public education through the media and documented study to shed light on the existence, causes, and solutions of injustice.

Our Focus Areas

● Tenants' Rights:

With daily dockets of up to 1,000 cases, "justice" in Maryland's rent court means 30-second "trials."

A landlord's duty to maintain rental property is rarely enforced by our government or courts. Evictions result in the dumping of tenants' belongings onto the street. The PJC seeks to address these systemic failures that cause hardship to tenants and the community by **representing tenants and tenants' organizations, educating clients as to their rights, and advocating for legislative and administrative changes** in landlord-tenant relations.

● Homeless Children's Rights:

The PJC has led the country in enforcement of the federal McKinney-Vento Act, which requires that school systems provide appropriate education to children who are homeless. **To enforce this law, we brought two of the nation's first class action lawsuits. Both resulted in comprehensive and innovative consent decrees requiring school systems to identify homeless children and provide them school continuity and transportation.** We continue to monitor and support policy changes in those districts.

● Foster Children's Right to Education:

This project focuses on the public education of Maryland's most vulnerable children: those in the foster care system. Maryland's problems in this arena are legion. **The PJC aims to bring together stakeholders around a vision to decrease school mobility and improve access to school for foster children in Maryland.**

Making an since 1985



**Pursuing systemic
change to build a
more just society.
The PJC is making
an impact in
Maryland, the
mid-Atlantic and
increasingly,
the nation.**

We all see the faces of hungry children, of homeless families, of sick people without medical care and of hard-working people who struggle to support their families. We see the effects of poverty in blighted urban neighborhoods and ramshackle rural houses as well as in the drugs, crime and under-employment rampant in our communities.

We also know that sympathy is not enough to defeat poverty or injustice. The only way to combat these social ills is by confronting and changing the institutions, laws, practices and attitudes that cause poverty and discrimination.

While many capable non-profit organizations address the results of poverty,

This means we look for ways to change the legal and social systems that cause injustice, or permit injustice to persist.

from full participation and respect in society by poverty or discrimination. We pursue projects and cases that have

not just for an individual, but for entire groups of affected people.