

The Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans' Vetlaw Program

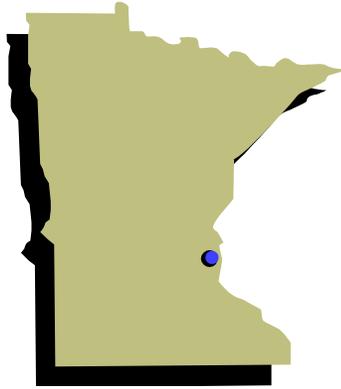


How the MACV Vetlaw² Program Started

- Responding to community need for veterans legal services.
- First clinic limited in scope; learned early on that a broader scope was necessary to respond to individual needs.
- Learn from our mistakes: go to where the veterans are, and that is not in courthouses.



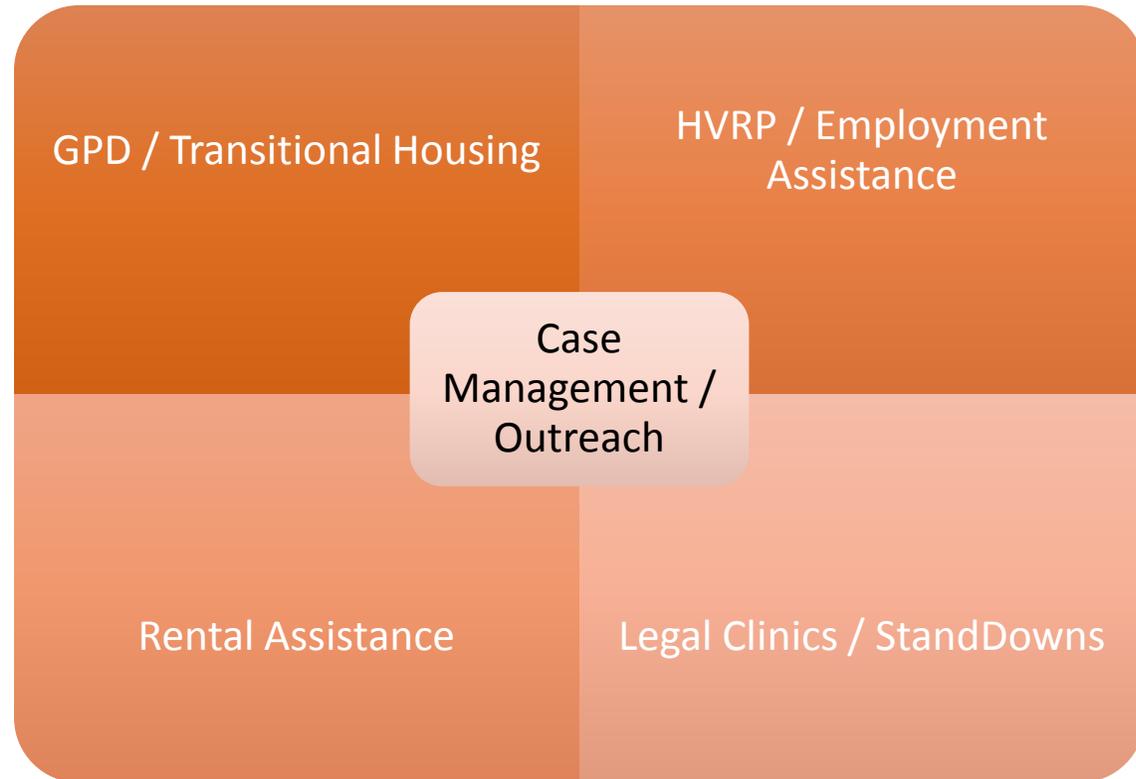
- Started without formal volunteer recruitment strategy or funding resource.
- “If you build it, they will come”, applies to clients, volunteers and funding!



Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)



Statewide 501c3
nonprofit established
in 1990



MACV Vetlaw Program

- Triage brief advice and referral
- Full representation services
- Representation Partnerships with Legal Services Offices
- Pro Bono partnerships with law firms and in-house counsel
- Legal Clinics
- StandDown events
- Interstate referrals



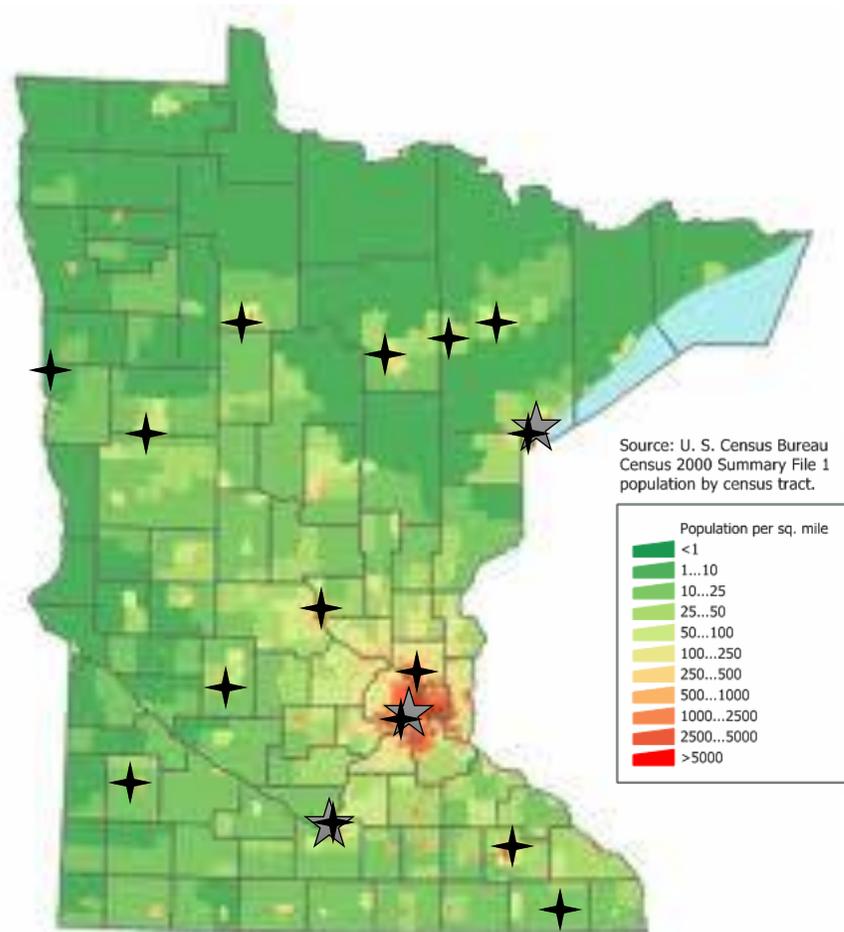
MACV Veterans Legal Clinics

➤ Vetlaw Program

- Serves all 87 counties
- 3 regional offices: Twin Cities, Duluth, Mankato
- 1 support staff, 2 attorneys
- 2014 will host 34 clinics and StandDown events serving ~1,400

➤ Pro Bono/Pro Se Clinic

- Varied legal issues
- Walk-ins accepted
- Law students and non-attorneys used to leverage attorney time



Common Issues seen at Legal Clinics

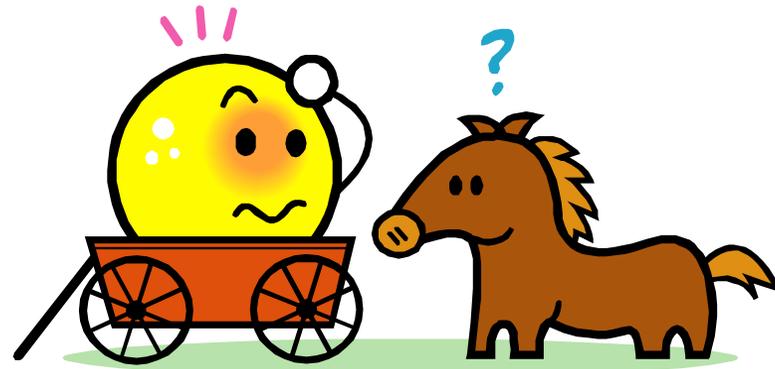
- Family Law
- Consumer Debt
- Criminal Charges
- Criminal Expungement
- Employment
- Tax
- Housing
- Benefits
- Medical Malpractice
- Wills, Trusts & Estates



Addressing Veterans Legal Issues

Infinite range of options for structuring legal component

- Which model works best for your community?
- What resources and relationships does the SSVF grantee have to address legal needs?
- Where do you start?
 - Identifying the need(s)
 - Identifying volunteer and referral resources
 - Structuring the program to fit client needs



Civil Legal Issues

- Spectrum of possible legal components
 - On-staff attorney at SSVF grantee providing full rep
 - On-staff attorney at SSVF grantee coordinating pro bono effort and/or legal services relationships
 - Contract relationship with legal services for full rep and/or pro bono assistance
 - Any combination of the above options
- Identifying veterans
 - Community-based legal clinics
 - Program participants
 - Community partners and VA homeless programs

SSVF and Legal Assistance

- Considerations when incorporating legal services into the wraparound services through SSVF:
 - Understanding the similarities and differences in the legal services and social services models.
 - Communicating the need, value, and impact of legal representation.
 - Outreach value of legal assistance provided in a clinic or workshop setting to SSVF providers.
- The importance of cross-training on SSVF legal issues:
 - Assist case managers in identifying legal issues impacting housing stability.
 - Non-legal remedies available through social service programs.
 - Understanding the restrictions of the SSVF grant and legal services programs.
 - Effectively communicating the professional rules that govern attorney-client relationships.
 - Understanding your SSVF partners' client eligibility guidelines.