



INDIANAPOLIS LEGAL AID SOCIETY

Advocating with Passion and Purpose

April 2020



As we continue living with the Covid-19 crisis, Indy Legal Aid would like to share some good news about several of our clients.

We hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy.



Young Father Wants to Give His Son the Best Possible Life

Sidney, a 23-year-old father, recently came to Indy Legal Aid to establish paternity of his one-year-old son. In addition to establishing paternity, Sidney expressed to his Indy Legal Aid attorney, Jennifer Hammond, that he wished to share custody of his son and begin exercising regular parenting time with him.

As Sidney told Jennifer, he had been doing all the wrong things with his life, including drugs. Fortunately, he has turned his life around and just wants to be a great dad to his son and give him the best possible life. Prior to Covid-19, Sidney, who lives with his parents, was working as a server at two different restaurants and as a DJ at wedding receptions. Jennifer said that "Sidney has been wonderful to work with especially because he is so motivated to do the right thing for his son!"

Sidney's visits with his son are going well and Jennifer was able to work out an Agreed Provisional Order with the mother. Once the courts reopen, mediation will be scheduled to finalize all issues.

Sidney is very appreciative of the help Jennifer and Indy Legal Aid provided. "Jennifer has done so much for me that I can't begin to thank her," Sidney said.

"Without her, I wouldn't be seeing my son right now."

Assistance with End-of-Life Documents Puts Client's Mind at Ease



"Mabel" is 73-years-old and has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, along with a heart condition. Like so many of the senior citizens in our community, Mabel has been very worried lately about becoming ill or dying if she contracts COVID-19 in light of her increased risk factors. Her husband and her only child are both deceased, and Mabel's income consists of Social Security and a small monthly survivor's benefit. Mabel decided to update the Will she'd made prior to her daughter's death almost 15 years ago, but because of her limited funds paying an attorney wasn't an option. So she called Indy Legal Aid to see if we could help her update her Will.

Although they couldn't meet in person, Mabel and Deetta Steinmetz, her Indy Legal Aid attorney, discussed Mabel's concerns over the telephone. Mabel told Deetta that she's been feeling burdened because she wants to make sure that her belongings go to her granddaughter, and she wants her best friend to have the ability to easily take care of her personal business and pay her bills if she becomes incapacitated. Finally, Mabel wanted to make her wishes known regarding who would serve as her Health Care Representative and how her Representative should handle decisions about life-prolonging measures if she's unable to communicate or make those decisions herself. After discussing Mabel's goals with her, Deetta suggested that Mabel consider additional end-of-life planning documents beyond just a Will to help put her mind at ease during this frightening time.

Deetta explained the needed documents to Mabel, and Deetta is now in the process of preparing end-of-life planning documents for Mabel including a Will; Living Will; Durable Health Care Power of Attorney and Appointment of Health Care Representative; and a General Durable Power of Attorney, along with other minor ancillary documents. Mabel is relieved that she is getting these documents prepared and will have her affairs in order in the near future

Indy Legal Aid Helps Great-Grandmother with Guardianship Issues

"Betty" is a great-grandmother who has lovingly raised three generations of her family: children, grandchildren and



great grandchildren. Indy Legal Aid has been involved in helping Betty for thirteen years with her guardianship and family law issues. In 2007, an Indy Legal Aid attorney first worked with Betty to establish guardianship over two of her great-grandchildren. In 2015, Indy Legal Aid attorney Rick Dyer worked with Betty to establish

guardianship over two additional great-grandchildren.

Betty returned to Indy Legal Aid this February to terminate two great-grandchildren's guardianships, because they have begun living with their mother, who is Betty's granddaughter. Those two children are now older, in school and very happy, according to Betty. Betty also requested that the court declare one of her great-grandchildren, who is serving in the military, emancipated. Finally, Betty wished to maintain guardianship over her six-year-old great-grandchild, who was drug addicted at birth and has lived his entire life with Betty.

Even with the many constraints due to Covid-19, Linda Thrapp, Indy Legal Aid attorney, was able to get all of Betty's documents prepared, signed, notarized, returned, and e-filed since March. The guardian and the mother worked together and signed an agreed entry, which was filed with the court. In early April, Indy Legal Aid received orders from the court that they agreed with the filings and issued rulings without a hearing.

Betty was thrilled with Linda's help that resulted in the successful conclusion of four guardianship cases in a very short period of time, not to mention, a very difficult time.

Volunteer Opportunities

VOLUNTEER



Indy Legal Aid has a number of volunteer opportunities for attorneys, students, and the general public. For attorneys, we have pro bono cases, internships for students, and our spring and fall events, along with light office work.

For more information, click [here](#).

No time to volunteer? Donate now!



We have several ways for you to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable Hoosiers in Central Indiana. Approximately \$.87 of every dollar donated to Indianapolis Legal Aid Society is directly used to provide programs and services. For more information, click [here](#).

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Monday - Friday

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

"The Indianapolis Legal Aid Society is dedicated to ensuring that qualified low-income persons living in the Central Indiana community have access to quality legal assistance for civil disputes."



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