LAWO
LEGAL AID OF WESTERN OHIO, INC.

WHY MAINTAINING $250,000 IN FUNDING THROUGH 2026 MATTERS FOR TOLEDO

What RTC does

Right to Counsel ensures that low- and moderate-income tenants facing eviction have access to legal representation. Without counsel, tenants rarely understand their rights, court procedures, or negotiation options. Nationally, only 4% of tenants have counsel compared to 84% of landlords—a fundamental imbalance that RTC corrects.

The City's $250,000 allocation funds 2 attorneys and 1 paralegal dedicated to eviction defense.

Strong Return on Investment Nationally

Detroit, Michigan

- $16.7M annual investment → $58.8M annual benefit
- $3.52 returned for every $1 invested

Cleveland, Ohio

- $14.3M investment (2020–2024) → $35.1M in benefits
- $2.46 returned for every $1 invested
- Homelessness rose 0.5% in Cleveland vs. 3% statewide, with RTC cited as a key stabilizing factor

More information on the studies above:

Local Impact: 2024

Households Served:

- 253 households (634 individuals)
- 284 eviction cases handled—cases that would not have been served without RTC

Case Outcomes:

Of 175 closed cases in 2024:

- 77 evictions prevented outright
- 87 evictions delayed, giving families time to secure safe housing
- 94% of households avoided an eviction judgment or involuntary move
- 73 eviction records sealed, improving access to future housing and employment

Cost Efficiency

- RTC representation cost $880.28 per case in 2024
- When compared to the $35,000 annual cost of homelessness, RTC is one of the most cost-effective interventions available

What's at Risk if Funding is Cut:

LAWO already subsidizes the program through intake, supervision, and overhead. With a projected 2026 budget shortfall, LAWO cannot absorb a reduction in City funding.

A cut would mean:

- Fewer families served
- Increased evictions and homelessness
- Higher costs to the City for shelters, emergency services, and neighborhood instability
- Reduced capacity for legal clinics

With no meaningful rental assistance programs, RTC is Toledo's primary tool for preventing homelessness.