

SOUTH COASTAL COUNTIES LEGAL SERVICES, INC.

“ SENIOR LAW PROJECTS ”

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- South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc.
-- SCCLS --
- The Mission of SCCLS is to achieve justice for the poor and disadvantaged through community-based advocacy.
- SCCLS is the principal provider of free civil (non-criminal) legal services in Southeastern Massachusetts including Cape Cod and the Islands.



- **SCCLS LAW OFFICES:**

- **Brockton:** 231 Main Street, Brockton, MA 02301-4342
Telephone: 508-586-2110 or 1-800-244-8393
- **New Bedford:** 21 S. Sixth Street, New Bedford, MA 02740
Telephone: 508-979-7150 or 1-800-929-9721
- **Hyannis:** 460 West Main Street, Hyannis, MA 02601
Telephone: 508-775-7020 or 1-800-742-4107
- **Taunton:** 71 Main Street, Taunton, MA
Telephone: 508-880-6704 or 1-800-287-3777
- **Justice Center of Southeast Massachusetts,**
22 Bedford Street, Fall River, MA 02720- 3002
Telephone: 508-676-6265 or 1-800-287-3777
- **INTAKE & LEGAL REFERRAL CENTER: 1-800-244-9023**

SCCLS SERVICE AREA

SCCLS Service Area

Elder = 59+ yrs

	MLAC	Elder		MLAC	Elder		MLAC	Elder
BROCKTON			FALL RIVER			HYANNIS		
Abington	Y	Y	Attleboro		Y	Aquinnah	Y	
Attleboro	Y		Berkley	Y	Y	Barnstable	Y	Y
Avon	Y	Y	Dighton	Y	Y	Bourne	Y	Y
Bridgewater	Y	Y	Fall River	Y	Y	Brewster	Y	Y
Brockton	Y	Y	Freetown	Y	Y	Carver	Y	
Carver		Y	Raynham	Y	Y	Chatham	Y	Y
Duxbury		Y	Seekonk	Y	Y	Chilmark	Y	
E. Bridgewater	Y	Y	Somerset	Y	Y	Dennis	Y	Y
Easton	Y	Y	Swansea	Y	Y	Duxbury	Y	
Halifax		Y	Taunton	Y	Y	Eastham	Y	Y
Hanson		Y	Westport	Y	Y	Edgartown	Y	
Hanover	Y					Falmouth	Y	Y
Kingston		Y				Gay Head	Y	Y
Lakeville		Y	NEW BEDFORD	MLAC	Elder	Gosnold	Y	
Mansfield	Y	Y	Acushnet	Y	Y	Halifax	Y	
Marshfield		Y	Dartmouth	Y	Y	Hanson	Y	
Middleboro		Y	Fairhaven	Y	Y	Harwich	Y	Y
N. Attleboro	Y	Y	Gosnold		Y	Kingston	Y	
Norton	Y	Y	Marion		Y	Lakeville	Y	
Pembroke		Y	Mattapoisett	Y	Y	Marion	Y	
Plymouth		Y	New Bedford	Y	Y	Marshfield	Y	
Plympton		Y	Rochester		Y	Mashpee	Y	Y
Rehoboth	Y	Y				Middleborough	Y	
Rockland	Y	Y				Nantucket	Y	Y
Stoughton	Y	Y				Oak Bluffs	Y	Y
Wareham		Y				Orleans	Y	Y
W. Bridgewater	Y	Y				Pembroke	Y	
Whitman	Y	Y				Plymouth	Y	
						Plympton	Y	
						Provincetown	Y	Y
						Rochester	Y	
						Sandwich	Y	Y
						Tisbury		Y
						Truro	Y	Y
						Wareham	Y	
						Wellfleet	Y	Y
						West Tisbury	Y	Y
						Whitman	Y	
						Yarmouth	Y	Y

SCCLS - Senior Law Projects – SLP -

- The Seniors Law Projects are funded in part by subsidies received from the Aging Services Access Points (ASAP), Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the Massachusetts Bar Foundation and SCCLS.
- SLP receives subsidies from the following ASAP: Bristol Elder Services, Inc., Coastline Elderly Services, Inc., Elder Services of Cape and Islands, and Old Colony Elder Services.
- Bristol Elder Services, Inc. covers the greater Fall River area including Attleboro and Taunton; Coastline Elderly Services Inc., covers the greater New Bedford area including Gosnold; Elder Services of Cape and Islands covers the greater Hyannis area including the Islands; and Old Colony Elder Services covers the greater Brockton area.
- In accordance with the Older Americans Act, SLP direct its services to those elders with the greatest economic and social need. To receive free legal services, an elder must be 60 and over and reside in the ASAP area.

SLP - SUMMARY OF SERVICES

- ***Housing:** Landlord/Tenant issues with subsidized housing such as evictions, denial of public housing, etc;
- *Health Issues:** Problems with Medicaid/MassHealth, Medicare & Institutional care such as premature discharge from nursing home and/or hospitals.
- * Public benefits:** Legal Issues with Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Emergency Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) & other entitlement programs.
- * Document Preparation:** Preparation of Power of Attorneys & Wills for home-bound, low income, & institutionalized elders.



- SLP, upon request, will present community education to local social agencies and to the community.
- SLP conducts monthly Legal Clinics at the Councils on Aging.
- SLP will visit homebound elders who reside in the community, local nursing facilities and hospitals.
- SLP works with the ASAP and receives referrals from the Council on Aging, hospitals, public housing agencies, the Massachusetts Bar Association, the Elder Services Hotline, & other social agencies.
- SLP does not assist elders with criminal cases or any fee generating cases. In such cases, elder will be referred to the private bar.



- Between 9/1/10 and 8/31/11, the SCCLS served 1,556.00 clients. 1,529.00 were elders.
- 605 were males and 951 females.
- 1,529.00 were over the age of 60.
- 1,092.00 were below 125% Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.



- The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs serves 1.1 million elders in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- It oversees 27 ASAP and 348 Councils on Aging
- www.mass.gov/elders www.800.ageinfor.org



- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, **13.6%** (890,447.5) of the Massachusetts population are elderly. Bristol County is at **13.9%** (76,211.65).
- As of December 2010, the following Bristol Counties residents were receiving benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA):
 - In Attleboro: 32,230 residents were receiving benefits. 21,225 in retirement benefits & 4,995 in disability benefits;
 - In Fall River: 33,435 residents. 19,480 in retirement benefits & 7,670 in disability benefits;
 - In New Bedford 41,480 residents. 26,040 in retirement benefits & 7,755 in disability benefits; &
 - In Taunton: 32,230 residents. 14,870 in retirement benefits & 4,995 in disability benefits.
- http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_zip/2010ma.pdf



- Based on the information provided by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), as of July 2011, in the Bristol County, there were 10,153.00 elders (60+) receiving assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program –SNAP- (formerly known as Food Stamps). There are 112,000 elders who receive SNAP benefits statewide.
- 99.6 % of Massachusetts elders have health insurance coverage.
- According to the MassHealth Custodian of Records, in the Bristol County areas, 22, 189 elders (62+) have enrolled in MassHealth.
- Bristol Counties offer subsidized housing specifically for elders. Over 12,000 elders reside in subsidized assisted living facilities.



- Bristol County elders continue to face many social and legal issues such as lack of health insurance, denial of Medicare coverage, lack of transportation, language barriers, financial exploitation, physical and verbal abuse, foreclosures, and lack of financial support to assist in with their daily necessities.
- SLP, besides providing free legal assistance, continues their efforts to assist elders by networking with local agencies, such as BES, CESI, CSS, IAC, etc, to ascertain that elders continue to safely reside in the community, independently and with dignity.
- SLP advocates are participating members of local coalitions, advisory boards and legal groups.
- As a result of working extensively with local agencies and seeing a great need for education and information in the Portuguese Speaking communities, in 2004, the New Bedford SLP joined forces with Catholic Social Services, Coastline Elderly Services, New Bedford Mayor's Office and the Immigrants' Assistance Center to establish the Portuguese Speaking Elder Network - PSEN.

PORTUGUESE SPEAKING ELDER NETWORK – PSEN



MISSION STATEMENT



- **"The "Portuguese-Speaking Elder Network – PSEN" Mission is to present an annual conference in Portuguese to educate and inform the Portuguese-speaking elder community of their rights and to connect and access services with local agencies."**
- PSEN held its first meeting **on April 5, 2004**, at South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc, formerly known as Southeastern Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation. The founding members were: Adonis Ferreira, New Bedford Mayor's Office; Theresa Cordeiro Larson, Coastline Elderly Services, Inc; Helena S. Marques, Immigrants' Assistance Center; Pauline Macedo, New Bedford Mayor's Office; Maria C. Pereira, Catholic Social Services; & Rosa Farizo, South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc. Ms. Farizo was the Chairperson, Ms. Marques, Treasurer, and Ms. Larson, Secretary.
- PSEN's founding members saw a great need in the Portuguese-speaking elder community of the greater New Bedford area. Community elders were always asking questions regarding their rights and services and how to access them. Thus, it was decided that a one time conference entitled **"Know Your Rights"** would be appropriate to address their questions, concerns and also for them to socialize with their peers and introduce them to the local agencies who provided services to them. The only requisite of the PSEN is that members must be Portuguese speaking, the conference is presented entirely in Portuguese and that guests' speakers are required to present their topic in Portuguese.
- The first **"Know Your Rights"** conference was presented on June 15, 2004 at the Mount Carmel Auditorium in New Bedford. We started the conference with a \$1,000.00 sponsor from Elder Services of Merrimack Valley and contributions from the city of New Bedford and local agencies. Our first guests of honor were the Honorable Frederick Kalisz, Jr. Mayor of New Bedford and State Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral. Our first Moderator was Lucilia Prates with Elder Services of Merrimack Valley. Our first topics were "Depression" presented by Ms. Maria C. Pereira; "MassHealth/Medicare by Rosa M. Farizo; "Protective Services/Elder Abuse" by Ms. Theresa Cordeiro Larson and Detective Joseph Cordeiro; and "Immigration/Citizenship" by Helena S. Marques. We had well over 180 elders in attendance, the conference was televised by the New Bedford Cable Access and the Portuguese Radio Station " A Voz do Emigrante" and we provided both breakfast and lunch and entertainment. The conference was presented to the public free of charge.
- Due to the public demand and success of our conference, the founding members decided to continue to present an annual conference for the Portuguese speaking elders and have now opened the conference to Portuguese speaking individuals with disabilities. Since then, Mr. Ferreira resigned from the committee and we have held conferences at the Fort Taber Community Center, which was graciously donated by the City of New Bedford. In 2010, the PSEN founding members also invited two new members to join our group: Ms. Lydia Rego-Gendreau of Bristol Elders Services, Inc; and Ms. Raquel Antonio with the New Center for Legal Advocacy (which merged with SCCLS in July 2011). The 2010 conference "Know your Rights" was held at White's of Westport, MA. In 2011, PSEN has its most recent conference held at Fort Taber during which the Director of Centers for Services for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS, is a Federal agency) was a guest speaker.

Portuguese Speaking Elder Network – PSEN – 2010



PSEN & Guests – 2010- Conference at White's of Westport



PSEN Conference 2010



Maria Pereira & Theresa Larson White's of Westport – 2010



PSEN Conference 2010 - Audience



Graca Fonseca – Portuguese Consul – N.B.

PSEN Conference 2010



PSEN & Guests 2011



PSEN 2011 – Lucilia Prates - SMP



PSEN 2011 – Guest speakers

Lucilia Prates, SMP; Jayne Weisman, CMS; Delia deMello, SSA; & Detective Victor Mendes



Ines Drolet with the Office of Congressman Barney Frank & Scott Lang, Mayor of New Bedford, PSEN Conference 2011



PSEN MEMBERS – 2011



Closing

- With all issues the local agencies are presently facing, particularly with the budget crisis and elders living longer, due to the lack of funds, it is becoming more difficult to assist elders. We are now assisting the “baby boomers” who are elders born between 1946 to 1964.
- This group of elders are facing much more extensive, complex and difficult problems (such as: foreclosures, lack of affordable housing, lack of employment, lack of health insurance, lack of transportation, lack of finances, bankruptcy, taking care of grandchildren, being caregivers, etc.) than their predecessors.
- It is important that social and legal agencies network with one another to maximize services to better assist the needs of our elders to assure that they continue to be a vital and productive component of our society.
- Thank you for this opportunity to allow us to inform you regarding the services offered by SCCLS – SLP and for inviting us to participate in the Portuguese Symposium.