

North Star

Zero racial disparities in infant mortality by 2033.

Zip Codes Served



This project served participants in the following FLOURISH priority zip codes:

63104, 63106, 63107, 63111, 63112, 63113, 63115, 63118, 63120, 63121, 63133, 63135, 63136, 63140, 63144, 63147

How much did we do?



55

Black families served



2000

Housing Pro Se guides distributed



2814

Hours of legal and housing-focused case management support provided for clients



12


Tenants' rights workshops hosted

Program Description

This FLOURISH grant funded the Housing Justice Project at ArchCity Defenders. The purpose of this grant was to support Black women, mothers, and families experiencing housing crises, reducing evictions and homelessness; advancing tenants' rights, and advocating for policies and practices that keep low-income families in their homes and most importantly addressing the roots of homelessness and housing insecurity for low-income Black mothers. This project took place from March 2021 to September 2022.

Priority Areas

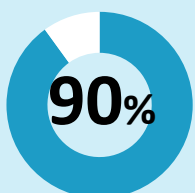
FLOURISH Community Leaders Cabinet identified priority areas they believe will have the most significant impact on improving conditions for Black families. Infant mortality is a complex issue that can't be solved by one organization alone. Below, you will find population level data where FLOURISH is contributing to changes for Black families alongside other organizations. ArchCity Defenders is working to move the needle for the individuals they serve in the areas listed below.

 FLOURISH Priority Area	Category of Work	Population Level Data
Social Determinants of Health	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Affordability Severe Housing Problems Rent Assistance Evictions

FLOURISH uses a **results-based accountability** model of evaluation, because it helps show how collaborative efforts can make an impact on reducing disparities in infant mortality. We focus on how well programs address root causes of the issue and whether Black pregnant and parenting families are better off.

How well did we do it?

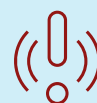
How were Black pregnant and parenting families impacted by this project?



of families **remained or became** housing secure

Is anyone better off?

What change occurred as a result of this project?



ArchCity Defender's systemic litigation efforts prolonged eviction prevention for families.

Impact on Families

Since March 2021, ArchCity Defender's attorneys have triaged and provided legal representation to tenants at risk of eviction and/or homelessness. Our work included eviction prevention, eviction defense, landlord-tenant mediation, and representation to eliminate legal barriers that prevent access to economic security. We provided over 1400 hours of legal services specifically on housing-related cases. We provided additional assistance through workshops and clinics, at community events, through relationships built with those on the streets, and in consultation with area social service providers. 31 new housing cases were opened by our attorneys. Of those cases, 94% percent of the families had a Black head of household. Through our representation, 90% of our clients were able to remain or become housing secure for a period of 12 months.



We also opened 24 new social work cases on top of the clients who were already receiving assistance. 100% of the families served in those new cases had a Black head of household. Our team facilitates payments of rental arrears with available emergency rental assistance, negotiates with landlords to reduce total amount owed, and pays heating and cooling costs, electricity, water, and trash bills to prevent eviction and/or maintain habitability of housing. Staff provide housing-focused case management targeting barriers and needs impacting housing security such as finding employment, financial coaching, and connecting clients to community resources that meet households' basic needs. Our Housing Case Manager has been extremely successful in finding housing for clients who have faced many barriers in the past. In all, our social services team members and practicum students provided over 1,414 hours in direct support to our clients.



Highlights, Lessons Learned and Challenges

One key success was our ability to negotiate with the St. Louis City Courts to stop all evictions for a period of time near the end of the CDC moratorium. Another highlight was the sheer number of people we were able to contact and connect with through the grant that allowed us to educate many more people about their housing rights and help them advocate for habitable, affordable housing.

There is a growing tenant movement in St. Louis that has more interest and buy-in than ever before that will enable tenants to assert more power at the negotiating table, in courts, and when signing leases with landlords.

The biggest challenge is the number of people in need. We've never seen as many evictions filed, as many illegal evictions executed, tenants turned away, and the inability of support systems to make a dent in the number of those in need. The challenge required a lot of creativity from our lawyers as far as how we could meet the need and provide legal representation to as many people as possible. It required that we train more volunteer attorneys, create more educational materials to help people self-advocate, and engage in more community outreach to provide education and one-on-one consultation when we could not provide full-service representation.

FLOURISH St. Louis, an infant mortality reduction initiative powered by Generate Health, is bringing together people and organizations across the region to fix the systems that impact the health of Black families. This organization received a FLOURISH grant which was funded by Missouri Foundation for Health.