

LEGAL SERVICES

Legal services provides licensed attorneys to persons living with HIV (PLWH) to assist with permanency planning and various legal interventions that maintain health and other benefits. This includes estate planning, wills, guardianships, and powers-of-attorney as well as discrimination, entitlement, and insurance disputes.

(**Graph 1**) In the 2016 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment, 27% of participants indicated a need for *legal services* in the past 12 months. 21% reported the service was easy to access, and 6% reported difficulty. 26% stated that they did not know the service was available.

(**Table 1**) When barriers to *legal services* were reported, the most common barrier type was education and awareness (54%). Education and awareness barriers reported include lack of knowledge about service availability, staff contact, definition, and location.

GRAPH 1-Legal Services, 2016

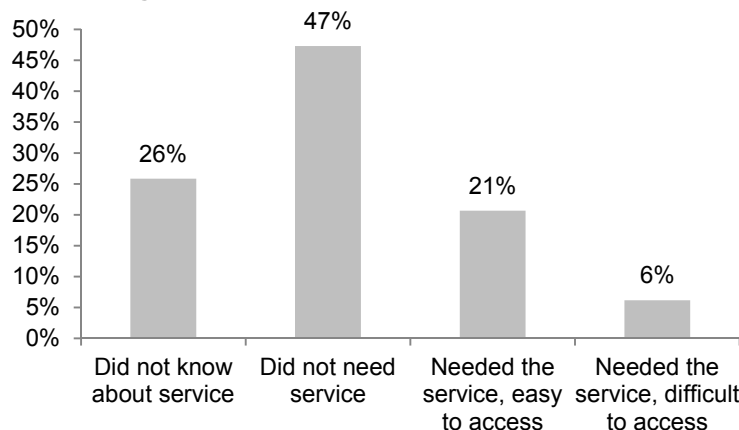


TABLE 1-Top 5 Reported Barrier Types for Legal Service, 2016

	No.	%
1. Education and Awareness (EA)	13	54%
2. Interactions with Staff (S)	7	29%
3. Administrative (AD)	1	4%
4. Eligibility (EL)	1	4%
5. Financial (F)	1	4%

(**Table 2 and Table 3**) Need and access to services can be analyzed for needs assessment participants according to demographic and other characteristics, revealing the presence of any potential disparities in access to services. For *legal services*, this analysis shows the following:

- More females than males found the service accessible.
- More other/multiracial PLWH than other race/ethnicities found the service accessible.
- More PLWH age 50+ found the service accessible than other age groups.
- In addition, recently released PLWH found the service difficult to access when compared to all participants.

TABLE 2-Legal Services, by Demographic Categories, 2016

Experience with the Service	Sex		Race/ethnicity				Age		
	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	18-24	25-49	50+
Did not know about service	27%	23%	30%	25%	31%	36%	43%	30%	17%
Did not need service	47%	47%	40%	50%	34%	21%	43%	46%	49%
Needed, easy to access	20%	23%	20%	20%	20%	43%	13%	19%	25%
Needed, difficult to access	6%	8%	10%	4%	15%	0%	0%	5%	9%

TABLE 3-Legal Services, by Selected Special Populations, 2016

Experience with the Service	Unstably Housed ^a	MSM ^b	Out of Care ^c	Recently Released ^d	Rural ^e	Transgender ^f
Did not know about service	31%	26%	50%	27%	17%	23%
Did not need service	43%	47%	50%	43%	48%	65%
Needed, easy to access	22%	22%	0%	19%	31%	6%
Needed, difficult to access	5%	6%	0%	11%	3%	6%

^aPersons reporting housing instability ^bMen who have sex with men ^cPersons with no evidence of HIV care for 12 mo.

^dPersons released from incarceration in the past 12 mo. ^eNon-Houston/Harris County residents ^fPersons with discordant sex assigned at birth and current gender