

# Five Things You Need to Know About Medical-Legal Partnerships Plus



The Office of Community Services (OCS) has announced the grant recipients of the Medical-Legal Partnerships Plus (MLP+) demonstration for Fiscal Year 2023. Here are five things you need to know about medical-legal partnerships and the new MLP+ demonstration program:

## 1. Unmet legal and socioeconomic needs undermine the health of children and families.

Four in five families with low incomes do not receive the legal assistance they need to stay healthy, stable, and safe.<sup>1</sup> Without assistance, families with low incomes can sometimes lack access to safe housing, dignified employment, education, and the ability to move to safer communities. At least half of a person's health is determined by these social, economic, and environmental factors.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Medical-legal partnerships are effective health-promoting interventions.

Medical-legal partnerships are effective in improving the health of children and adults by addressing social determinants of health and improving access to primary care.<sup>3,4</sup> Successful partnerships have also been associated with positive health outcomes including improved chronic disease management in youth<sup>5,6</sup>, reduced stress levels for parents of children with disabilities<sup>7</sup>, and improved mental health of veterans<sup>8</sup>.

## 3. Social service provision improves the capacity of medical-legal partnership to holistically address socioeconomic needs.

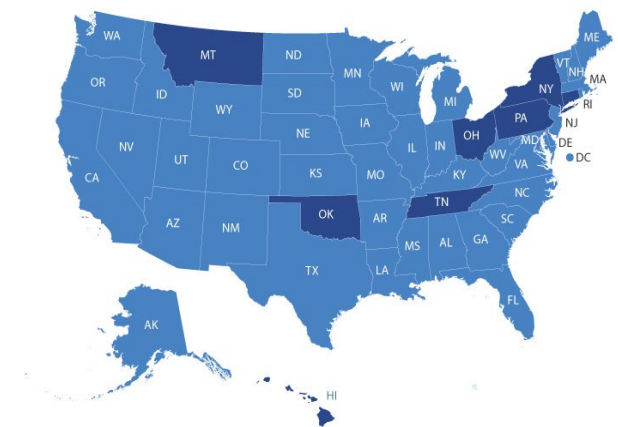
Some successful medical-legal partnerships have included additional services, such as case management and family education.<sup>9</sup> The MLP+ program will build on this work and strengthen social service connections to support the long-term health and stability of families.

## 4. Medical-legal partnerships are cost-effective.

Medical-legal partnerships decrease emergency and inpatient care use and increase preventative care, thereby lowering overall medical costs.<sup>10</sup> Some medical-legal partnerships also yield large returns on investment.<sup>11</sup>

## 5. The MLP+ demonstration program will expand eight existing medical legal partnerships.

FY 2023 MLP+ grant recipients are located in eight states across the country (Connecticut, Hawaii, Montana, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee). In addition to growing legal services, MLP+ will establish social service navigators to provide another layer of support to families.



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