

Interest on Lawyer Account Fund of the State of New York

Funding civil legal assistance for low-income New Yorkers since 1984

Justice Infrastructure Project Report on Phase 1 Activities (January – August 2024)

Executive Summary

The New York Interest on Lawyer Account Fund (IOLA) has completed Phase 1 of its Justice Infrastructure Project (the JIP or the Project). IOLA undertook an extraordinarily broad and comprehensive approach to listening and learning and has appreciated and embraced the potential for transformative change within New York's civil justice ecosystem. Phase 1 of the JIP included significant stakeholder engagement in communities across New York, engagement with national and local leaders in access to justice, and quantitative analyses of resident survey responses as well as data from the New York State Courts, IOLA grantees, LawHelp New York and 2-1-1.

Key observations and findings from Phase 1 include:

Challenges Identified that Inhibit Access to Clear and Timely Access to High Quality Legal Information, Advice, and Representation

- Residents experience "**life issues**" – not "**legal issues**"
- New Yorkers least likely to seek legal assistance are **those with the lowest incomes**.
- Many New Yorkers seek help from **trusted sources** first (family, friends, community organizations)
- Seeking help is typically **frustrating, time consuming, inefficient, and uncoordinated**
- Civil legal services providers and other community organizations **spend significant time referring people** to other organizations or resources
- Civil legal services providers dedicate significant resources to certain activities that could be coordinated to reduce **duplication of effort**
- Changes in laws, processes, technology and other factors have left IOLA grantees **in need of coordinated infrastructure support**

Opportunities to Invest in Infrastructure that Can Improve Access to High Quality Legal Information, Advice, and Representation

- Amplify the capabilities of local organizations that are **important community connectors**
- Invest in **more efficient and effective coordination of, and access to, resources**
- Develop a **single, consistent, comprehensive, updated tool for referral and legal information**
- **Leverage new technologies** to enable more effective referral and access to information
- Enable people to securely **store and share information**
- **Integrate and coordinate** with other social care platforms
- Invest in **consistent, coordinated outreach**
- Assist civil legal services providers with **statewide support functions**

Background

Due to recent historic revenue growth, IOLA found itself with a generational opportunity to enhance the delivery system of civil legal aid in New York.

In March 2023, the IOLA Board of Trustees approved the development of a plan that would increase coordination, innovation, and capacity in the sector, known as the Justice Infrastructure Project (the JIP or the Project). Consistent with the IOLA Fund's mission, this Project seeks to ensure that every New Yorker with a legal problem has clear and timely access to high quality legal information, advice, and representation.

The JIP also happens at a time of great change and opportunity in the civil justice ecosystem, both locally and nationally. New insights emerged from the unprecedented challenges and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. New technologies have been developed and proven effective, but not yet scaled and integrated. New York City's historic eviction right to counsel continues to be implemented while statewide expansion is considered. New judicial leadership and investments in e-filing, justice navigators, virtual kiosks and other access to justice initiatives by the courts provide valuable contributions to the justice ecosystem. And recent pilots and other programs are exploring the potential for coordinated intake, triage, screening, information and referral. In addition, numerous innovations across the country have demonstrated the transformative potential for the use of artificial intelligence both as an internal resource for legal services organizations and as a public-facing tool to assist those seeking help.

The combination of funding, inspiring leadership in the grantee community and courts, and advancements in technology present a generational opportunity to make transformative investments in civil justice infrastructure in New York.

Phase 1 Activities

The IOLA Fund, with the assistance of its project management firm, Stout Risius Ross (Stout), and technical advisor, Just-Tech, initially worked to more fully define the steps necessary to achieve the Project goal. It was apparent from the outset of the Project that it would be essential to genuinely and authentically listen to grantees, community-based organizations, and individuals who have interacted with the justice system across the state in order to understand the challenges that exist in our communities and the opportunities to develop scalable, sustainable, impactful and useful innovations to improve access to justice. The specific deliverables for achieving the goal were left open to slowly evolve but contemplated investments in the infrastructure of IOLA grantee organizations as well as investments in public facing tools.

As IOLA sought feedback from New York communities certain guiding principles included:

- Learning about the *public's experience* interacting with the justice system
- The Project should consider how to *amplify existing infrastructure* while also seeking ways to *develop new infrastructure*
- Remaining mindful that the public often experiences *life issues*, which are not always understood as legal issues
- Maintaining a focus on the design and development of innovations that will be *useful and used*
- The Project should consider ideas that are both *practical and innovative*
- Opportunities to invest in the infrastructure of the justice system will exist *within grantee*

organization and external to grantee organizations

- The Project should remain open-minded to potential areas of ***coordination, innovation, and capacity building***
- An adequate amount of time will be necessary to gather feedback, synthesize feedback, engage in continued dialogue, design, develop and implement new innovations – a ***multi-year*** commitment will be necessary
- ***Stakeholders should have an ongoing role*** in providing feedback and participating in the design and development of new innovations – and should be compensated for significant contributions

From January through July 2024 IOLA engaged in an extensive, comprehensive, humble and genuine process to listen to New York residents, community organizations, grantees and other stakeholders. This has included:

- **In-Person Listening Sessions** – With the assistance of its grantees throughout the state, IOLA conducted listening sessions in each of IOLA’s 7 geographic units across the state. These listening sessions were conducted in Rochester, Hempstead, White Plains, Syracuse, Buffalo, Albany, and New York City. Over 1,000 people were invited to these listening sessions from over 500 organizations. Over 250 people attended these sessions representing a broad cross-section of organizations including:
 - IOLA Grantee Organizations
 - Non-IOLA Grantee Legal Services Organizations
 - Child & Adult Literacy Centers
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community Stakeholders
 - Domestic Violence CBOs
 - Faith Based Institutions
 - Family and Child Services CBOs
 - Foundations
 - Health and Welfare CBOs
 - Housing and Homelessness CBOs
 - Immigrant and Refugee CBOs
 - Medical-Legal Partnerships
 - Rural Housing and Transportation CBOs
 - Tenants’ Rights Organizers
 - Bar Associations
 - Judges and other Local Courthouse Representatives
 - Law Library Help Centers
 - Mediation Groups
 - Public Libraries
 - Reentry Task Forces and Community-Based Organizations
 - State and Local Government Agency Representatives
 - United Way Representatives
 - Academic Community

Cognizant that some individuals may not have been able to attend local listening sessions or other feedback opportunities, IOLA created and distributed a website where any individual could provide feedback or request a meeting for further discussion.

- **Subject Matter Focus Groups** – IOLA conducted virtual focus groups with grantees and other organizations with expertise in matters involving: Housing, Consumer Debts, Family Law, Immigration, and Income Maintenance matters. Approximately 150 people from grantee and other local and national organizations participated. These focus groups were designed to learn more about particular nuances related to the law, process and resources associated with these matter types, which represent an overwhelming majority

of the civil legal issues the public faces.

- **Client Focus Group Discussions** - With the assistance of its grantees, IOLA observed focus groups of grantee clients in 4 upstate regions. These focus groups were conducted in-person and facilitated by a local trusted person. IOLA observed these focus groups remotely.
- **New York Resident Survey** – Using an online survey tool, IOLA conducted a survey of 1,000 New Yorkers over the age of 18 who had experienced a civil or administrative legal issue in the last year. Survey responses were collected from all regions of New York and across major demographic factors (age, gender, race / ethnicity, sexual orientation, education, disability and household income). This survey asked respondents about the nature of the issue they experienced, whether they sought help, from whom they sought help, how many attempts to seek help they completed, whether the sources of assistance were helpful or effective, and whether the respondent was satisfied with the outcome of the issue.
- **NYC Community Organization Survey** – With the assistance of the New York Community Trust, New York Council of Nonprofits, and Nonprofit New York, distributed a web-based survey to hundreds of community-based organizations in New York City requesting information and feedback regarding how members of the community diagnosis life issue that may be legal issues, how they respond to such issues, and what opportunities may exist to enhance coordination and collaboration related to resources responsive to civil legal issued experienced by persons in their community. This survey had a very low response rate, generating fewer than 10 responses. IOLA also sought feedback from the New York Community Trust, New York Council of Nonprofits, and Nonprofit New York directly based on their expertise with the NYC non-profit community. IOLA met with the New York Community Trust and Nonprofit New York to collect this additional feedback, as well as discuss improvements to our engagement with the New York City non-profit community, as the Project moves forward.
- **Engagement with New York State and National Justice Stakeholders** – In addition to grantees and community-based organizations throughout the state, IOLA also sought feedback from organizations or agencies that operate in New York on matters involving civil justice as well as national experts, including, New York 2-1-1, Legal Services Corporation, New York Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, Center for Justice Innovation, Family Legal Care, NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, New York Office of Justice Initiatives of the New York Courts, Immigrant ARC, the New York State Office of Court Administration’s Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs, InformUSA, and FindHelp.¹
- **Research** – IOLA conducted research regarding coordinated intake models, justice infrastructure investments, justice innovations, technology grants / initiatives, statewide platforms for information and referral and innovative research regarding how persons with low incomes diagnose issues that arise in their life and how / whether they seek assistance with those issues, including issues that may be understood as legal issues. This

¹ Family Legal Care and Immigrant ARC are current IOLA grantees.

included meetings with at least 12 local and national leaders who worked on large collaboration projects as well as review of numerous reports, webinars, conference presentations, scholarly research and other materials.

- **Quantitative Analysis** – IOLA received data from LawHelpNY, 2-1-1 of New York, and the Office of Court Administration (OCA) to assist with quantitative analysis. IOLA also incorporated data from its Grantee Annual Reports (GAR) to provide further quantitative analysis and comparison. This analysis was intended to provide measurements associated with the frequency of certain needs (civil legal filings and otherwise) and preliminary indications about certain ways in which people seek help.
- **Cybersecurity Improvement and Technical Assistance Project** - In March 2024, IOLA released an RFP for technology consulting services in relation to the JIP. Following the RFP process, IOLA engaged Just-Tech LLC to provide technology consulting services for the Project. As part of these services, Just-Tech LLC is currently training, managing, and facilitating cohorts of IOLA grantees in implementing cybersecurity best practices and technology, such as multi-factor authentication (MFA). Just-Tech LLC will continue to work with IOLA grantees as part of the JIP to strengthen grantee cybersecurity practices and policies.

IOLA remains committed to continued dialogue with stakeholders across the state to refine and synthesize findings and observations from this process.

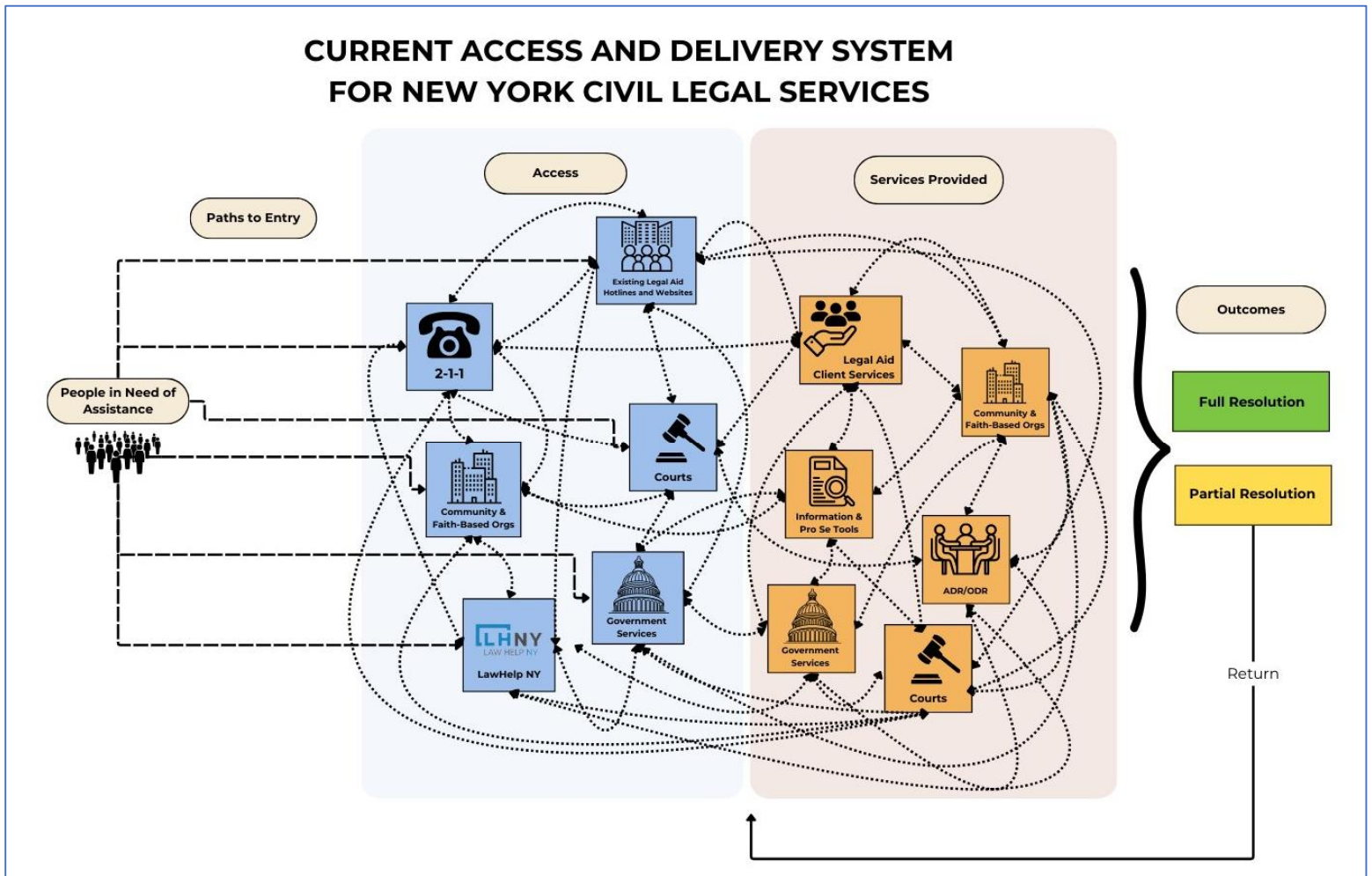
Synthesis of Key Themes and Observations

Provided below is a listing of consistently shared ideas for improvement that were received from across many of the feedback mechanisms described above:

- Coordinated or centralized intake, triage, screening, information and referral – a centralized, easily accessible resource for information, referral, call center contact, live chat, automated forms, artificial intelligence-enabled guidance and information, etc.
- Real-time provider availability for referring entities and people seeking help
- A means for people to collect and store information, including data personal to them
- Expanded, efficient, reliable access to culturally-competent, plain language, information and videos that empower people to understand and navigate legal processes, especially when they cannot access a lawyer
- Tools to support people that often serve as trusted, credible sources of information and assistance within the community (e.g., navigators, community justice workers, etc.)
- Improved language access and access for those with a disability
- Improved rural access (e.g., where transportation and broadband access are unreliable or nonexistent)
- Secure technology tools for those who can access technology (which some cannot)
- Convenient place-based technology resources and assistance (e.g., kiosks, privacy rooms or spaces with technology to enable access to the justice system or other resources, etc.)
- AI tools -- for increased provider efficiency and for improved public access to services
- Tools to assist with provider knowledge management and collaboration
- Data, information sharing, and strategies to empower advocates to pursue systemic change

Through these various forms of engagement IOLA came to appreciate the current challenges faced by New Yorkers seeking help. We consistently heard that the process of seeking help is typically frustrating, time consuming, inefficient, and uncoordinated – both for New York residents and the organizations working to help them. A visual illustration of the process for seeking help that many New Yorkers must endure is presented below:

CURRENT ACCESS AND DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR NEW YORK CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES



The current statewide and local ecosystems and resources reflect decades of under-investment in system infrastructure. Local organizations, including IOLA grantees, have adapted processes, systems, and relationships in a tireless effort to maintain awareness of ever-changing program criteria and contact information. We consistently heard that these efforts to maintain ad-hoc referral directories are resource intensive and constantly at-risk when staff turnover. As discussed in the observations detailed below, , when invited to imagine what would dramatically improve the ecosystem, stakeholders repeatedly emphasized that they wanted an ability to easily provide consistent, reliable and effective legal information and referral.

Key Observations From Each Source of Feedback

From each of the sources of feedback described above, certain key findings were observed.

In-Person Listening Sessions

- **Legal Services Program Tools (Internal)**
 - The opportunity for better coordination and referral across civil legal services programs – reducing the resources required, and client frustration associated with, having to refer someone to a different organization
 - The need to reduce duplication of effort related to the development of materials, intake, triage, referral and other activities
 - The importance of and need for effective knowledge transfer, knowledge management, upskilling, and collaboration across the legal services community
 - The importance of call center operations and the opportunity to develop and implement effective strategies for both call center technology and call center agents (human contact)
 - The need for technology support, training and assistance with the adoption of new (and established) technologies (including AI)
 - The importance of holistic, case management approaches to helping clients with life issues
- **Consumer Tools / Resources (Public-facing)**
 - Public-facing, humble, empathetic generative AI tools for life problems faced by New Yorkers, including those understood to be legal issues
 - Tools to assist clients in maintaining, organizing, sharing and filing documents and information related to civil legal issues and / or other life issues
 - The importance of simple, brief, accessible video content to convey legal processes, risks and resources
 - Acknowledgment of the digital divide and limited access to technology and limited technology literacy for some people seeking assistance (and the need for alternative means of seeking assistance)
 - Acknowledgment that public-facing technology needs to be:
 - Mobile-enabled
 - Adequately staffed and maintained
 - Accessible and accommodating to persons with a broad spectrum of needs and capabilities
 - Accessible in multiple languages
- **Outreach and Communication Tools**
 - The importance of multi-channel outreach to develop a pervasive sense of awareness of the tools and resources available in the community
 - The need to ensure that the source of information is perceived to be credible, reliable and trustworthy
 - The opportunity for place-based justice access (e.g., community centers, kiosks, privacy pods, technology pods, etc.)
 - The importance of WhatsApp for client communication
 - The importance of simple, plain language, diverse language, and culturally-competent language and outreach strategies
 - The importance of access for persons with disabilities, including but not limited to the deaf community, the blind community, and the intellectually impaired

- community
 - The opportunity to create consistent, short video content for civil legal topics to assist those with low levels of literacy and to broaden access to effective information about civil legal topics
 - The need to acknowledge that for many the issues are not “legal” but rather “life issues” (and that using the word “law” or “legal” may impede the ability to engage the public)
- **Ecosystem Tools / Resources (Coordinated)**
 - The opportunity to amplify or enhance platforms that currently exist (such as 2-1-1 and LawHelpNY)
 - The opportunity to engage and enable individuals or organizations in the community that are trusted by those in need to help them navigate complex circumstances and processes
 - The opportunity to learn from private industry (e.g., the healthcare industry) regarding outreach, communication, technology, and service delivery models
 - Acknowledgment of justice-adjacent needs (e.g., mental health, substance abuse, household budgeting, employment barriers, access to financial supports, access to safe and stable and affordable housing, etc.)
 - The importance of partnership with the courts in the design, development and implementation of justice initiatives
 - The importance of unique and complex access to justice barriers that arise in rural communities (e.g., lack of broadband access and lack of transportation)
 - The importance of comprehensive, coordinated data collection to assist with evaluation, reporting, and strategic decision-making, and impact advocacy

Client Focus Group Discussions

- The importance of trust and credibility in communications and outreach
- The need to have a single trusted source for information (one phone number, one website, one app – all integrated)
- The need for greater coordination among community resources
- The value of having a secure place to store information related to civil legal issues (and other life issues)
- The need to have tools and materials for people with the ability to use them, but more intensive services for people with more complex circumstances
- The value of short, simple videos to explain civil legal processes
- The importance of language access, translation and interpretation, and culturally competent outreach and services
- The importance of supporting and enabling trusted individuals and organizations in the community that are often the first place people go to for help

New York Resident Survey

- **Consumer debt was the most frequently identified matter type for respondents who did not seek assistance from anyone.**
- **In aggregate, family law (including child support, custody, divorce, and paternity) was the most frequently identified matter type for respondents who did seek assistance from someone other than a lawyer.**
 - 740 respondents indicated they experienced a civil or administrative legal issue and sought help; 235 respondents indicated they experienced a civil or administrative legal issue and did not seek assistance.
 - The most prominent matter type respondents who did not seek assistance were involved in was consumer debt (94, 40%). Taken in combination, family law matters (child support, custody, divorce and paternity, combined) were the second most prominent selection (85, 36.2%).
 - The most prominent matter type respondents who sought assistance from someone other than a lawyer were involved in was consumer debt (264, 35.7%), followed by motor vehicle (194, 26.2%), public benefits/ fair hearing (143, 19.3%), eviction (123, 16.6%), child support (114, 15.4%) and SSI / SSD reconsideration (109, 14.7%). When taken in combination, family law matters (child support, custody, divorce and paternity) was the most prominent selection (287).
 - The prominence of consumer debt for those who sought assistance and did not seek assistance from anyone owes partially to the fact that there are simply more consumer debt filings than any other matter type.
 - It is notable that a greater proportion of consumer debt issues were identified by people who did not seek help than those who were seeking help from someone other than a lawyer.
 - It is also notable that eviction was more prominent than child support for matters where individuals sought assistance from someone other than a lawyer than for those who did not seek assistance, likely due to the complexities of the eviction process and the risks and circumstances faced by eviction defendants.
 - Of respondents who sought assistance, ONYC respondents were more likely than NYC respondents to seek help with family law matters (68% v. 42%).
 - The sources of assistance for which respondents made the *fewest attempts* for assistance were:
 - Pro Bono Clinic – 2.5 attempts on average
 - Legal Hand – 2.6 attempts
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer – 2.6 attempts
 - Courts / court help center- 2.9 attempts
 - LawHelpNY – 2.9 attempts
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1 – 3 attempts
 - Church / Faith Community – 3 attempts
 - Public School – 3.2 attempts
 - Private / paid lawyer – 3.3 attempts

- Public Library – 3.3 attempts
 - Family / friends – 3.5 attempts
 - Online / Google search – 7.4 attempts
- The sources of assistance respondents indicated were *most helpful* were:
 - Family / friends – 303 (33%)
 - Private / paid lawyer – 160 (18%)
 - Online / Google search – 93 (10%)
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit lawyer – 84 (9%)
 - Courts / court help center – 56 (6%)
 - LawHelpNY – 54 (6%)
 - Legal Hand – 46 (5%)
 - Church / Faith Community – 41 (5%)
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1 – 23 (3%)
 - Pro Bono Clinic – 19 (2%)
 - Public Library – 19 (2%)
 - Other – 11 (1%)
 - Public School – 6 (1%)
- Respondents with higher household incomes were more likely to consider LawHelpNY the most helpful source of assistance (54 responses).
- Private and paid lawyers were more likely to be indicated as the most helpful source for households ONYC and households with higher incomes.
- LawHelpNY was more likely to be indicated as a source of assistance as well as the most helpful source of assistance for households ONYC than households in NYC.
- **Respondents who did not seek assistance were those with the lowest household income.**
 - 47% of respondents who did not seek assistance had annual household income of \$50,000 or less.
 - The distribution of household income for those who sought assistance was nearly uniform across all income categories; however, *those who did not seek assistance were overwhelmingly those respondents with the lowest household income.*
- **Local community stakeholders and organizations are important for people who have low incomes, may not understand legal paperwork, and may have certain disabilities.**
 - Online Search / Google Search was among the top 5 sources of help for each demographic group. Those with particularly low incomes, those who don't understand legal paperwork, and those who have certain disabilities such as blindness or difficulty making decisions will sometimes also turn to the Church / Faith Communities, demonstrating the importance of local community stakeholders as credible sources of information and potential sources of assistance within the community.
- **People may not identify the issue(s) that they are experiencing as a legal issue.**
 - Of the people who sought assistance, approximately 16% did not seek help from a

- lawyer because they did not think their issue was a legal issue.
- 32% did not seek help from a lawyer because they could not afford a lawyer.
 - For those who did not think the issue was a legal issue, and the matter they identified was a civil legal issue, nearly all instances involved consumer debt cases (with a few immigration and family law matters). This finding reinforces that people often experience life issues which are not identified as legal issues.
- **When asked what would be helpful, most respondents indicated that information and resources that could be provided by people other than lawyers would empower them to advocate for themselves and resolve the circumstances.**
 - The 5 most frequently identified things respondents thought would be more helpful were:
 - Help with my finances / budget – 122 (22%)
 - Clear and simple instructions – 83 (15%)
 - A lawyer to help me – 83 (15%)
 - An easy way to know who in my community could help me – 77 (14%)
 - Help talking to the other side – 60 (11%)

See **Exhibit A** for detailed metrics related to the New York Resident Survey.

Quantitative Analysis

- **NYC grantees handle more Family Law and Consumer Debt cases as a percentage of Family Law and Consumer Debt case filings than Outside NYC (ONYC) grantees.**
 - The data demonstrates a significant gap between the number of people facing civil legal issues and the number of people served by grantees. The data also indicates significant requests for assistance related to issues adjacent to civil legal issues. The frequency and concentration of issues does appear to vary geographically and by matter / issue type across the state.
 - There is a disproportionate gap between case filings and grantee cases in Family Law and Consumer Debt matters between NYC and ONYC.
 - NYC grantee cases as a % of Family Law case filings was 12.7%, and ONYC grantee cases as a % of Family Law case filings was 5.2%, indicating that NYC grantees are providing services more than twice as frequently in Family Law matters than ONYC grantees.

A similar geographic difference was observed in Consumer Debt. NYC grantee cases as a % of Consumer Debt case filings was 18.7%, and ONYC grantee cases as a % of Consumer Debt case filings was 11.6%.

- **New Yorkers are often seeking assistance with life issues rather than legal issues as evidenced by a significant number of Landlord-Tenant case filings compared to a nominal number of 2-1-1 requests for assistance in Landlord-Tenant matters.**
 - Statewide, approximately 93.2% (194,330) of Housing case filings were for Landlord-Tenant matters.

- ONYC, there were 116,640 2-1-1 requests for assistance related to Housing. Of these, only 6,610 (5.7%) were for Landlord-Tenant issues, which may be indicative of New Yorkers seeking assistance for *life issues* rather than *legal issues*. This notion is further demonstrated by the approximately 44,000 2-1-1 requests for assistance related to Shelters and approximately 39,400 requests for assistance related to Rent Assistance.
- **New Yorkers are seeking assistance with Family-Support issues from online legal resources; IOLA grantees close few family support cases.**
 - There were 539,509 Family Law case filings statewide. Of the Family Law case filings, the most common type of filing was Family-Support (approximately 32.3% of Family Law case filings).
 - However, Family-Support was the least frequent sub-category in the Family area of need for IOLA grantee cases (534 cases in statewide).
 - After “Other Family Matters,” Family-Support was the most frequent sub-category for LawHelpNY (LHNY) page views (4,861 page views) and LHNY page visitors (2,638).
- **Administrative proceedings, such as those related to public benefits matters, can be complex and require the specialized knowledge of a paralegal or attorney.**
 - Income Maintenance was the second most frequent IOLA grantee case type (after Housing) with 51,779 IOLA grantee matters and the fourth most frequent 2-1-1 request for assistance (74,330 requests). The magnitude and frequency of Income Maintenance requests for assistance and IOLA grantee cases may be a function of the complex nature of these administrative proceedings.

See **Appendix B** for additional observations from the Quantitative Analysis.

Subject Matter Focus Groups

Many observations from the Subject Matter Focus Groups were consistent with the key observations noted above. Provided below are observations from the Subject Matter Focus Groups that were particularly unique to the particular subject matter discussed.

- **Housing**
 - The opportunity to develop tools, resources and information to assist individuals prior to a housing case being filed to assist with pre-filing resolution, when possible
 - The importance of informing the public about changes to housing laws with reliable, credible and consistent information
 - The importance of partnership and collaboration with and among government services that respond to housing instability, including those providing rental assistance
 - The opportunity for technology tools to assist tenants in filing cases for claims of substandard housing conditions
 - The value of housing court decisions and the opportunity to develop tools that can promptly inform attorneys across the state regarding recent, relevant housing court decisions

- The opportunity to develop tools, technology or processes to assist with the recertification process for subsidized housing
- The opportunity to leverage and scale recently-developed tools and technology designed for elements of housing cases or housing instability (such as [JustFix](#) and [Heat Seek](#))
- Consumer Debt
 - The opportunity to assist legal services providers with investments in certain case management platforms and software licenses, particularly for consumer bankruptcy matters
 - Recognizing the significant rates of default in consumer debt cases (for example, estimated to be 90% in Rochester City Court), the importance of providing clearer information to defendants regarding the necessary steps in the court process (especially the need to file answers) and the consequences of inaction
- Family
 - The opportunity to learn from the current use of guided forms in family law matters and seek expansion of the use of guided forms in other family law matters
 - The importance of partnership with the family courts to develop effective responses for the variety of family law matters and client needs
 - The importance of appreciation that family law clients may be involved in several matters that will require coordinated responses
- Immigration
 - The opportunity for technology tools to assist individuals in filing immigration documents
 - The opportunity to develop training tools and materials to enable more certifications for civil surgeons as well as for persons certified to complete forensic psychiatric evaluations
 - The opportunity to develop training, tools and resources related to Special Immigrant Juveniles (SIJ) in partnership with the Family Court
 - The opportunity to develop technology training to assist clients as they learn to use technology platforms required to interact with various social systems (legal, government, education, healthcare, etc.)
 - The opportunity to coordinate materials and information used in advocacy (such as country conditions reports)
 - The opportunity to create tools to enable pro se clients to effectively conduct FOIA requests
 - The importance of having technology and processes that enable rapid response to urgently changing circumstances
 - The importance of WhatsApp as a tool for communicating with clients
- Income Maintenance
 - The opportunity to improve access to medical records for SSI and SSD applications
 - The opportunity to invest in privacy pods enabled with technology, placed in the community and with grantees, to provide safe and secure places with human assistance for clients to access the courts using technology (Social Security and OTDA hearings are now primarily conducted remotely).

Engagement with New York State and National Justice Stakeholders

- The opportunity to create a single common organization or resource that you can call, chat, or email that is also mobile-enabled and can provide both information and referral (based on available capacity)
 - While also the need to appreciate that a single point of entry for all users is not feasible; instead ensuring that all points of entry have the necessary information to assist people navigate to consistent, reliable, effective information
 - The importance of adequate staffing to ensure information collection can be timely, comprehensive and accurate, even when systems of data collection are developed and implemented
 - The importance of shared and clear responsibility and accountability for stakeholders involved in coordinated systems of information and referral
- The opportunity to use journey mapping methodologies in the design and development of tools that may be valuable throughout various civil legal processes
- The importance of user-centered design techniques to develop civil justice innovations
- The importance of comprehensive, strategic data collection to continue to inform iterative design and refinement (as well as strategic advocacy for other supportive resources)
- The opportunities associated with generative AI to assist with civil legal issues
- The importance of plain, simple language in all forms and content
- The importance of appreciating that New Yorkers view legal assistance as an extension of social services
- The importance of enabling trusted community members and organizations who are often the initial places where people go to seek help
- The need for more coordination of resources and organizations
- The opportunity to use place-based, assisted justice access points and technology (e.g., kiosks, privacy pods, technology pods, etc.)
- The importance of allocating sufficient time and resources to ensure an effective user experience
- The importance of access to court files and documents to empower people to navigate civil legal issues
- The value of having a resource people can use to securely store information related to their civil legal and other life issues
- The importance of developing a pervasive sense of awareness of a single organization or resource that can provide effective assistance and referral (based on available capacity)
- The importance of institutional protection for client data even if / when consent is requested and provided

Appendix A

Detailed metrics from the New York Resident Survey conducted in June 2024 (as well as the survey instrument).

- 740 respondents indicated they experienced a civil or administrative legal issue and sought help; 235 respondents indicated they experienced a civil or administrative legal issue and did not seek assistance.
 - Respondents that Did Not Seek Assistance
 - 139 respondents (59%) were between the age of 18 and 44 and 96 (41%) were over the age of 44.
 - Matter types among respondents who did not seek assistance:
 - Consumer debt (94, 40%)
 - Motor vehicle (44, 18.7%)
 - Public benefits / fair hearing (43, 18.3%)
 - Child support (40, 17%)
 - SSI / SSD reconsideration (36, 15.3%)
 - Eviction (32, 13.6%)
 - 70% of respondents had annual household income of \$50,000 or less.
 - Respondents that Sought Assistance
 - 500 respondents (68%) were between the age of 18 and 44 and 240 (32%) were over the age of 44.
 - Of respondents who sought help, 63% resided ONYC and 37% resided in NYC.
 - 68% of ONYC respondents sought help with family law matters compared to 42% of NYC respondents.
 - Matter types among respondents who sought assistance
 - Consumer debt (264, 35.7%)
 - Motor vehicle (194, 26.2%)
 - Public benefits / fair hearing (143, 19.3%)
 - Eviction (123, 16.6%)
 - Child support (114, 15.4%)
 - SSI / SSD reconsideration (109, 14.7%)
 - Disputes with government offices (ONYC and NYC) – Of those respondents who sought assistance with a dispute involving a government office:
 - 61% of respondents living in NYC sought help with Public Benefits / Fair Hearings compared to 41% of respondents living ONYC.
 - 25% of respondents living in NYC sought help with SSI / SSD Reconsideration compared to 47% of respondents living ONYC.
 - 24% of respondents living in NYC sought help with Employment Complaints compared to 32% of respondents living ONYC.
 - 15% of respondents living in NYC sought help with Public Accommodations compared to 21% of respondents living ONYC.

- 47% of respondents had annual household income of \$50,000 or less.
- Sources where respondents *sought* assistance:
 - Family / friends – 494 (29.9%)
 - Online / Google search – 243 (14.7%)
 - Private / paid lawyer - 184 (11.1%)
 - Courts / court help center – 135 (8.2%)
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit lawyer – 125 (7.6%)
 - LawHelpNY – 99 (6%)
 - Legal Hand – 81 (4.9%)
 - Church / Faith Community – 76 (4.6%)
 - Public Library – 59 (3.6%)
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1 – 54 (3.3%)

- Sources of assistance and geography
 - Family / Friends - 68% NYC respondents and 66% ONYC respondents
 - Online Search / Google - 30% NYC respondents and 36% ONYC respondents
 - Courts / Help Center - 19% NYC respondents and 19% ONYC respondents
 - Private / Paid Lawyer - 17% NYC respondents and 29% ONYC respondents
 - Pro bono / Non-profit Lawyer - 13% NYC respondents and 20% ONYC respondents
 - 211 / 311 - 11% NYC respondents and 6% ONYC respondents
 - Legal Hand - 9% NYC respondents and 12% ONYC respondents
 - LawHelpNY - 8% NYC respondents and 17% ONYC respondents
 - Public School - 1% NYC respondents and 6% ONYC respondents

- Sources of assistance respondents identified as requiring the *fewest attempts*:
 - Pro Bono Clinic – 2.5 attempts on average
 - Legal Hand – 2.6 attempts
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer – 2.6 attempts
 - Courts / court help center- 2.9 attempts
 - LawHelpNY – 2.9 attempts
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1 – 3 attempts
 - Church / Faith Community – 3 attempts
 - Public School – 3.2 attempts
 - Private / paid lawyer – 3.3 attempts
 - Public Library – 3.3 attempts
 - Family / friends – 3.5 attempts
 - Online / Google search – 7.4 attempts

- Sources of assistance respondents identified as *most helpful*:
 - Family / friends – 303 (33%)
 - Private / paid lawyer – 160 (18%)
 - Online / Google search – 93 (10%)
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit lawyer – 84 (9%)
 - Courts / court help center – 56 (6%)
 - LawHelpNY – 54 (6%)
 - Legal Hand – 46 (5%)
 - Church / Faith Community – 41 (5%)
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1 – 23 (3%)
 - Pro Bono Clinic – 19 (2%)
 - Public Library – 19 (2%)
 - Other – 11 (1%)
 - Public School – 6 (1%)

- Most helpful sources of assistance and geography
 - Family / Friends - 52% NYC respondents and 45% ONYC respondents
 - Private / Paid Lawyer - 18% NYC respondents and 29% ONYC respondents
 - The frequency of this response is correlated to household income (more frequent for higher income levels)
 - Households with annual incomes of \$80,001 - \$100,000 identified Private / Paid Lawyer as the most helpful source of assistance
 - Online Search / Google - 16% NYC respondents and 14% ONYC respondents
 - Pro bono / Non-profit Lawyer - 10% NYC respondents and 15% ONYC respondents
 - Courts / Help Center - 7% NYC respondents and 10% ONYC respondents
 - Legal Hand - 6% NYC respondents and 8% ONYC respondents
 - 211 / 311 - 5% NYC respondents and 3% ONYC respondents
 - LawHelpNY - 5% NYC respondents and 10% ONYC respondents

- For respondents who indicated LawHelpNY was most helpful (54 responses), the distribution of household income:
 - 3% of households with no income
 - 2% of households with \$1 - \$10,000 in annual income
 - 0% of households with \$10,001 - \$20,000 in annual income
 - 2% of households with \$20,001 - \$30,000 in annual income
 - 2% of households with \$30,001 - \$40,000 in annual income
 - 7% of households with \$40,001 - \$50,000 in annual income
 - 8% of households with \$50,001 - \$60,000 in annual income
 - 10% of households with \$60,001 - \$70,000 in annual income
 - 12% of households with \$70,001 - \$80,000 in annual income
 - 20% of households with \$80,001 - \$100,000 in annual income

- The reasons respondents indicated they did not seek help from a lawyer included:
 - I could not afford a lawyer – 236 (41.9%)
 - It did not seem like a legal issue – 123 (21.8%)
 - I was not aware that there could be free lawyers – 100 (17.8%)
 - I've had bad experiences with lawyers in the past – 39 (6.9%)
 - I do not trust lawyers – 33 (5.9%)
 - Other – 32 (5.7%)

- The things respondents thought would be more helpful were:
 - Help with my finances / budget – 122 (22%)
 - A lawyer to help me – 83 (15%)
 - Clear and simple instructions – 83 (15%)
 - An easy way to know who in my community could help me – 77 (14%)
 - Help talking to the other side – 60 (11%)
 - Help with transportation to the courts or other appointments – 42 (8%)
 - A person to come with me to the court – 38 (7%)
 - Something that would help me create the forms I needed to provide – 27 (5%)
 - Help with childcare for my appointments – 15 (3%)
 - Other – 12 (2%)

- 86% of respondents indicate they can understand the language used in legal paperwork and meetings “Very well” or “Somewhat well.”

New York Resident Survey Instrument

Screening Questions²

1. In the last year have you been involved in one of these matters? (Select All)
 - Eviction
 - Foreclosure
 - Consumer Debt (such as credit card collections)
 - Immigration
 - Child Support
 - Custody
 - Paternity
 - Divorce
 - Guardianship
 - Motor Vehicle (such as disputed traffic tickets or license suspension)
 - Other (Please Describe)
 - Was not involved in any of these types of issues in the last year
2. Were you helped by a lawyer or legal services organization?
 - Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - I was not helped by a lawyer
3. In the last year have you been involved in a dispute involving a government office (see listing)? (Select All)
 - Public Benefits / Fair Hearing
 - SSI / SSD Reconsideration
 - Employment Complaint
 - Public Accommodation
 - Other (Please Describe)
 - Was not involved in any disputes with a government office in the last year
4. Were you helped by a lawyer or legal services organization?
 - Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - I was not helped by a lawyer

Substantive Questions

5. Did you seek help with the issue(s) you identified in the last year (even if you didn't receive help)? (Select All)
 - Yes
 - No³
6. If not, why not? (Select All)
 - I thought I could take care of it myself

² If a respondent did not experience any of the matters listed in Questions 1 or 3 or if they experienced a matter listed in Questions 1 or 3 and were assisted by a lawyer, the respondent exited the survey. The remaining respondents were people who experienced a matter listed in Questions 1 or 3 and were not assisted by a lawyer.

³ The survey limited the number of “No” responses to this question to 235.

- I did not trust others to help me
 - I could not afford any assistance
 - I was not aware of any free assistance
 - Other (Please Describe)
7. If so, from who did you seek help? (Select All)
- Family / Friends
 - Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - Online Search / Google Search
 - LawHelpNY
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1
 - Public Library
 - Church / Faith Community
 - Public School
 - Courts / Court Help Center
 - Legal Hand
 - Pro Bono Clinic
 - Other (Please Describe)
8. Of those, which were able to help you with your problem? (Select All)
- Family / Friends
 - Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - LawHelpNY
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1
 - Public Library
 - Church / Faith Community
 - Public School
 - Courts / Court Help Center
 - Legal Hand
 - Pro Bono Clinic
 - Other (Please Describe)
9. For each, how many attempts did you make to seek help?
- Family / Friends
 - Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - LawHelpNY
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1
 - Public Library
 - Church / Faith Community
 - Public School
 - Courts / Court Help Center
 - Legal Hand
 - Pro Bono Clinic
 - Other (Please Describe)
10. Which were most helpful?
- Family / Friends

- Private / Paid Lawyer
 - Pro Bono / Non-Profit Lawyer
 - LawHelpNY
 - 2-1-1 / 3-1-1
 - Public Library
 - Church / Faith Community
 - Public School
 - Courts / Court Help Center
 - Legal Hand
 - Pro Bono Clinic
 - Other (Please Describe)
11. If you did not seek help from a lawyer, why not? (Select All)
- It did not seem like a legal issue
 - I do not trust lawyers
 - I could not afford a lawyer
 - I was not aware that there could be free lawyers
 - I've had bad experiences with lawyers in the past
12. Were you satisfied with the outcome?
- Yes
 - Not exactly what I was hoping for, but I'm ok with the outcome
 - No
 - Other (Please Describe)
13. If not, what would have been helpful? (Select All)
- A lawyer to help me
 - Clear and simple instructions on what I needed to do
 - Something that would help me create the forms I needed to provide
 - An easy way to know who in my community could help me
 - Help with my finances / budget
 - Help with transportation to the courts or other appointments
 - Help with child care for my appointments
 - Help talking to the other side
 - A person to come with me to court
 - Other (Please Describe)

Demographic Questions

14. Zip Code of Residence (Numerical 5 Digits)
15. Age (Numerical; Minimum of 18)
16. Gender
- Man
 - Woman
 - Transgender Man
 - Transgender Woman
 - Agender / I don't identify with any gender
 - Non-Binary
 - Gender Not Listed

- Prefer not to answer
17. Race / Ethnicity (Select All)
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Two or More Races
 - Ethnicity - Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latine/Latinx
 - Prefer not to answer
18. Sexual Orientation
- Straight or heterosexual
 - Lesbian, gay, or homosexual
 - Bisexual
 - Queer
 - Asexual
 - Don't know
 - Another
 - Prefer not to answer
19. Education
- No Schooling Completed
 - Did Not Complete High School
 - Completed High School; No Further Education
 - Completed Some Education After High School
 - Completed an Education Program Other than a College Degree
 - Completed a Bachelor Degree Program in College
 - Some Education After College
 - Completed a Master's or Doctorate Degree Program
20. Disability (Select All)
- Blind
 - Deaf
 - Physical, mental, or emotional condition, causing serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
 - Serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs
 - Difficulty dressing or bathing
 - Physical, mental, or emotional condition, causing difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping
21. Annual Household Income
- \$0 (No Income)
 - \$1 - \$10,000
 - \$10,001 - \$20,000
 - \$20,001 - \$30,000
 - \$30,001 - \$40,000
 - \$40,001 - \$50,000
 - \$50,001 - \$60,000
 - \$60,001 - \$70,000

- \$70,001 - \$80,000
- \$80,001 - \$90,000
- \$90,001 - \$100,000
- \$100,000+

22. How well can you understand the language used in legal paperwork and meetings?

- Very well
- Somewhat well
- Not very well
- Not at all

Appendix B

Provided below is a brief summary of each data source reviewed and analyzed for the quantitative analysis:

- GAR – IOLA Grantee Data
 - IOLA Grantee Intakes Completed / Rejected / No Legal Benefit / Hotline Calls / Cases Closed
 - Data range – 2023
 - Geography – by county and each of the 7 geographic IOLA units
 - General description – Count of intakes completed by legal services organizations, cases rejected for service, clients for whom there was no legal benefit attained, the number of calls to legal aid hotlines, by geographic area, and cases closed

- LawHelpNY (LHNY)
 - LawHelpNY Website and Live Chat Data
 - Data range – 2023
 - Geography – by county in New York
 - General description – number of website views and unique users accessing information by legal topic area as well as number of chats by legal topic area

- OCA – Civil Court Filings
 - Data range analyzed – 2023
 - Geography – by county in New York
 - General description – number of civil legal filings by matter type and by court

- 2-1-1 Contacts
 - 2-1-1 Contact Counts
 - Data range – monthly, January 2019 to March 2024
 - Geography – statewide outside NYC
 - General description – number of calls to 2-1-1 by need/problem

- Housing Matters
 - 208,412 - court filings
 - 194,330 of these filings were for Landlord-Tenant cases
 - 99,383 - IOLA grantee cases
 - 43,212 - LHNY page views
 - 25,809 - LHNY page visitors
 - 170 – LHNY live chats
 - 116,640 - 2-1-1 requests for assistance (excluding NYC)
 - Approximately 44,000 requests for assistance related to Shelters
 - Approximately 39,400 requests for rent assistance
 - 6,610 requests related to Landlord-Tenant issues

- Family Matters
 - 539,509 court filings
 - 174,780 for Family – Support
 - 152,630 for Custody / Visitation
 - 67,721 for Family Offense
 - 48,526 for Divorce
 - 40,084 IOLA grantee cases
 - 534 IOLA grantee Family – Support cases
 - 5,852 IOLA grantee – Custody / Visitation cases
 - 33,303 LHNY page views
 - 4,861 LHNY page views for Family – Support
 - 4,578 LHNY page views for Custody / Visitation
 - 20,312 LHNY page visitors
 - 2,638 LHNY page visitors for Family – Support
 - 2,592 LHNY page visitors for Custody / Visitation
 - 486 LHNY live chats

- Consumer Matters
 - 97,278 court filings
 - 15,570 IOLA grantee cases
 - 12,002 LHNY page views
 - 7,070 LHNY page visitors

- Income Maintenance Matters
 - 74,330 requests for assistance from 2-1-1
 - 51,779 IOLA grantee cases

- Other Significant ONYC 2-1-1 Requests for Assistance
 - Education – 76,325
 - 11,600 IOLA grantee Education cases ONYC
 - 6,638 IOLA grantee Educations cases in NYC
 - Healthcare – 70,305
 - Employment – 10,490

Figure 1 - IOLA Grantee Cases by Case Type - 2023

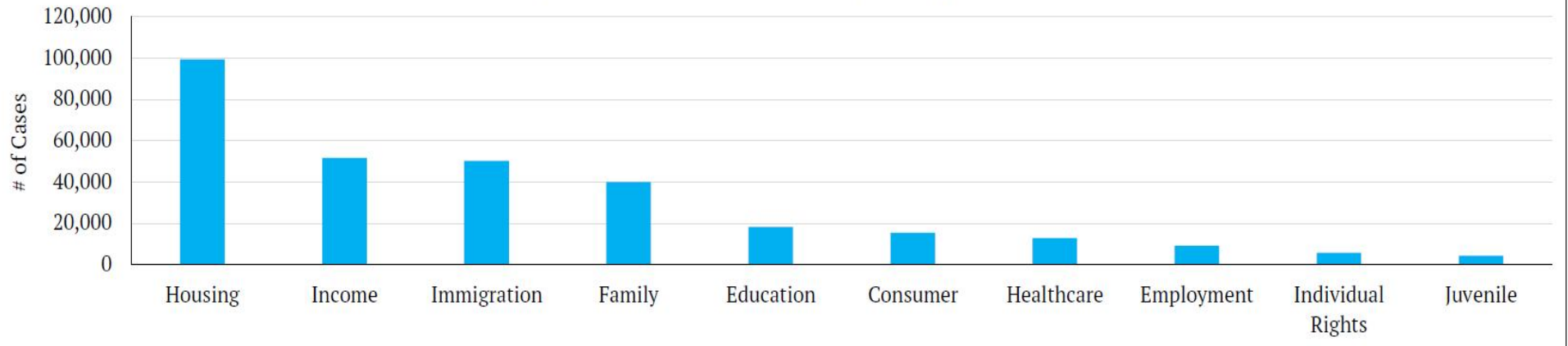
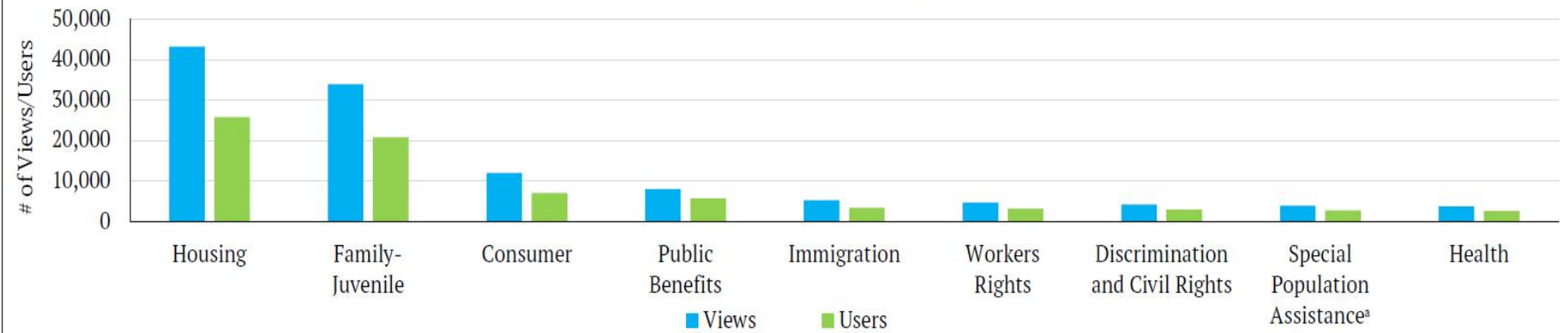


Figure 2 - Website Views and Users by Case Type - LHNY - 2023



[a] Special Population Assistance includes helping seniors, veterans, crime victims, and people with physical and mental health disabilities connect to services, advocacy and support groups.

Figure 3 - LiveHelp Chats - LHNY - 2023

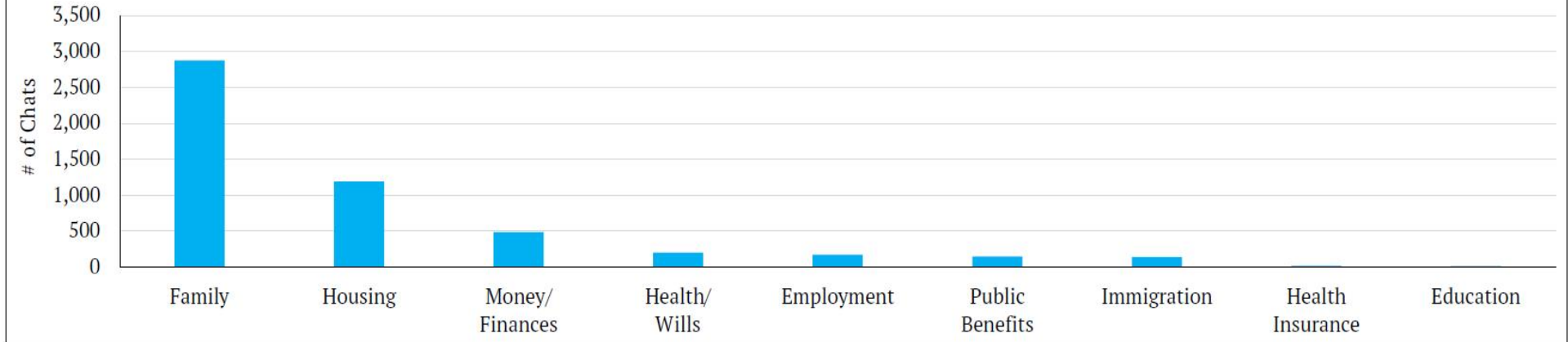
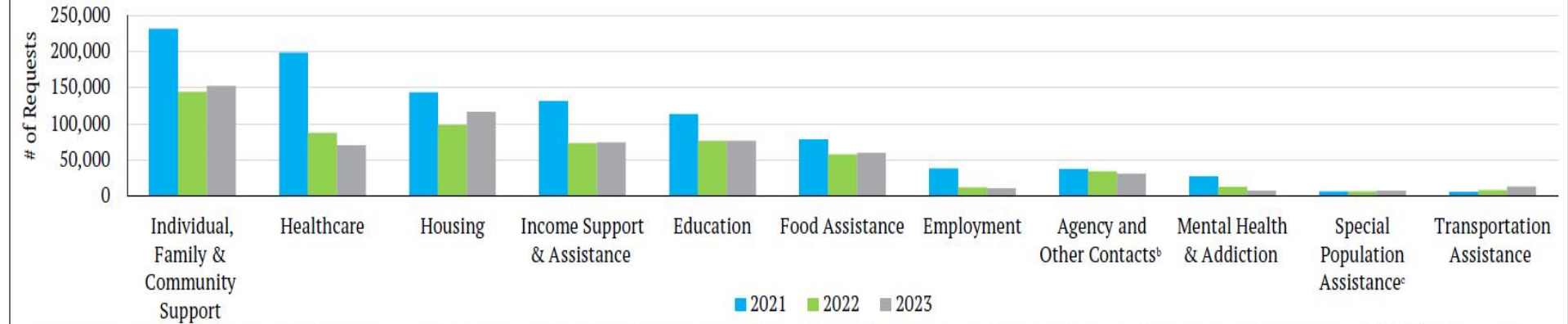


Figure 4 - 211 Requests by Area of Need by Year - 2021 - 2023^a

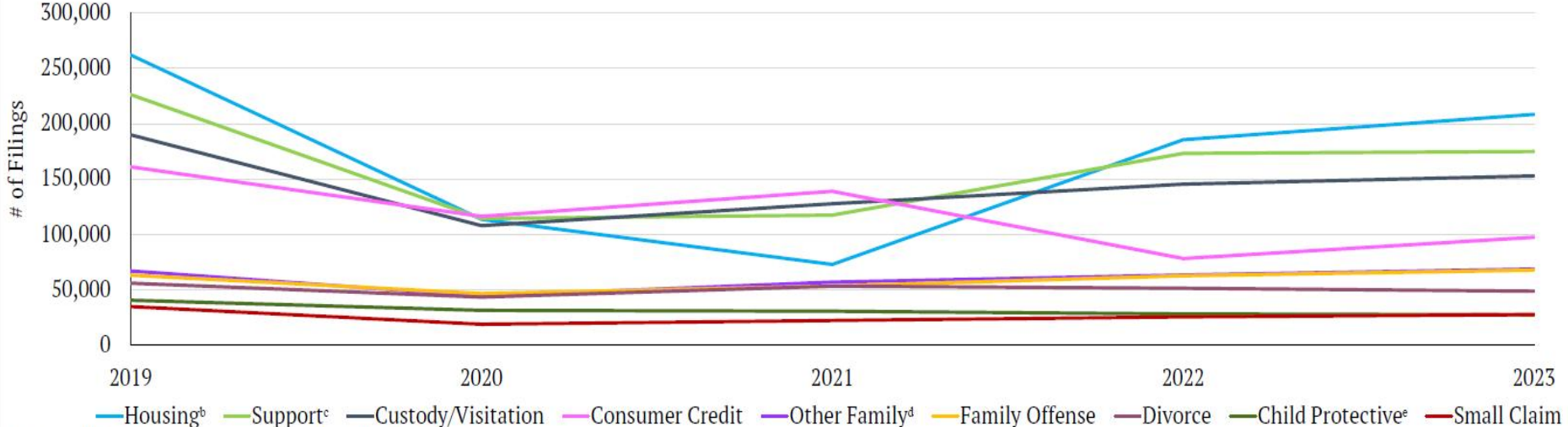


[a] 211 Requests do not include New York City 311 contacts. Refer to "Aggregated Analysis of GAR, 211, LawHelpNY, and OCA Filing Data - Statewide - 2023" for the number 211 requests for Family Law, Child and Family Support Services, and Immigration.

[b] 211 Requests for Agency and Other Contacts includes assists with reaching agencies, getting contact information for government services and legal organizations.

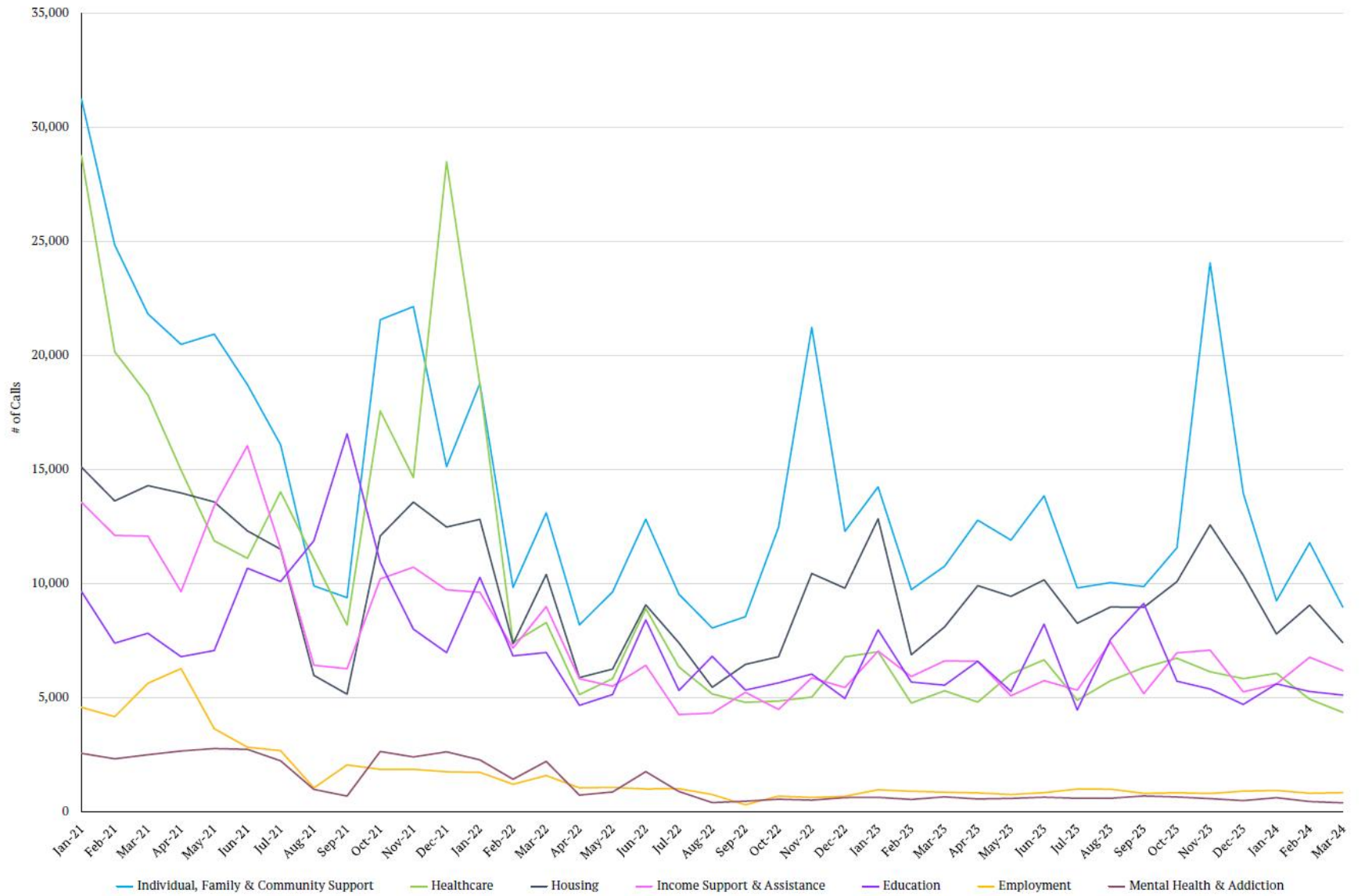
[c] 211 Requests for Special Population Assistance includes helping seniors, veterans, crime victims, and people with physical and mental health disabilities connect to services, advocacy and support groups.

Figure 5 - Case Filings by Case Type by Year - 2019 - 2023^a

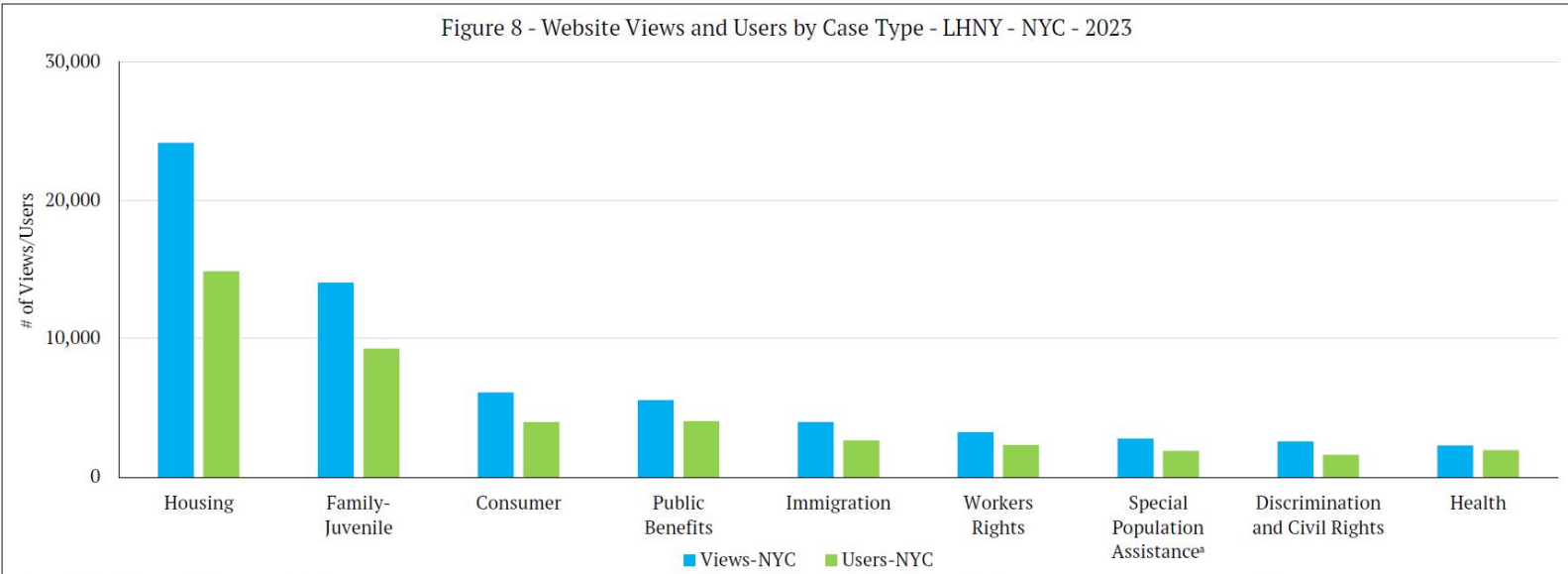
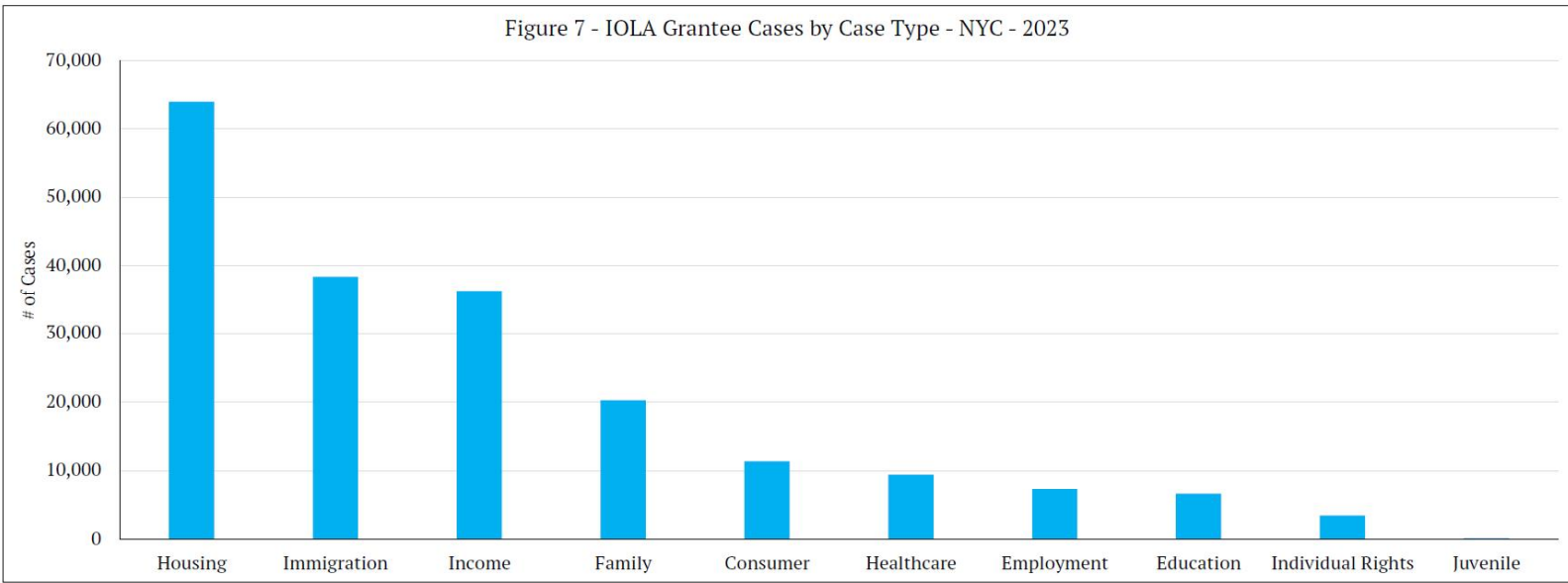


[a] New York State Unified Court System Caseloads Trends Dashboard.
 [b] Housing cases include evictions and "other housing" cases.
 [c] Support cases include Paternity, Support, and Uniform Interstate Family Support cases.
 [d] Other Family cases include Adoption, Foster Care, Guardianship, Juvenile, Permanency Hearings, Termination of Parental Rights, and "Other Family" cases.
 [e] Child Protective cases include abuse and neglect cases.

Figure 6 - 211 Requests by Area of Need by Month - January 2021 - March 2024^a

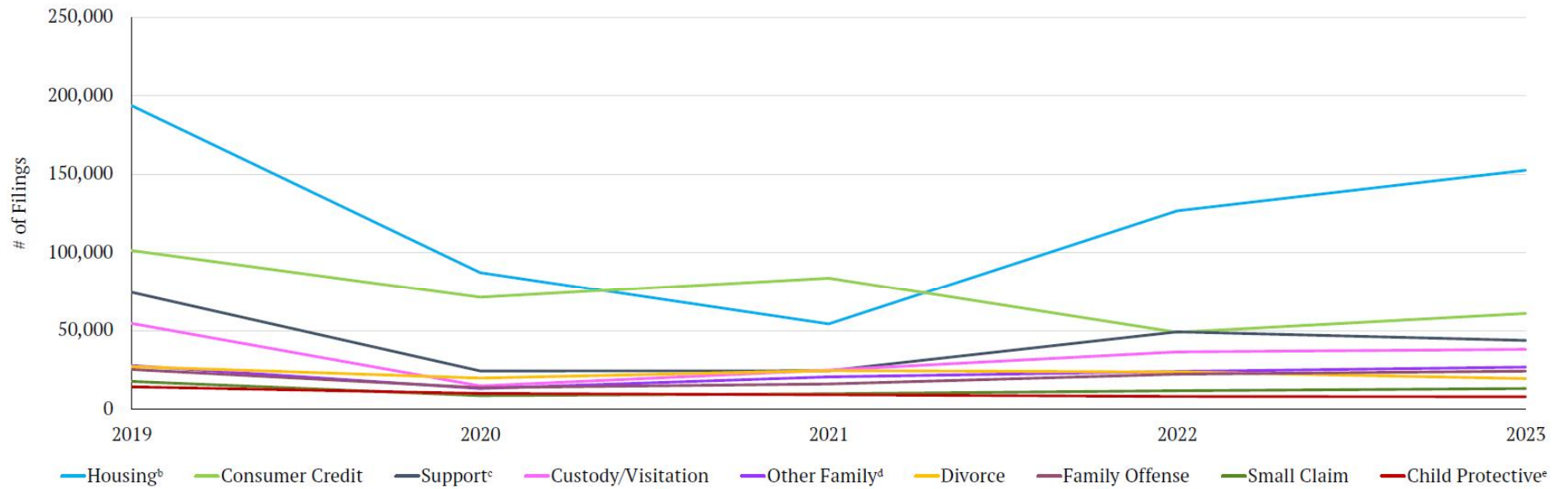


[a] There is no monthly 211 Request data for Special Population Assistance, Transportation Assistance, Family Law, Immigration, Child and Family Support, Food Assistance, and Agency and Other Contacts.



[a] Special Population Assistance includes helping seniors, veterans, crime victims, and people with physical and mental health disabilities connect to services, advocacy and support groups.

Figure 9 - Case Filings by Case Type by Year - NYC - 2019 - 2023^a



[a] New York State Unified Court System Caseloads Trends Dashboard.

[b] Housing cases include evictions and "other housing" cases.

[c] Support cases include Paternity, Support, and Uniform Interstate Family Support cases.

[d] Other Family cases include Adoption, Foster Care, Guardianship, Juvenile, Permanency Hearings, Termination of Parental Rights, and "Other Family" cases.

[e] Child Protective cases include abuse and neglect cases.

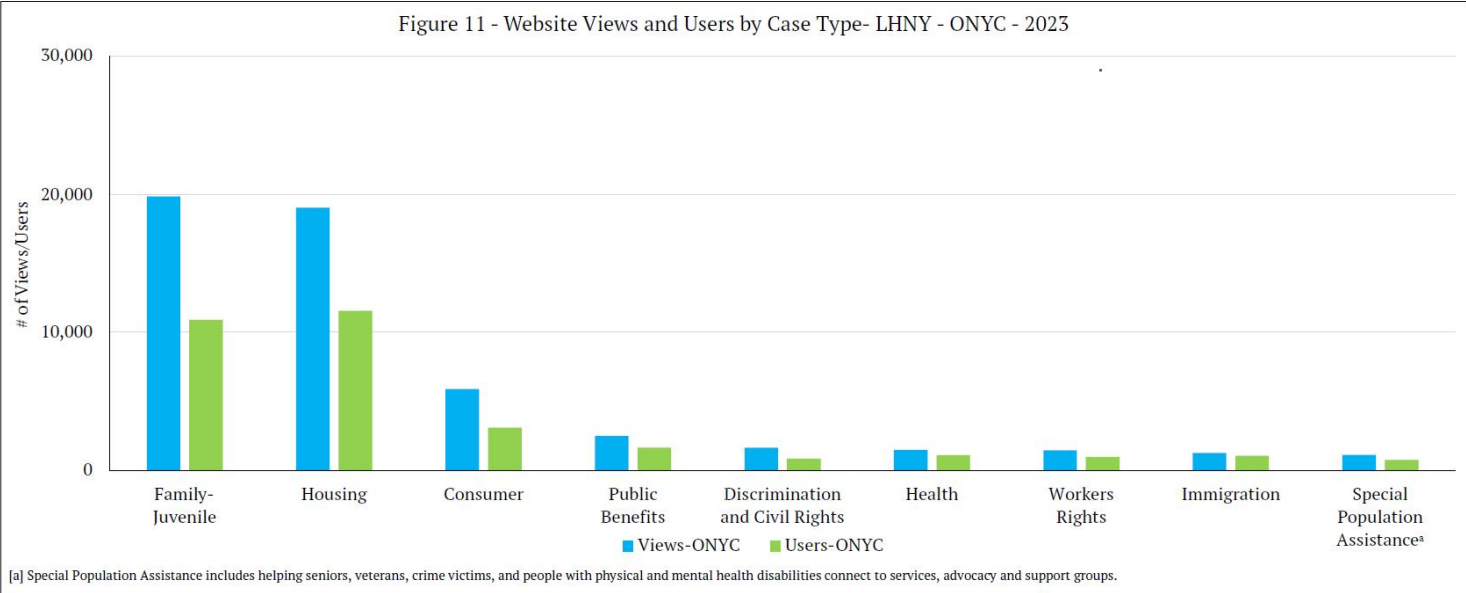
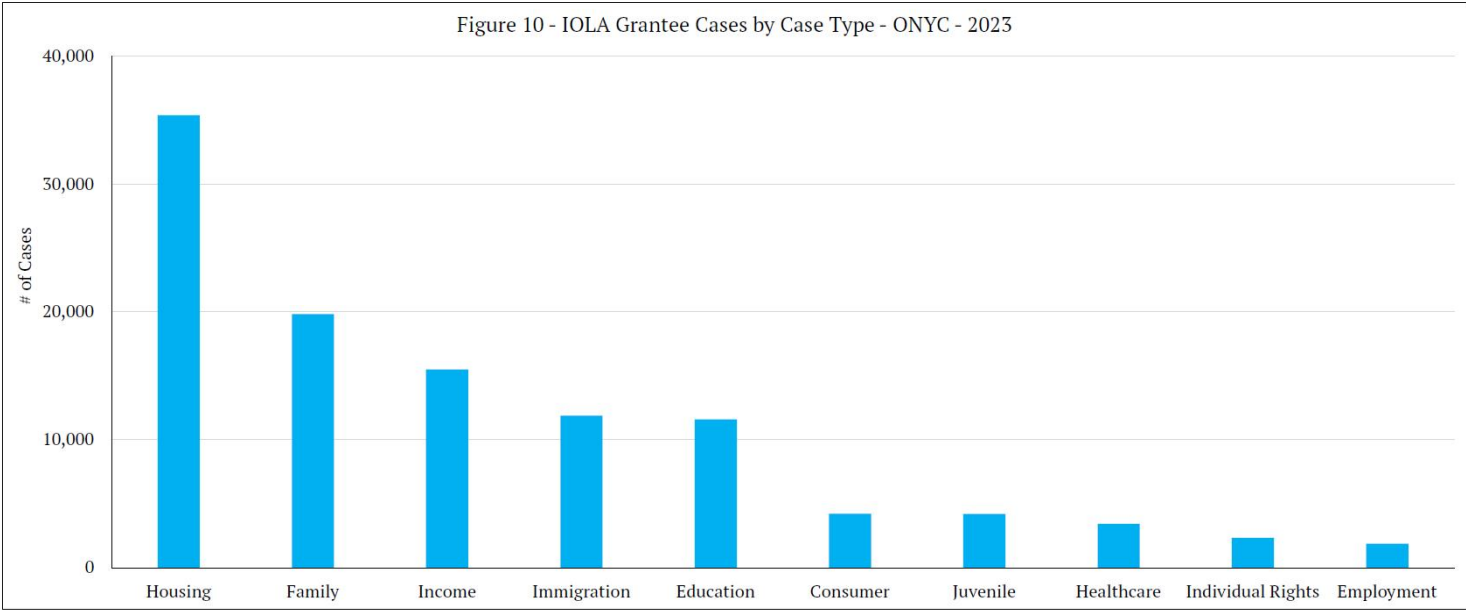
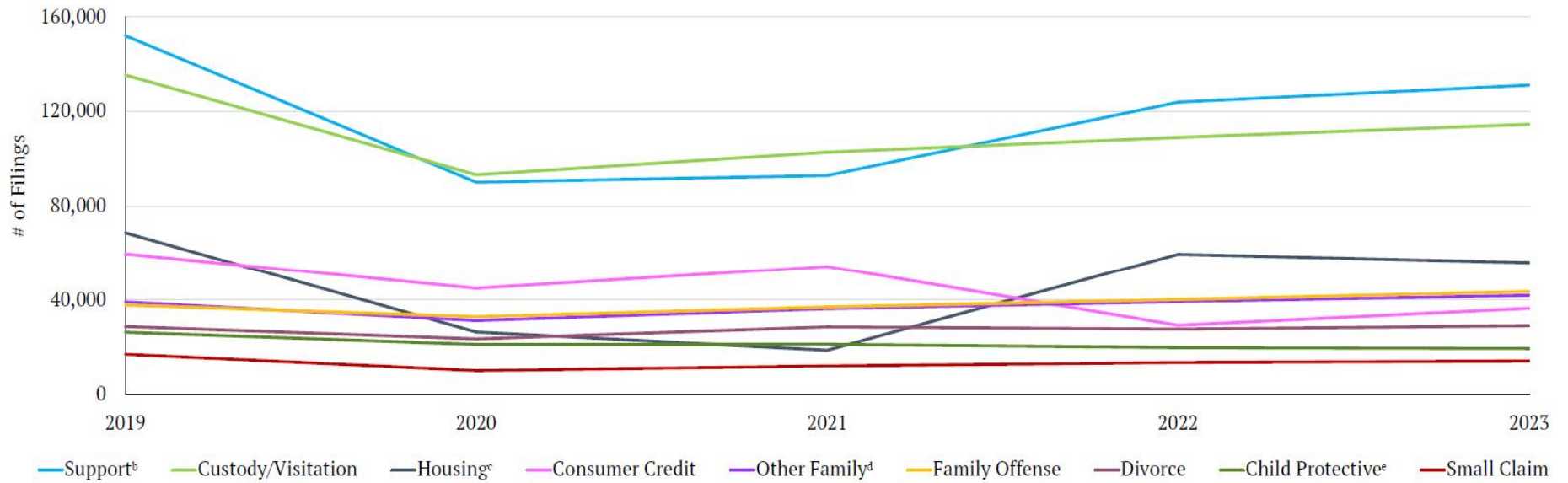


Figure 12 - Case Filings by Case Type by Year - ONYC - 2019 - 2023^a



[a] New York State Unified Court System Caseloads Trends Dashboard.

[b] Support cases include Paternity, Support, and Uniform Interstate Family Support cases.

[c] Housing cases include evictions and "other housing" cases.

[d] Other Family cases include Adoption, Foster Care, Guardianship, Juvenile, Permanency Hearings, Termination of Parental Rights, and "Other Family" cases.

[e] Child Protective cases include abuse and neglect cases.