



Mission for Mark Cancer Initiative



In your lifetime, in some form, cancer will touch you. According to the American Cancer Society, Louisiana will experience an estimated 28,580 (.59%) new cancer diagnosis and an estimated 9,420 (.19%) deaths from cancer. With Louisiana’s estimated population at 4.8 million, breast cancer (4050 cases) in women and prostate cancer (4970 cases) in men are the most prominent types of cancer diagnosed each year. Just another day in “cancer alley” folks.

Past United States Presidents have had their own version of a “cancer moonshot” where action plans were created to address cancers on many levels with the ultimate goal of ending cancer in our lifetime. In the latest plan (found on the White House website), three points of service illustrate what impact the legal community can have on cancer patients, caretakers, and their families:

To support patients, caregivers, and survivors – Today, we know cancer as a disease in which we do not do enough to help people and families navigate cancer and its aftermath. We can help people overcome the medical, financial, and emotional burdens that cancer brings by providing support to navigate cancer diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship.

To address inequities – Today, we know cancer as a disease for which there are stark inequities in access to cancer screening, diagnostics and treatment across race, gender, region, and resources



We will improve the experience of people and their families living with and surviving cancer.

Now is the time for a call-to-action. Southeast Louisiana Legal Services (SLLS) was created, in part, for such a purpose as described above. SLLS fights for fairness for vulnerable people, by providing free civil legal aid to low-income people in six offices across 22 parishes. No matter what challenges in our 22 parishes, SLLS works every day to increase access to justice and help vulnerable people clear life’s legal hurdles.

Using the American Bar Association's Cancer Legal Advocacy Interest Group as a guideline of, SLLS wishes to create "... a *pro bono project designed to lead and implement educational programs that protect the legal rights of cancer patients and their families with a focus on advocacy training for attorneys interested in assisting patients who need legal advice related to their diagnosis and treatment.*" Thus, the Mission for Mark Cancer Initiative was created to address the civil legal needs of cancer patients and their families. Now is the time.

This initiative will serve individuals affected by cancer (patients, survivors, and caregivers) of limited economic means. We appreciate a working partnership with healthcare professionals, advocates and employers who enable Southeast LA Legal Services to provide these services for those in need.



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR:

- Cancer Symposium
- Webinars and Know Your Rights Sessions – a Cancer education series

Please contact Cindy Horne at chorne@slls.org if you are interested in helping us to develop these programs!



PROFESSIONAL PANEL OF ATTORNEYS ARE NEEDED:

Southeast LA Legal Services is in search of attorneys Professional Panel: (Provides in-depth information and counsel; who have a connection to the cancer community and are interested in its work and/or lawyers who have a subject matter expertise that pertains to the legal issues often faced by those in the cancer community)

The attorney's commitment is a limited one; after a conflicts check, Professional Panel attorneys agree to consult with a referred client and to provide legal advice or limited intervention at no charge. Any further representation is up to the attorney.

For more information of how you can become a part of our Professional Panel, please feel to contact Cindy Horne, CP (Pro Bono Coordinator) at chorne@slls.org or Doug Carey (Director of Pro Bono Programs) at dcarey@slls.org.

AREAS OF LAW

This initiative is currently in need of Attorneys with an expertise in:

- Employment – cancer-related discrimination in the workplace.
- Insurance – challenging unjust coverage decisions by private health insurance companies
- Government Benefits - disability
- Estate Planning – wills, health care proxies, living wills, and powers of attorney
- Consumer Rights – medical debt/financial