

# Turning on the Lights

*"It felt very much like wandering through a room with no lights on, and you'd bump into something, you'd ask somebody about it, and they'd give you a little flashlight and say, 'go that way'... Nobody ever turned the lights on in the whole room to give us an idea of exactly what it should look like and how the process should look."*

*--Anonymous self-represented litigant. Honoring Families Initiative 2016A, p.30*

Massachusetts Appleseed's "Turning on the Lights" initiative advocates for the immediate creation of a Virtual Court Service Center (VCSC). By leveraging 21st century technology such as mobile friendly document assembly, plain language digital resources, and real time "LiveHelp" support, the Trial Court can standardize access to justice regardless of a resident's zip code. Our research proves that most self help inquiries are "not complex" and can be resolved through digital tools, empowering litigants to advocate for their own stability and rights while reducing the administrative burden on our physical courts.

## 54.6%

of court staff rank providing legal information as one of the most important services provided by existing Court Service Centers (CSCs).

## 10%

 (approximately 670,000 people)

possess limited English proficiency, making plain-language virtual tools a necessity for basic court navigation.

## 25%

 of home visits conducted by the DCF currently

include a competent interpreter, signaling a systemic failure in communication that virtual resources could help standardize.

Check the Report Out Here:  
<https://tinyurl.com/2etzvmjw>



**Massachusetts  
Appleseed**  
Center for Law & Justice