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In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. **What geographic area is served?** *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)*
   All of Chester County.

2. **What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**
   SeniorLAW Center seeks justice for older people using the power of the law, educating the community, and advocating on local, state and national levels. We are the only nonprofit in Pennsylvania solely dedicated to protecting the legal rights of older people, serving almost 10,000 seniors each year. While our Chester County office closed in March per directives of government leaders and concerns for our staff, all of our staff began immediately and seamlessly working remotely with excellent remote communication tools to serve older people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

   We serve those who are 60 years of age and older. Our clients range from 60 to those who are well into their 100s. The great majority of older people to whom we provide direct legal representation live in or near poverty -- at or well below 150% of the federal poverty level. Many face other vulnerabilities (including isolation, frailty, illness, disability, language access, cultural isolation, being homebound or bedbound). Older people are at the epicenter of this crisis. 80% of U.S. COVID-19 deaths to date are older people, 65 years of age and older (CDC).

   SeniorLAW Center is on the front lines serving low-income, isolated and vulnerable older people who are most at risk to the virus and deeply affected by the crisis and at risk in isolation. Even though the courts and our physical offices are closed, we are responding to the needs of older people each day through our Chester County telephone intake line and SeniorLAW HelpLine (610.910.0215 for Chester County and 1.877.PA.SR.LAW for statewide services), with expanded hours during the crisis, now open all day, every business day.

   We are also handling legal emergencies: COVID-19 fraud, scams and financial exploitation, and all forms of elder abuse which are exacerbated during this crisis and when families may be under immense stress in quarantine; housing issues and homelessness prevention, including illegal lockouts and violations of the statewide moratorium on evictions and foreclosures; health care and end of life planning, especially vital during a health crisis and pandemic; helping LGBTQ older people with resources to promote access to aging and legal resources; helping grandparents raising grandchildren, with information about their legal options, including standby guardianship, medical consents, stimulus payments for the kids in their care, and custody; and other emergency responses. We have also implemented a new Health and Wellness questionnaire with all existing clients and new clients to address holistic basic human needs. We are educating the community with specific COVID-19 and Older People
web resources and a universe of specific legal alerts, and advocating with leaders to protect the rights of older people during this unprecedented crisis.

Here is how we are intentionally responding to the crisis immediately and where grant funds will be used:
1. Expanded hours and services on our Pennsylvania SeniorLAW HelpLine, providing free legal advice, information and brief services for all Chester County residents 60 and older on areas of critical need. Fully accessible by phone in the comfort and privacy of seniors’ homes, reducing isolation, and providing access to attorneys and advocates to discuss a challenge, problem or crisis, including those caused directly or indirectly by COVID-19.
2. Our new Wellness and Safety Checklist and Questionnaire reviews basic human needs with all callers and current clients to assess and share resources for food, safety, health care, shelter, resources for grandparents raising grandchildren, financial supports, and other basic human needs.
3. Seeking emergency responses while the courts are closed to address elder abuse, financial exploitation, illegal evictions and foreclosures, COVID-19 fraud and scams, and aid grandparents raising grandchildren during this stressful time of school closures and stay-at-home orders.
4. Advocating with the courts, government officials and other leaders to ensure access to the courts, income, health care, voting rights, legal protections and access to justice for our parents, grandparents and senior veterans.
5. Educating seniors, families and the community about legal rights and resources, court rulings and moratorium, protecting yourself or your loved ones against fraud, exploitation, and homelessness, resources and legal tools for grandparents, health care and end-of-life decisionmaking during a health care crisis, and other critical issues.

Our staff in Chester County is partnering with elected leaders, the legal and aging services community, and other nonprofit organizations ground responding to the immediate needs of older people in Chester County. We have a dedicated intake line for older people calling the HelpLine for their legal needs. We receive referrals regularly from our key Chester County partners: The Department of Aging Services, Crime Victim’s Center of Chester County, Legal Aid, and various local government officials.

In addition, our Chester County staff attorney has joined efforts to help LGBTQ seniors with our partners at SAGE and their evening and weekend hotline for to reduce the suffering of isolated older adults during COVID-19. Our legal advocate continues to call the county police chiefs and other partners in law enforcement and social services to remind them that our services are available for older people, especially those who are victims of crime, scams, fraud, and financial exploitation during this pandemic. Chester County staff have written an article about the pressing critical legal needs of older people that will be published soon.

In September, our Chester County staff attorney will be presenting at the Chester County Elder Abuse Task Force quarterly meeting that has been pushed back due to the delay of the first two quarterly meeting. She will be presenting on the human toll of elder financial exploitation and abuse. We are also partnering with the Supreme Court Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts, led by our colleague Judge Paula Ott (ret.), to present a training for Magistrate District Judges in Chester County on aging and the law, elder abuse and financial exploitation, and other pressing legal issues facing older people in the County, and how we can help.

We know that the demand for our services will continue to increase during this crisis, as stress, financial strain and emotional tensions take a toll. And we are expecting a tsunami of legal cases when the courts re-open and are advocating for accommodations and remote and virtual access for our older and disabled communities who are still at risk. Older people are themselves in crisis. This is an unprecedented time for all of us, and older people are the most devastatingly impacted. We are proud to be a voice for one of the most vulnerable and most underserved populations in our country and to have been so for the past 42 years. We have the experience, expertise, compassion, knowledge and expansive networks to do this work.
3. **How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

We are seeking a grant of $5,000 to go towards immediate relief efforts and critical legal services during the COVID-19 pandemic as described above. The funds will be used immediately. This funding would be approximately 2% of our Chester County budget and approximately 0.1% of our organizational budget.

Please email grants@chescocf.org

- x This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
- x Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
- x 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescocf.org. Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.