



FAIR SHAKE ENVIRONMENTAL LEGAL SERVICES' MISSION AND PROGRAMS

Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services is a "501(c)(3)" nonprofit law firm that brings decision-making and conflict resolution tools to people in place. Our mission and programs include the following:

Fostering Equal Access to Environmental Justice

Through our Legal Services Program, we promote the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, national origin, income, or zip code in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Our Legal Services Program has three components:

Pro Bono Representation – We provide free legal services to individuals and families whose income is within 300% of the federal poverty level. Without this pro bono representation, our low-income clients would likely be excluded from the environmental decision-making process. Our pro bono clients are often living with the impacts of coal mining, oil and gas development, and general industrial activity.

Sliding Scale Representation – Fair Shake also offers sliding scale rates set according to an individual's household income or an organization's annual budget. By providing discounts ranging from 10% to 90%, we open the doors of the environmental legal process to the individuals and organizations who may not otherwise avail themselves of the legal process.

Public Interest Litigation – Public interest litigation is legal work for larger organizational clients that seeks to accomplish outcomes for the public and environmental greater good.

Providing Education in Legal Service Entrepreneurship

Fair Shake has Resident Attorney and Legal Fellowship Programs that seek to educate young attorneys in environmental law, law office management, and legal entrepreneurship thereby incubating and seeding start-up law firms to better serve the environmental legal needs of the underserved in our region and beyond.

Supporting Community Empowerment

Achieving justice for the systemic environmental harms found in Appalachia on a case-by-case basis is just part of the solution. Therefore, Fair Shake seeks to empower communities throughout Appalachia to proactively make their own environmental and economic development decisions. We do this through our Community Democracy Program.

Community Democracy Program – The goal of this program is to build capacity and resilience among communities to enable them to be their own advocates in advance of damaging industrial development. This process is deliberative and forward-thinking; helps local residents identify the best development and job creation for their specific needs; and then provides the legal and organizational development tools to ensure that those needs are met. Fair Shake conducts visioning sessions, offers organizational consulting, facilitates public participation, and creates legal templates to move plans to action. This work is driven by that community's self-identified concerns, putting the people in the driver's seat in reclaiming their self-determination and community environmental health.