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# Going Above and Beyond

Living in poverty puts lives in a precarious state. A single illness or a temporary job loss can be life changing and not having legal help in these situations can be devastating. For more than 40 years, the Legal Aid of East Tennessee ([LAET](#)) has worked to ensure equal justice for elderly, abused, and low-income people by providing a broad scope of civil legal assistance

 **LAET Visits Client in Hospital** and advocacy. The services provided by LAET reap benefits far beyond the courtroom.

According to one client of LAET, “if the IRS had starting taking money from what little disability check I get, I would have been forced to do without medicines and medical care until it was paid. Being a diabetic, this could have been catastrophic or fatal. I was even in the hospital and my LAET representative came to my bedside so I could sign important paperwork. They went above and beyond anything I could have expected.”

For many, LAET is their only link to legal assistance when faced with seemingly insurmountable dilemmas in civil matters. LAET provides civil legal assistance to approximately 8,000 individuals each year. From gaining Orders of Protection for victims of domestic violence to preventing families from becoming homeless, the efforts of LAET have ensured that thousands of low-income families in across their service area in East Tennessee have been given a second chance.

LAET is part of the community fabric of East Tennessee, serving 26 counties from Chattanooga to Johnson City. With an estimated 300,000 eligible persons in their service area, LAET provides civil legal representation to East Tennesseans who would otherwise have no one to help them secure their basic legal rights.

On the LAET website, there are numerous testimonials from clients who have benefitted from LAET. This small sampling of client comments leaves no question about the value of the services provided by LAET -- "I don't know what I would have done without your help." "I feel as if I couldn't have gotten a better lawyer, even if I was paying." "Legal Aid saved me from losing m home."

These client's [testimonials](#) speak volumes of the fundamental role LAET plays in their community. The Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services is proud to support the work of civil legal service providers, such as LAET, who go above and beyond for their clients by providing training opportunities, advocate support, and legislative activities.

SOURCE: Legal Aid of East Tennessee [website](#)

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