

INDIANA HEALTH ADVOCACY COALITION NEWSLETTER



In this issue:

- A Word from Our President
- Suggested Reading
- Eviction Sealing
- IHAC Spotlight
- Gun Violence
- Upcoming Events



THE IMPACT OF EVICTIONS ON OUR COMMUNITY

Indiana has long had one of the highest eviction rates in the country. According to data from the Eviction Lab, in 2018, Marion County alone had 21.1 filed evictions for every 100 households (a rate that was more than 13% above the national average) and more than 29,000 unique households faced eviction that year. The eviction moratorium from 2020-2021 helped many tenants remain in their homes during the early days of the pandemic. However, the end of these pandemic protections and the financial losses caused by the pandemic means that tenants are once again being evicted in Indiana at high rates. While rental assistance may be available to them, tenants may be unaware of the rental assistance programs before the filing of an eviction proceeding or their landlord may refuse to accept the rental assistance payments. The Eviction Lab eviction filing data for Indiana for January 3, 2022-July 17, 2022 shows that approximately 34,669 evictions were filed. (<https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/indiana/>)

For many of the tenants against whom the eviction proceedings were filed, the eviction filings will become a scarlet letter that will make it more difficult to rent safe, habitable housing in the future. Regardless of whether the case was later dismissed or decided in a tenant's favor, eviction filings have historically been open to the public. In recent years, it has become even easier for landlords to easily locate eviction records by searching the publicly available electronic court records. As a result, many Indiana tenants who have had an eviction proceeding filed against them have found that the eviction filing alone has served as a barrier to renting safe housing that is in a good habitable condition. Research has long told us that a lack of safe, habitable housing negatively impacts the mental and physical health of individuals living in poor housing conditions. (<https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hpb20210315.747908>) Research has further shown that housing instability and poor housing conditions harm children's ability to focus on their education, resulting in lower reading and comprehension scores and increasing the likelihood that the children will not graduate from high school. (<https://www.buduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall14/highlight1.html>)

The disheartening research data regarding the negative impact of housing instability on the mental, physical, and financial health of adults and children is a perfect example of why bringing together health care and legal professionals is so important. From a healthcare organization providing patient assistance to prevent an MLP patient-client from being evicted to a physician working with an MLP attorney to create a letter that explains to a landlord how an MLP patient-client's health is negatively impacted by the leaking, moldy ceiling in their apartment, medical and legal professionals in a medical-legal partnership work together each day to address the impact evictions and habitability issues have on the mental and physical health of patients and their families. Beginning July 1, MLP partners have an additional tool in their toolbox. Tenants may now petition the Court to have certain eviction proceedings sealed, thereby helping the tenant begin the process of removing the scarlet letter from their tenant record. This quarter's newsletter discusses the new law, features an interview with one of our dedicated board members, and contains resources that help tenants facing eviction.

Thank you for supporting our continued effort to bring medical and legal professions together to address the social determinants of health that prevent Indiana residents from living their happiest, most successful lives.

Rakuya

Had an eviction filing harm you?

You might be able to expunge it from your record.

Tenants across Indiana who have had evictions filed against them that were dismissed, ruled in their favor, or overturned on appeal can now have the eviction filing expunged from their record.

To seal an eviction filing, tenants must fill out a form and submit it to the court where the case was filed. They can obtain a copy of the form at indianalegalhelp.org, which is a project of the Indiana Supreme Court, or ask the court where their case was filed and what they need to do to seal the eviction.

An eviction filing can be expunged only if there is no judgement issued by the court that says the tenant owes the landlord money in the eviction case.

DID YOU KNOW???

Gun violence comes in many forms (accidental, mass, defensive, self-inflicted, officer involved, etc.). As of the date of this article, the total number of gun violence deaths in Indiana are 551¹. [Gun Violence Archive](#).

In 2020, the average number of deaths and injuries caused by firearm in Indiana were 17.3 (per 100,000)²

GUN VIOLENCE ARCHIVE 2014-2022 IN STATS		
Evidence Based Research - since 2013		
PUBLISHED DATE: September 12, 2022		
Homicide/Murder/Unintentional/DGU¹		3,790
Total Number of Injuries ¹		7,004
Mass Shootings ²		84
Mass Murders ²		6
Number of Children (age 0-11) ¹	Killed	58
	Injured	132
Number of Teens (age 12-17) ¹	Killed	229
	Injured	545
Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	10
Officer Killed or Injured	Injured	62
Officer Involved Incident ¹	Killed	206
Subject-Suspect Killed or Injured	Injured	174
Defensive Use ²		397
Unintentional Shooting ²		564
Murder/Suicides Incidents ²		142

1. All numbers are subject to change or incidents recategorized as new evidence is established and verified.
2. Death rates are based on 2020 age-adjusted death rates from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) via CDC WONDER.

Suggested Reading...

[Social determinants of health in relation to firearm-related homicides in the United States: A nationwide multi-level cross-sectional study.](#)

[Social Determinants of Health—Societal factors like discriminatory policies, educational opportunities, poverty, and racism affect a person’s risk of firearm injury.](#)

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE INDIANA LEGISLATURE?

House Bill 1296 Permit-less Carry Law. Effective July 1, 2022. This bill repeals the law that requires people to obtain a license to carry a handgun in Indiana. This means people who are not otherwise prohibited from carrying or possessing a handgun don’t have to obtain or possess a license or permit from the state to carry a handgun. The law also makes it a crime to carry a handgun unlawfully. This could be a misdemeanor offense or felony, depending on the circumstance.

[What we know about the permitless carry law that went into effect July 1](#)

How does a bill become law? For more information, visit <https://www.in.gov/gpcpd/publications/the-legislative-process/>.

IHAC SPOTLIGHT...

Lexi Fuson, JD

Lexi is a product liability and mass tort attorney at Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP. Lexi counsels and defends manufacturers of a wide variety of products, including consumer products, aquatic products, medical devices, cosmetics, and personal care products. In addition, Lexi represents pro bono clients in a wide variety of matters, including guardianship petitions, veteran’s appeals, and the preparation of wills and advanced care directives. As a member of the IHAC Board, Lexi is devoted to collaborating with like-minded individuals to understand and address social determinants of health in the Indianapolis community.



How did you get involved in IHAC?

When I joined Faegre Drinker, I was eager to take on pro bono work. I started working with the Faegre Drinker – Eskenazi Medical Legal Partnership (“MLP”), where I had the opportunity to assist clients with guardianship proceedings and other matters. I really loved that work and appreciated the opportunity to work with the clients and make a difference in my community. My work with the MLP and other pro bono cases blossomed into an interest in the social determinants of health, which led me to become involved with IHAC.

How have MLPs impacted your life and/or career?

The Faegre Drinker – Eskenazi MLP has given me the opportunity to meet so many amazing clients and help them navigate the legal proceedings required for guardianships. Each time I complete a guardianship for a client, I am reminded of the unique opportunity I have to help others in the community through pro bono work. More than anything, I am grateful that the MLP work allows me to use my skills to help others in my community.

How have you experienced or witnessed IHAC’s support for MLPs and professionals?

Absolutely – IHAC is constantly considering how the legal and medical professions can come together for the benefit of patients. In addition to connecting professionals in the medical and legal field, IHAC provides training opportunities, educational information, and support for our community. We want to make sure everyone in our community has access to healthcare and legal services.

What are you most passionate about?

I believe that every individual deserves access to food, housing, medical care, and legal assistance (among other things). As an attorney, I realize that I am uniquely positioned to promote this access, and I do not take that for granted. I want to do whatever I can to expand support, medical care, and legal assistance to *anyone* who needs it and remove the barriers that exist in our community.

How do you spend your free time?

I enjoy spending time with my husband and our dog, Phoebe. I also enjoy traveling, hiking, eating out (way too much), and cooking vegan food!

What do you look forward to most in 2022?

As a millennial, I am excited to see my generation continue to make a positive impact in our society. I look forward to seeing what the next generation of leaders has in store and am hopeful that they will bring positive change to our world!

UPCOMING EVENTS...



2022
CENTERING EQUITY IN OUR WORK
ICADV FALL CONFERENCE
 HYBRID EVENT - IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES
INDIANAPOLIS MARRIOTT EAST HOTEL | **TUESDAY, OCT. 4**
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 5
 CLICK [HERE](#) TO REGISTER

IHAC has been a primary promoter of the “medical-legal partnership” in Indiana for over a decade. We work to foster relationships between healthcare providers, legal advocates, and academic researchers - with the goal of using legal interventions to improve health outcomes.



Contact Us at IndianaHAC@gmail.com