



**LEGAL SERVICES GRANT PROGRAMS
STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE**

25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

www.mncourts.gov/lisac

651-284-4379

MEMORANDUM

TO: LSAC Grant Applicants
FROM: Bridget Gernander, Executive Director
RE: FY16-17 Grant Application Guidelines
DATE: January 15, 2015

The Legal Services Advisory Committee (LSAC) intends to award grants for the two year period from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017 (FY16-17). LSAC will distribute approximately \$4,000,000 per year in grant funds from three primary sources:

- Funding appropriated by the Minnesota Legislature, governed by Minn. Stat. 480.242; this funding is available to legal services and alternative dispute resolution programs serving clients who meet the statutory poverty guidelines. More details about legislative funding eligibility are listed in the *Statutory Interpretation and Financial Guidelines* document at www.mncourts.gov/lisac. LSAC distributed \$1,708,350 per year from the FY14-15 legislative funding available for discretionary grants (also known as the 15% funds). The committee will not know the total funding available for FY16-17 until the 2015 legislative session has ended.
- The civil legal services portion of Minnesota attorney registration fees; this funding can be spent at the discretion of LSAC for any purpose that supports civil legal services. LSAC distributed approximately \$1,800,000 per year from the FY14-15 attorney registration fee revenue. This funding is expected to remain stable.
- Interest on Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) revenue; the purpose of this funding is to enhance the availability of legal services for the poor, to support programs of law related education and programs to enhance the administration of justice. LSAC plans to distribute approximately \$450,000 per year from IOLTA funds and related revenue for the FY16-17 grant cycle. This is a decrease of 20% from the last biennium because of continued low-interest rates and the depletion of the IOLTA reserve.

Grant Proposal Categories and Scoring

For the FY16-17 grant cycle, LSAC will consider proposals in three categories:

1. General Operating Grants for Staff Legal Services: Regional grants that can be used for organizational expenses related to the provision or support of civil legal services by staff attorneys to economically disadvantaged Minnesotans. Regions are defined on the last page of this memo. LSAC is charged with ensuring access to a base level of civil legal services around the state. Regional proposals will be evaluated to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources.
2. General Operating Grants for PAI Services: Regional grants that can be used for organizational expenses related to private attorney involvement (PAI) services to economically disadvantaged Minnesotans. PAI is defined to include both pro bono and judicare. Regions are defined on the last page of this memo. LSAC is charged with ensuring access to a base level of civil legal services around the state. Regional proposals will be evaluated to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources.
3. Project Grants: Grants for projects to enhance the availability of legal services or alternative dispute resolution for the poor, to support programs of law related education and to enhance the administration of justice.

Applicant organizations can submit proposals in more than one category. Minnesota Judicial Branch Policy requires that all grant review be conducted using set review criteria. In this grant cycle, each proposal for grant funding will be evaluated and awarded up to 30 points (up to 15 organizational capacity points + up to 15 points for each project type) based on the following criteria:

Organizational Capacity Evaluation of All Applications

Evaluation and Planning (5 points) – A high scoring organization will demonstrate that it has evaluation and planning processes in place to improve their services. The organization anticipates challenges and has shown a capacity to adapt. The organization has found solutions to address current and emerging client need.

Leverage (5 points) – A high scoring organization leverages LSAC funds by vigorously pursuing resources and partnerships to maximize their community impact. The organization also leverages LSAC funds by securing diverse funding sources (e.g., donations, foundation support, other government funding, etc.).

Financial Strength (5 points) – A high scoring organization has a realistic and clear budget that is part of an overall program plan, including ongoing financial review by their Board of Directors. The organization has demonstrated the ability to sustain their work and be responsive to a changing fiscal environment.

General Operating Grant for Staff Services Evaluation

Community Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal demonstrates the broad impact of the service provided, either geographically or for specific populations. Proposals for direct legal representation should also address how legal needs are assessed and prioritized to deliver a full range of services in the region, including advice, brief service and extended representation.

Delivery System Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will clearly demonstrate how the proposal contributes to a delivery system where there is a base level of access to civil legal services in all Minnesota counties. Proposal should also address how the organization connects or plans to connect to existing delivery system infrastructure, including projusticemn.org, lawhelpmn.org, mnlegaladvice.org and online intake.

Collaboration (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will recognize other service providers in the region and address how this project will collaborate with other providers to reduce duplication. All proposals that cover a county with a staffed law library or court self-help services should address how the proposal will work with those resources to maximize client service.

General Operating Grant for PAI Services Evaluation

Community Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will describe how private attorneys will meet community legal needs in the region(s) to be served. Proposals for direct legal representation should also address both pro bono and judicare models and how they could be used in the region to achieve a full range of PAI services, including advice, brief service and extended representation.

Delivery System Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will clearly demonstrate how the proposal contributes to a delivery system where there is a base level of access to civil legal services in all Minnesota counties. Proposals should also address ways that the organization connects or plans to connect to existing delivery system infrastructure, including projusticemn.org, lawhelpmn.org, mnlegaladvice.org and online intake.

Collaboration (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will recognize other service providers in the region and address how this project will collaborate with other providers to reduce duplication. All proposals that cover a county with a staffed law library or court self-help services should address how the proposal will work with those resources to maximize client service.

Project Grant Evaluation

Community Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will have a broad geographic reach and/or provide support services or education to a wide range of programs or client groups.

Delivery System Impact (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will describe how this project uses technology or other approaches to support an integrated service delivery infrastructure.

Collaboration (5 points) – A high scoring proposal will demonstrate that the project is not duplicative of existing services and will describe any collaborations with other providers to provide effective and efficient use of funds.

Timeline

LSAC applications for funding must be received in the required format by **4:30 p.m. on March 13, 2015**. Applications should be sent to:

Legal Services Advisory Committee
ATTN: Bridget Gernander
130 Minnesota Judicial Center
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55155

There will be a workshop on January 29, 2015 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at the Minnesota Judicial Center in Room G06 for any prospective applicants who would like to ask questions about the grant application or data submission. Attendance by phone and webex can be arranged by request. This presentation will include detailed information about the areas where LSAC is seeing gaps in services and resources.

All applicants received by the deadline will be screened for compliance with LSAC's funding criteria. Applicants who meet the funding criteria will be scheduled for a 45-minute interview with an LSAC panel to discuss the application and respond to any committee member questions. Applicants who do not meet the funding criteria will be notified that their application has been denied and for what reason. LSAC contemplates making grant awards by July 1, 2015.

Please direct inquiries regarding grant applications to Bridget Gernander, Legal Services Grant Manager, at bridget.gernander@courts.state.mn.us or 651-284-4379.

Notices Concerning Grant Applications

LSAC reserves the right to reject any or all applications received that do not, in its opinion, serve the best interest of the Minnesota Supreme Court or the intent of this funding. The application is made for informational or planning purposes only. Neither the Supreme Court nor LSAC will be liable for any expenses incurred by any prospective grantee prior to the issuance of the grant. Upon submission, all applications become the property of the Supreme Court, which has the right to use any or all ideas presented in any application submitted, whether or not the application is accepted. All application materials are public data and may be made available to other interested organizations and individuals.

Contract Conditions

The selected grantee must understand and agree to the following conditions that shall be included as part of the final grant:

a. Inspection and Audit

The office and representatives of the Supreme Court, and the Minnesota Legislative auditor, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access for purposes of audit and examination to any books, documents, papers, and records of the grantee.

b. Certification of Non-Profit Status

The grantee must certify that it is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that it is governed by a board of directors composed of attorneys-at-law and consumers of legal services, including at least one client eligible member as defined in the *Statutory Interpretation and Financial Guidelines* document.

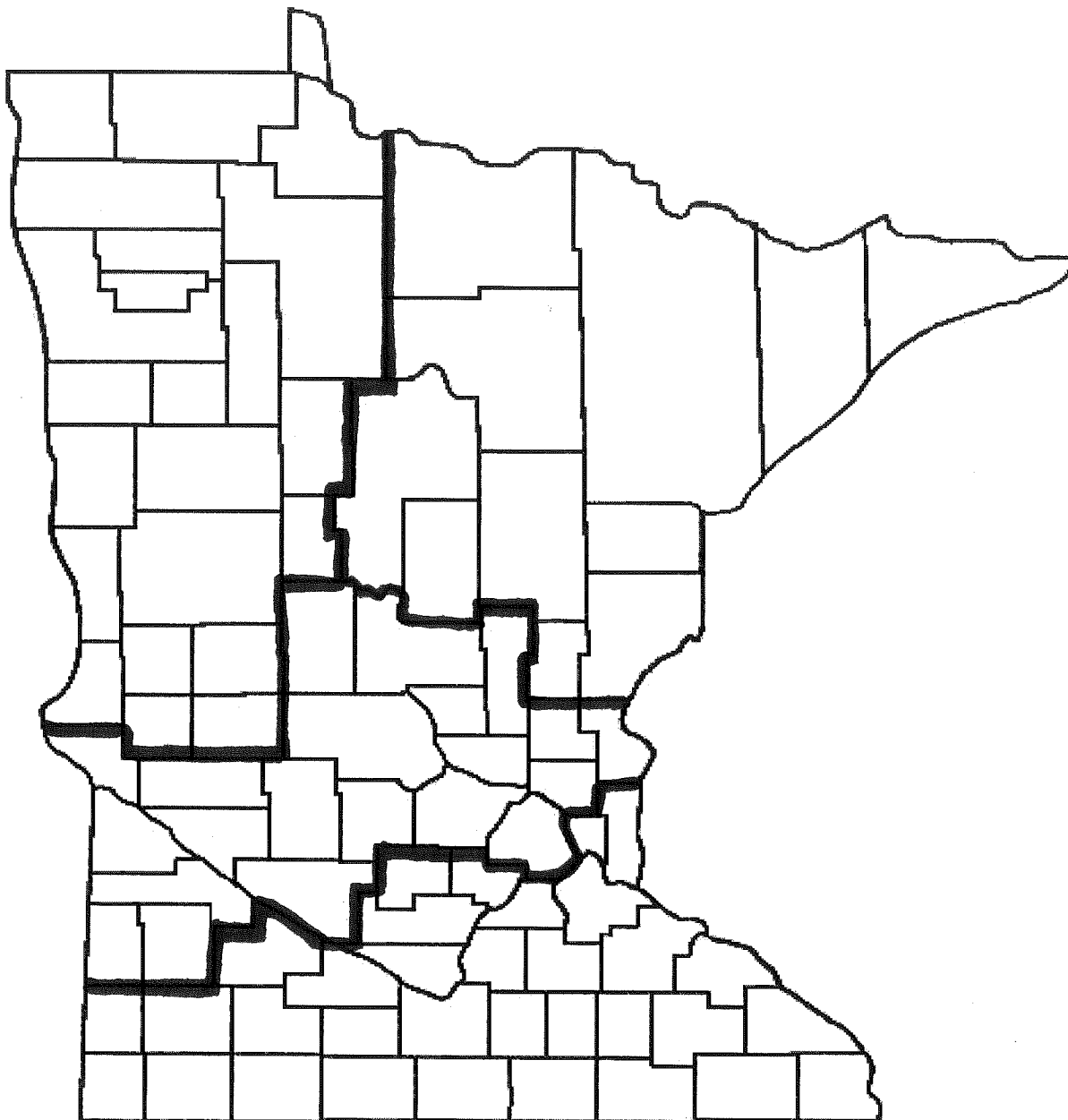
c. Supplemental Data Requests

In accepting a grant from LSAC, grantees will be asked to comply with all reasonable requests for supplemental data.

d. Reduction in Grant Funding

In the event the Legislature reduces the appropriation for civil legal services or anticipated funding from other sources drops below the allocated level, LSAC may reconsider and reduce awards to grantees for the second year of the biennium.

Regions for LSAC General Operating Grants



Northwest Region: Becker, Beltrami, Clay, Clearwater, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Otter Tail, Pennington, Polk, Pope, Stevens, Red Lake, Roseau, Traverse, Wadena, Wilkin plus any Indian reservations within the geographic boundaries of this region

Northeast Region: Aitkin, Carlton, Cass, Cook, Crow Wing, Kanabec, Koochiching, Itasca, Lake, Pine, St. Louis plus any Indian reservations within the geographic boundaries of this region

Central Region: Anoka, Benton, Big Stone, Chippewa, Chisago, Hennepin, Isanti, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Meeker, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Renville, Sherburne, Stearns, Swift, Todd, Wright, Yellow Medicine plus any Indian reservations within the geographic boundaries of this region

Southern Region: Blue Earth, Brown, Carver, Cottonwood, Dakota, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Jackson, Le Sueur, Martin, McLeod, Mower, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Olmsted, Pipestone, Ramsey, Redwood, Rice, Rock, Scott, Sibley, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Washington, Watonwan, Winona plus any Indian reservations within the geographic boundaries of this region