

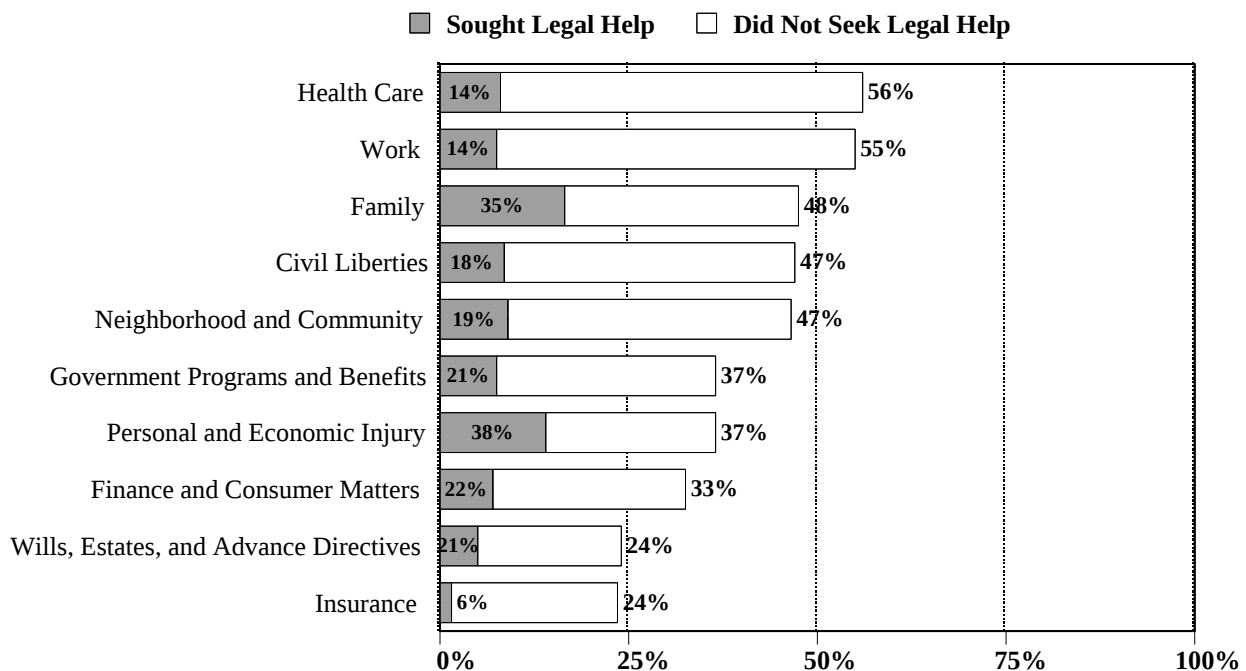
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Study Finds Unmet Needs for Civil Legal Help Among Baltimore City Treatment Clients

Baltimore City public treatment clients have unmet needs for civil legal help, according to a collaborative pilot study conducted by the University of Maryland School of Law and CESAR. The majority of the participants (98%) reported having one or more potential legal problems, yet relatively few sought legal help for their problems. For example, more than one-half reported a health care-related (56%) or work-related (55%) legal problem, yet only 14% also reported seeking legal help for the problem. The primary reasons cited for not seeking help were that they did not think the problem was a legal problem and/or they did not know who could help. The authors suggest that treatment programs can help clients identify and remedy civil legal problems by “providing education about legal issues that commonly confront persons in treatment and identifying existing legal and non-legal resources that are available on specific topics” (p. 211).

Top Ten Potential Legal Problems* Reported by Baltimore City Public Treatment Clients, by Whether or Not Legal Help for the Reported Problem Was Sought (N=200)



*Other types of legal problems asked about were property rental; family education; transportation; personal education; home ownership; and veterans and military service.

SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Weber E., Grunberger R.C., O'Grady, K.E., Arria, A.M. "Civil Legal Needs of Individuals in Drug Treatment," *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* 28(2):205-211, 2005. For more information, contact Ellen Weber at eweber@law.umaryland.edu.

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