



Judicial Council of California

Shriver Civil Counsel Act
Implementation Committee

ACTION BY EMAIL

Title: Public Law Center Project: Expand Scope of Work

Date: April 14, 2025

Issue

May the Public Law Center (PLC), a non-profit legal aid organization funded by the Sargent Shriver Civil Implementation Project, expand its scope of work from providing legal aid to only to persons subject to provisions under the Hague Abduction Convention to also include highly contested “move-away” cases, which are those subject to the Uniform Child Custody, Jurisdiction, and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA).

Background

California Code, GOV 68651

§68651(b)(1) states the types of representation that may be funded. The section states, in part, “ Programs authorized under this section shall provide representation of counsel for low-income persons, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status, who require legal services in civil matters involving housing-related matters, domestic violence and civil harassment restraining orders, probate conservatorships, guardianships of the person, elder abuse, or actions by a parent to obtain legal or physical custody of a child, as well as providing court procedures, personnel, training, and case management and administration methods that reflect best practices to ensure unrepresented parties in those cases have meaningful access to justice, and to gather information on the outcomes associated with providing these services, to guard against the involuntary waiver of those rights or their disposition by default.”

Additionally, §68651 states that: “In order to ensure that the scarce funds available for the programs are used to serve the most critical cases and the parties least able to access the courts without representation, eligibility for representation shall be limited to clients whose household income falls at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Programs shall impose asset limitations consistent with their existing practices to ensure optimal use of funds.”