

## Sample Email from DC Residents to the DC Council

Dear [Councilmember \_\_\_\_\_],

I am a District resident, and I urge you to secure the funding in the Mayor's budget devoted to the Access to Justice Initiative. Protecting program funding will preserve critical resources needed to address the growing need for civil legal help post-COVID among District residents. These are unprecedented times, and the coronavirus has changed the way we live in unanticipated ways.

Every citizen should have the ability to access justice regardless of income. Civil legal aid has historically been a critical part of our District's safety net. It will be an essential component of the District's recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. Right now, the legal aid network is helping us solve civil justice problems like domestic violence, unemployment, debt, and housing. Vulnerable populations like District elders, those living with disabilities, and the immigrant community are particularly susceptible to these problems. They are reaching out to the legal aid network for assistance.

I am deeply concerned that, if the Access to Justice Initiative is not fully funded, the legal aid network will be unable to meet the unprecedented demand for civil legal assistance as we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis. Many of my neighbors, who prior to this crisis managed to keep their families stable, will now face unfamiliar civil legal needs that they are unprepared to address. At a time when access to civil legal services was already in need of greater support, any cuts to the Access to Justice Initiative would be devastating to our community.

I strongly urge you to fund the DC Access to Justice Commission's FY21 budget request to ensure that all District residents have access to the legal help needed to participate fully in the District's recovery from this unprecedented crisis. Thank you.

*[Your Name]*  
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*[City, State ZIP]*  
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## RELEVANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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