

# Media “Rules”

- 1 ● Ask about the focus of the story.
- 2 ● Ask to call back the reporter in 15 min. or at a set time.
- 3 ● Call the EJC (206.447.8168) or appropriate org. to brainstorm ideas about messages.
- 3 ● Develop brief talking points that include:
  - anecdotes to support your message
  - answers to the worst possible questions
  - your main point

## Stay on Message

- 4 ● The Alliance for Equal Justice is a network of organizations providing legal aid to those with nowhere else to turn.
- 5 ● Civil legal aid organizations provide critically-needed legal help, including information, advice and representation.
- 6 ● Over 85% of low-income people cannot get any legal assistance for problems that threaten their basic human needs like housing, health and family safety.
- 7 ● Our laws guarantee basic rights and protections--not just to those who can afford legal representation--but to *all of us*.
- 7 ● Civil legal aid helps families in crisis return to safe, productive lives and saves taxpayer dollars by preempting a spiral of costly social problems.
- 8 ● It's not justice if it's not equal.



# How to Respond

## Questions from left field

Reporter: “What’s this I hear about...”

You: “I’m not familiar with that...”

## The loaded or false premise

Reporter: “Since it’s well known that...”

You: “Let’s look at that assumption.

Research (or my personal experience) shows...”

## Unacceptable alternatives

Reporter: “Are lawyers a or b?”

You: “Neither is true. What is true is...”

## False conclusions

Reporter: “What you’re saying is...”

You: “No, let me clarify my point...”

## The interrupter

You: “I’d be happy to answer that after I’ve made one final point...”

## Machine-gun questions

If a reporter bombards you with rapid-fire questions, you can say: “Let’s take those questions one at a time. In response to...”

## The silent treatment

Don’t rush to fill the silence. When you’re done with your point, ask “What else would you like to know?”

## The expert

Be wary of reporters who act like they know more than they do, in an effort to get you to say more. It’s always okay to say that we think a particular assertion or assumption is not accurate.