

DELIVERING ON THE PROMISE

2020-PRESENT

The Promise
THE PHILADELPHIA POVERTY ACTION FUND

POWERED BY



United Way
of Greater Philadelphia
and Southern New Jersey

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



City of
Philadelphia



THE PROMISE CHANGED HOW PHILLY TOOK ON POVERTY.

With more than one in five residents still living below the poverty line, the challenge was never a lack of effort, it was fragmentation. Isolated work couldn't meet the scale of the problem. Real progress required a fundamentally different approach.

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UNITED WAY

Brought partners together, coordinated strategy and learning, and supported the infrastructure that allowed the system to function as a whole.



CITY AGENCIES

Aligned public investment, policy, and systems to support coordinated, community-based delivery rather than fragmented programs.



PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

Provided flexible capital and long-term support to test, scale, and sustain collaborative approaches across the network.

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COMMUNITY-BASED COALITIONS

Led outreach and service delivery on the ground, coordinating across trusted organizations to meet residents where they are.



LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

Delivered specialized legal support—especially around record clearing—embedded within community settings and referral pathways.



SHARED DATA & REPORTING

Enabled learning, accountability, and coordination by allowing information to move across partners rather than remain siloed.

**Across Philadelphia,
partners aligned
around a key insight:
Residents needed
stability now and fewer
barriers to opportunity
over time.**

A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

By working through community coalitions and trusted neighborhood organizations, The Promise expanded reach, reduced duplication, and delivered support shaped by the communities it served.

**We provided
service in every
Philadelphia
zipcode.**

**Strong reach
into immigrant
communities**

**High participation
among older adults
and households
with limited digital
access**

TURN ACCESS TO INCOME

THE FAMILY STABILITY CHALLENGE

With an estimated \$450M in public benefits going unclaimed each year, the Family Stability Challenge invested in trusted neighborhood organizations to expand access through community coalitions.

53K+

households reached

171K

benefit & service
applications
submitted

9:1

return on
investments.

CLEAR RECORDS, OPEN DOORS

THE JOBS & OPPORTUNITIES CHALLENGE

To address the lasting employment and housing barriers caused by criminal records, the Jobs & Opportunities Challenge embedded free record-clearing legal services in trusted Philadelphia neighborhoods.

76

total clinics hosted

70%

participants moving
forward with
record clearing

**3 coalitions &
40+ organizations
helped families access
public benefits
they were already
eligible for.**

\$159M

BENEFITS & TAX CREDITS DELIVERED

**21 community
organizations &
3 legal groups
helped residents
clear eligible
criminal records.**

11,560

ATTENDED RECORD CLEARING EVENTS

**What comes next
isn't a question
of whether the model
works, but whether
funders in Philadelphia
are ready to sustain it.**

The Promise didn't just expand services;
it changed how they were delivered.
Outreach, referrals, legal relief, and benefits
access were connected instead of siloed,
reaching residents across neighborhoods
and languages at scale.

THEPROMISEPHL.ORG



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

African Cultural Alliance
of North America

Asociacion
Puertorriqueños
en Marcha

Beech Community
Services

Beyond Literacy

Cambodian Association
of Greater Philadelphia

Campaign for
Working Families

CEIBA

Central Division
Victim Services

Community College of
Philadelphia Foundation

Community Legal
Services of
Philadelphia

Congreso

Defender Association
of Philadelphia

EMIR Healing Center

Esperanza

Father's Day
Rally Committee

First Step Staffing
Philadelphia

Grands As Parents

Greater Philadelphia
Community Alliance

HACE

Institute for
Community Justice

JEVS Human Services

LISC

Lower North
Philadelphia CDC

Make it Happen
Philly Inc.

Mercy Neighborhood
Ministries

New Kensington CDC

NOMO Foundation

Norris Square
Community Alliance

Philadelphia
Bail Fund

Philadelphia Chinatown
Development Corporation

Philadelphia Lawyers
for Social Equity

Philly Black
Worker Project

Revolutionary Vision

SEAMAAC

Southwest CDC

Strawberry Mansion CDC

The Community of
Compassion CDC

The Elevation Project

The Reawakening
Agency

Unity in the
Community

Uplift Solutions

Urban League of
Philadelphia

Xiente

The Promise
thepromisephl.org

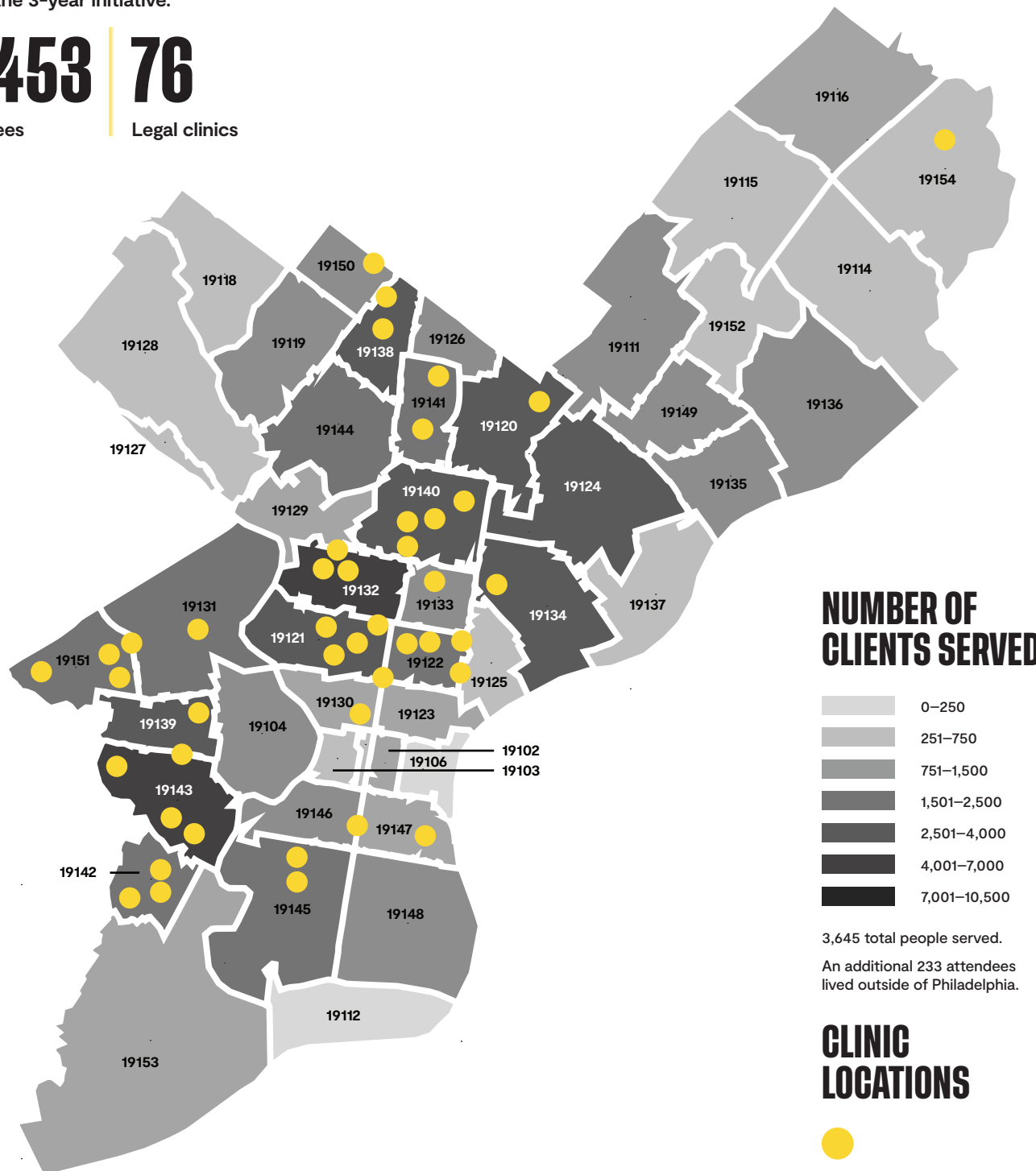
LEGAL CLINIC ATTENDANCE ACROSS PHILADELPHIA

Zip code information available
during the 3-year initiative.

2,453 | **76**

Attendees

Legal clinics



FAMILY STABILITY CLIENTS SERVED IN PHILADELPHIA

2021-2024

Data from all coalitions

