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FreeState Justice – FY25 Mid-Year Impact Summary & FY26 Projections

Reporting Period: July 1 – December 31, 2024 + Forward-Looking

I. Organizational Overview

Mission: To improve the lives of Maryland's LGBTQ+ community through free legal services, resource navigation, advocacy, and education. FreeState Justice is the only statewide organization in Maryland offering LGBTQ+-specific legal services. Founded in 2007 and merged with Equality Maryland in 2016, FSJ brings 18 years of direct service experience, particularly for LGBTQ+ Marylanders at risk of violence, discrimination, and marginalization.

II. FY25 Mid-Year Client Services & Legal Impact

Case Volume & Service Levels

- Opened Cases: 406
- Closed Cases: 566
- Ongoing Cases (as of Dec 2024): 61

Service Level Breakdown:

- Brief Advice & Referral: 185
- Legal Counseling: 182
- Document Preparation: 10
- Judicial Representation: 189

III. Client Outcomes

Representative Client Vignettes (Anonymized):

- “Jordan” (they/them), Baltimore City: A young nonbinary person was denied entry to a youth shelter due to mismatched ID. FSJ helped them receive a legal name and gender marker update, allowing access to services and job training.
- “Tanya” (she/her), Prince George’s County: A Black trans woman and survivor of domestic violence received protective orders, child custody, and counseling support.
- “Luis” (he/him), Wicomico County: A gay man facing workplace harassment secured a settlement and insurance through FSJ’s mediation and legal support.

Client Feedback:

- 95%+ felt respected and affirmed

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Phillip Westry, Esq.
Executive Director

Lauren Pruitt, Esq. Ronnie Taylor
Legal Director

Ronnie Taylor
**Advocacy, Policy & Partnership
Director**
BOARD

Andrew Adelman
President

Brianna January

Lee Carpenter, Esq.

Brenda Dorsch

Bonnie Smith

Adam Farra, Esq.

Diana Philip

Miller Douglas

Lauren Fleming, Esq.

Andrew Ansel

FreeState Justice, Inc. is a social justice organization that works through direct legal services, legislative and policy advocacy, and community engagement to enable Marylanders across the spectrum of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer identities to be free to live authentically, with safety and dignity, in all communities throughout our state.

- 98% would recommend FSJ
- 91% reported increased understanding of their legal rights

IV. Community Outreach & Systemic Support

- 29 outreach events, 1,217 total participants
- Led Rainbow Roundtable (25+ LGBTQ+ orgs)
- Delivered inclusivity training to law enforcement and service providers

V. Forward Projections

January–June 2025 Projected Closures:

- Brief Advice: 190
- Counseling: 180
- Document Preparation: 20
- Representation: 210

FY26 (July 2025–June 2026) Projected Closures:

- Brief Advice: 407
- Counseling: 400
- Document Preparation: 22
- Representation: 415

Total: 1,244 cases

VI. Simplified Budget Summary (FY26)

Total Budget: \$344,689 (100% Grant-Funded)

Personnel Costs:

- Executive Director: \$16,065
- Survivor Coordinator: \$14,166
- Legal Director: \$89,250
- Paralegal: \$53,550
- Program Manager: \$45,220
- Staff Attorney I: \$75,863
- Staff Attorney II: \$50,575

VII. Closing Statement

FreeState Justice delivers life-changing legal and advocacy services to LGBTQ+ Marylanders experiencing crisis and discrimination. We are prepared to meet the growing need in 2025–2026.