



## Legislation Text

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**File #: 0733-2024, Version: 1**

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This legislation authorizes an amendment to Ordinance No. 2089-2023, passed by Columbus City Council on August 2, 2023, in support of the Tenant Advocacy Project (TAP) to provide legal representation to residents facing an eviction, and to authorize payment of expenses such as salaries and fringe, consultants and professional services, travel to conferences, space costs and rentals, bank charges, postage, printing, training, insurance, membership dues, legal library subscriptions, research related, litigation, interpreter expenses, and technology, starting January 1, 2024.

Ordinance No. 0240-2024, passed by Columbus City Council on 1/24/2024, authorizes the assignment of all existing and future business done by the City of Columbus with Legal Aid Society of Columbus (LASC) to Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO). This change will reflect a company merger and subsequent name change and Federal Identification Number change for all existing and future contracts and purchase orders established using the name Legal Aid Society of Columbus (LASC).

Ordinance No. 2089-2023 authorized the Director of Development to enter into a not-for-profit service agreement with the Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO) in an amount up to \$1,500,000.00 in support of the Tenant Advocacy Project (TAP) to provide legal representation to residents facing an eviction.

Tenants with legal representation are much more likely to avoid an eviction judgment and keep possession of their homes than unrepresented tenants. In addition to these primary effects, a right to counsel offers several secondary benefits to defendants who are sued for eviction. Attorneys may be able to keep eviction filings off tenants' records, arrange for alternative housing, negotiate reasonable amounts of time for tenants to move out, reduce or eliminate money owed to the landlord, or help tenants apply for rental assistance.

With these dollars, the Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO) will be able to staff additional TAP attorneys and support staff for an additional year. Because the Tenant Advocacy Project attorneys specialize in these services, this cannot be provided by existing city employees.

This amendment is to establish that the expenses identified above that have been incurred from January 1, 2024 until the creation of the purchase order be eligible for reimbursement.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None.

**CONTRACT COMPLIANCE:** the vendor's vendor number is 004239 and is compliant through 1/17/2026.

To amend Ordinance No. 2089-2023, passed by Columbus City Council on August 2, 2023, to allow for reimbursement of costs that have been incurred from January 1, 2024 until the creation of the purchase order in support of the Tenant Advocacy Project (TAP) to provide legal representation to residents facing an eviction. (\$0.00)

**WHEREAS**, Ordinance No. 2089-2023, passed by Columbus City Council on August 2, 2023, authorized the Director of Development to execute a not-for-profit service agreement with the Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO) to

provide legal representation to residents facing an eviction; and

**WHEREAS**, this amendment is to establish that costs from January 1, 2024 until the creation of the purchase order be eligible for reimbursement; and

**WHEREAS**, the services included in this not-for-profit service contract cannot be provided by existing city employees because the Tenant Advocacy Project attorneys specialize in these services; and **NOW THEREFORE**,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:**

**SECTION 1.** That Section 1 of Ordinance No. 2089-2023, passed August 2, 2023, be amended to read as follows:  
**SECTION 1.** That the Director of the Department of Development is hereby authorized to enter into a not-for-profit service agreement with the Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio in support of the Tenant Advocacy Project to provide legal representation to residents facing an eviction, and to allow for reimbursement of the cost of expenses such as salaries and fringe, consultants and professional services, travel to conferences, space costs and rentals, bank charges, postage, printing, training, insurance, membership dues, legal library subscriptions, research related, litigation, interpreter expenses, and technology that have been incurred from January 1, 2024 prior to the purpose order which costs are hereby determined to be a valid public purpose.

**SECTION 2.** That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.