Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

2014 Report to the Wyoming Supreme Court

&

Five-Year Strategic Plan - 2015-2020

IN THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WYOMING
FILED

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November 20, 2014

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TO: Chief Justice E. James Burke, Wyoming Supreme Court

Governor Matt Mead, Governor, State of Wyoming

President of the Wyoming Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives

I. History and Accomplishments of the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission (Commission) is pleased to present this Five Year Strategic Plan and July 2014 report. The Commission is very proud of what has been accomplished over the last five years. Thanks to the involvement of the Legislature and the Executive Branch, we have been able to expand dramatically the services that are available to Wyoming citizens who need legal assistance but are unable to afford it. Starting from the volunteer efforts of a small group of committed citizens in December 2008, Wyoming's programs have grown into a statewide system that is serving thousands of people each year. Nationwide, legal services programs are on the decline, but Wyoming has swum strongly against this current, as it has funded, planned, organized and executed programs that are becoming national models.

The Commission's work started in December 2008 when Wyoming Supreme Court Chief Justice E. James Burke (then Justice Burke) convened a small group of judges, court administrators, law professors and attorneys to assess the state of legal services for low-to middle-income citizens of the State. The Commission directed that a White Paper be drafted to describe the history of legal services in Wyoming and to propose legislation for consideration by the Wyoming Legislature in the 2010 session.

The White Paper was drafted in 2009 and the Commission held a series of public meetings to gather information and build support for a legislative initiative. Propelled by a small grant from the Federal Courts in Wyoming, the Commission created a video which captured the public meetings and presented a compelling case for significant expansion of Wyoming's efforts.

In 2010, the Legislature debated and passed, in a budget session, a new law that creates a funding mechanism for legal aid programs and a structure for the operation of a state wide system. The legislation was successful because of the strong support of Governor Freudenthal and Senator Tony Ross, who was the Majority Floor Leader of the Senate and a member of the Commission. The legislation became effective on July 1, 2010, and the Wyoming Supreme Court and the Commission commenced work immediately after the legislative session to set up the organizational structure. The key funding in the legislation provides for a $10 filing fee on all civil and criminal cases. The fee was estimated to generate $750,000 to $1,000,000 annually, and that prediction has been borne out.

The Supreme Court then created the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid, (WCLA), an organization charged with developing programs, implementing them, and overseeing the expenditure of the funds generated by the filing fees. The WCLA is led by a volunteer board that devoted countless hours to the complex tasks of creating an organization out of whole cloth. The WCLA has succeeded because it has attracted a strong staff of lawyers,

led by Director Angie Dorsch, who brought a wealth of knowledge gained in Texas' legal services programs.

The history of the Commission's work is chronicled in the White Paper (December 2009), and reports to the Supreme Court from December 2011 and July 2013. All three reports are available on the Supreme Court's website and are attached as **Appendix A** to this report.

II. Status of Legal Services Providers in the State

A. Wyoming Center for Legal Aid (WCLA)

The Wyoming Supreme Court created the WCLA pursuant to the Wyoming Civil Legal Service Act of 2010, Wyo. Stat. §§ 5-2-121 *et seq.*, and through an Order dated April 19, 2011. Over the past three years, the WCLA has worked with the Access to Justice Commission, the Wyoming State Bar, and various legal services providers to expand legal aid and *pro bono* programs across the state.

The WCLA recently issued its July 2014 Annual Report to the Wyoming Supreme Court. A copy is attached as **Appendix B**. The report highlights the accomplishments of the WCLA and describes the relationships that it has built with its grantees. During the year ending July 2014, the WCLA provided $789,000 in grant funding to four grantees: (1) Legal Aid of Wyoming; (2) Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; (3) Teton County Access to Justice Center; (4) Wyoming Children's Law Center. The grants to Legal Aid of Wyoming allowed for the expansion of its programs

to Rock Springs and Gillette, and the continued funding of the legal advice and intake hotline. As a result of these efforts, 3,497 low-income individuals received direct services from the WCLA and WCLA-funded programs. This was a 22% increase compared to fiscal year 2013.

The WCLA has also worked to build resources to assist self-represented litigants. The WCLA has expanded its self-help website with more topics, information, and forms with instructions. The site now has over 180 pages of legal information and resources and saw 19,660 visits in the past 12 months. Additionally, WCLA has organized monthly advice clinics to assist low-income individuals. *Pro bono* attorneys provide the advice at the clinics.

The WCLA, in conjunction with the Wyoming Supreme Court, also created a highly innovative approach to serving self-represented litigants through technology with the launch of the Wyoming Interactive Self-Help Center in June 2014. After two years of work, this time intensive project saw the first set of automated forms launched. The automation process walks the litigant user through a series of question and answer interviews to collect their information and at the end of the interview, the litigant has a complete and accurate packet of family law forms, ready to print and file. The WCLA continues work on the automation of additional family law pro se packets.

The WCLA has also focused on providing support to *pro bono* attorneys. The Center launched a *Pro Bono* Portal with resources and pleadings as well as a CLE

archive, litigation toolkit, and limited scope representation toolkit. WCLA hosted seven free CLEs on topics that commonly affect low-income clients. The WCLA hosts these CLEs to provide training to attorneys in these areas of law and encourage more attorneys to accept a *pro bono* case. The WCLA also partnered with the Wyoming State Bar, through the "I'll Do One" campaign, to recruit and train more *pro bono* attorneys.

Through a grant from the American Bar Association, the WCLA assisted the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission in setting up remote access sites in five rural Wyoming communities. Partnering community organizations in Cody, Douglas, Evanston, Newcastle, and Thermopolis provided the space and the WCLA provided the equipment to the sites. Each site was equipped with a computer with Skype capabilities. The remote access sites were used to host Skype clinics in order to match the need for legal advice and assistance in rural areas with *pro bono* attorneys willing to meet with the client remotely via Skype. The goal is to connect clients in these rural areas with "face-to-face" legal help without the travel and time expense.

In October 2013, WCLA also helped organize Wyoming's first year of statewide participation in National Pro Bono Week to bring attention to the importance of *pro bono* and recognition to the work of attorneys. During that week, 16 *pro bono* events were held throughout Wyoming. More than 50 attorneys participated and 120 individuals received free legal services at these *pro bono* events.

Due to the work at the WCLA, the WCLA staff was invited to present two sessions at the 2014 Equal Justice Conference in Portland, Oregon to share their experience with rural *pro bono* efforts.

B. Legal Aid of Wyoming

In 2013, Legal Aid of Wyoming faced cuts in excess of $80,000 most of which were the result of federal sequestration cuts. Despite these cuts, Legal Aid of Wyoming was able to increase services around the state, particularly in the southwest and northeast portion of the state, where Legal Aid was able to place full-time attorneys in Rock Springs and Gillette. Both the Rock Springs and Gillette offices are funded by a grant from the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid. By the end of 2013, Legal Aid of Wyoming had closed 4,181 individual cases. Of those cases, 170 went to trial and 69 cases involved veterans.

In 2014, funding stabilized somewhat and Legal Aid of Wyoming was able to fine tune its services around the state. Legal Aid's Hotline has been a great success in providing much needed legal assistance. The Hotline provides direct access to an attorney five days per week and allows clients to call in, be screened for conflicts, income and case type and speak to an attorney about their particular issue immediately. The Hotline has access to two full-time Spanish speaking staff members for translation services as needed. The hotline is funded by a grant from the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid. The cases that need extended services are referred to Legal Aid's weekly case review meeting

where the cases receive another screening for services and are assigned to a staff attorney, a contract attorney, referred to the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid to place with a *pro bono* attorney, or are ultimately rejected. At the end of August 2014, Legal Aid of Wyoming had closed 3,461 cases, of which 240 went to trial. 112 of these cases involved veterans.

C. University of Wyoming College of Law Clinics: the U.W. Legal Services Program (UWLSP) and the U.W. Domestic Violence Legal Assistance Project (UWDVLAP)

Working with real clients with real problems allows law students to begin the lifelong process of becoming thoughtful, responsible, and reflective lawyers. Clinic students gain critical skills in communication, information gathering, persuasion, and legal and factual analysis that prepare them to address the complex needs their clients will present. Law students enrolled in UWLSP and the UWDVLAP work hard to bridge the justice gap that exists in our state by providing comprehensive legal representation in civil, non-fee generating cases to people whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. The student interns handle a wide array of cases including divorce, child custody, domestic violence protection orders, stalking orders, guardian *ad litem* appointments in juvenile and domestic relations cases, consumer debt, public benefits and housing, return of property, veterans service benefits claims and immigration issues. Law students represent children or their parents in child abuse and neglect cases, termination of parental rights, children in need of supervision and delinquency actions.

In addition, clinic students in the UWDVLAP travel to the Wyoming Women's Center for intake on civil, legal matters each semester and in the summer. Law students consistently report that the experience of working in a clinic opens their eyes to the need for social justice and impacts their commitment to provide *pro bono* assistance and to integrate public service into their practice, regardless of their career choice.

Wyoming Access to Justice Commission member Dona Playton continues her supervision of the UWDVLAP and in addition to representing victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence in a broad range of civil legal matters, students in her clinic also work on child welfare issues, including as Guardians *ad litem* in private as well as juvenile court cases, as attorneys for parents in child welfare matters, and in termination of parental rights actions. Danielle Cover is an incoming faculty director of the UWLSP and is excited to continue to lead the clinic towards expanded services to low income individuals throughout the state with primary focuses on family law, public benefits, including social security, consumer/debtor protection and veterans' service matters.

D. Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (WCADVSA)

The WCADVSA has provided various services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault since 1987. All fifty states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S.

territories have domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions similar to the WCADVSA.

Coordinating with UWLSP and the UWDVLAP, the WCADVSA has provided direct civil legal services for many years and since 1998 has advised and represented over 4,500 clients who could not afford legal services from other attorneys. The WCADVSA employs staff attorneys who work on a variety of civil cases. The WCADVSA receives significant grant funding from the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid.

III. Commission's Strategic Plan (2015-2020)

The Commission continues to serve a vital function in the State. It reflects the commitment of the State's court system, led by the Wyoming Supreme Court, to the provision of services to the low-to-moderate income population. The active involvement of practicing Justices and Judges is not of small import. When the Courts are involved, practicing lawyers pay attention. When mountains or even small hills need to be moved Justices and Judges generally find a way to move them. The general public in this country and citizens of our State have a great deal of respect for the rule of law, and Justices and Judges embody the virtues of our system of justice. The programs the Commission has initiated and supported would not be where they are without the active support of the Wyoming Judiciary.

We propose a targeted five-year strategic plan, covering 2015-2020. Under this plan, the Commission will address the following issues and initiatives:

<u>Initiative #1.</u> **Continued Support for Legal Services in Wyoming**

The Commission's primary purpose is to maintain the widest view possible of the needs of the low-to-moderate income population, to track the progress of the programs that are providing services and to create and support new programs when needed. The broad experience and variety of views represented on the Commission are an invaluable resource to Wyoming. Addressing the needs of the low-to-moderate income population takes many different approaches, and the Commission can keep its collective eyes on what works, what is being developed in other states and what Wyoming might be doing to enhance the opportunities to serve the needs.

The Commission should support continued and stable funding for legal services. To this end, the Commission will monitor the stability of current state funding generated from filing fees, support efforts to increase funding for legal services and access to justice initiatives, and explore additional methods to increase funding including *pro hac vice* fees, *cy pres* awards, as well as other potential sources.

The Commission will increase communication concerning the need for and use of funds.

The Commission recognizes there is a continuing need for the expansion of legal services across Wyoming. The need for legal services in the State continues to outweigh available services. Although several thousand people receive advice and brief assistance from legal aid programs, only a small fraction receive extended services or full

representation of an attorney. There also continues to be areas of the state that are underserved. The Commission will investigate and raise public awareness of this issue.

The Commission will investigate various methods for delivery of legal services over the next five years, including:

- **Alternative models for delivery of legal services.** The Teton County Access to Justice Center, which receives funding from the WCLA, is an example of an organization providing self-help legal resources, as well as limited direct legal services to low- to moderate income citizens of Teton County. The program also coordinates *pro bono* and reduced fee representation in the County. The Commission believes the Teton County program may be a model for other possible programs across the state. The Commission will investigate cost-effective uses of such alternative models of service delivery.

- **Development of resources for self-represented litigants in Wyoming Courts:**

  a. Develop education and training opportunities for judges and clerks focusing on strategies for working with self-represented litigants;

  b. Support the continued development of self-help information and resources for self-represented litigants;

c. Support development of additional Supreme Court pro se forms to ensure that self-represented litigants have adequate pleadings;

d. Support the creation of additional interactive (automated) *pro se* forms in order to help self-represented litigants to more easily and accurately complete court forms;

e. Continue support for attorneys providing limited scope representation to assist pro se litigants; and

f. Investigate successful programs in other states including Arizona and Washington.

- **The Commission will form working groups to identify and address barriers to access to justice presented in:**

  a. Family law;

  b. Housing law;

  c. Consumer law; and

  d. Disability/language barriers.

- **The Commission will identify and propose methods for reaching currently underserved segments of the Wyoming population including, potentially, Native Americans and elderly citizens.**

- **The Commission will investigate underserved areas of the state.**

- **The Commission will seek to strengthen ties with the University of Wyoming colleges and departments with connections to low-income populations, in addition to the College of Law.**

<u>Initiative #2.</u> Communications and Public Awareness: Inside and Outside Wyoming's Legal Community

The Commission believes it should strengthen communication and public awareness about legal services with a focus on three groups: 1) Wyoming's legal community including lawyers and judges; 2) Wyoming Legislators and other government leaders; and 3) the general public. The key communication issues include:

- Distinguishing and explaining the existing legal services providers including WCLA, Legal Aid of Wyoming, UWLSP, UWDVLAP and WCADVSA;

- Providing outlines for public presentations on legal services and access to justice issues that can be used by lawyers and local bar associations across the state;

- Emphasizing that access to justice is a necessary component of a healthy legal system; and

- Focusing on education about the existence and use of state funding for legal services.

A. Inside the Bar

The Commission is in a strong and unique position to increase awareness of access to justice and legal services issues with the Wyoming State Bar. Over the next five years, the Commission will develop a communications plan to inform all Wyoming lawyers and judges about the work of the WCLA, the Legal Aid of Wyoming, the U.W. law school clinics and other legal services providers. The Commission will consider working with the State Bar to create a regular feature in the *Wyoming Lawyer* magazine and will collaborate with stakeholders and supporters to increase awareness of access to justice issues.

Second, the Commission will institute a program to increase access to justice presentations to local bar associations. As a first step, the Commission will identify and establish contact with leaders of local bar associations.

Third, new Wyoming lawyers and the University of Wyoming College of Law should be focuses of the Commission's outreach activities. The Commission will seek to expand law school and young lawyer programs that increase the delivery of legal services to low-to-moderate income citizens. The Commission will: 1) support the development and expansion of law school *pro bono* programs; and 2) support the development of

mentorship programs for young attorneys and other tools to encourage newly licensed attorneys to take on *pro bono* cases in order to gain practical experience.

B. Wyoming Legislature and Other Government Leaders

The existing legal services organizations in the state have identified obstacles to access to justice present in Wyoming's legal system. As those programs grow, they are likely to identify additional barriers to access. The Commission is not an advocacy organization. However, the Commission is in a unique position to act as a clearinghouse to receive comments from legal services providers, legal services clients and others about barriers to access, and to communicate those concerns to the Legislature, judges and other government leaders.

C. Communication with All Wyoming Citizens

The Commission will assist in educating the public and government representatives about the importance of equal access to justice and the need for increased resources.

We believe all interested Wyoming citizens should be involved in our discussions about the need for legal services, but the public may also need basic education about the meaning of legal services. While we believe the public understands the work of the Public Defender's Office in criminal cases, there may not be an understanding of the types of cases handled by legal service providers.

The Commission held a series of successful town hall meetings around the state in 2009. We believe another round of statewide meetings would increase awareness and help identify access to justice issues faced by Wyoming citizens.

Finally, the Commission will look for opportunities to include access to justice and legal services issues as subtopics in statewide initiatives and discussions about the justice system. The Commission will contact programs like "You Be The Judge" and "iCivics" to determine if access to justice/legal services issues may be incorporated into their programs. In addition, the Commission will consider a high school lesson plan such as the one developed in Maryland to educate high school teachers on access to justice issues.

Initiative #3. **Inspiring *Pro Bono* Service by Wyoming Attorneys**

The Commission will develop and support *pro bono* programs and initiatives around the state.

The "I'll Do One" campaign, recently initiated with support from the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid and the Wyoming State Bar, is an example of a program designed to inspire *pro bono* service by Wyoming lawyers. The Commission will support programs like "I'll Do One" and will also research impediments lawyers face in providing *pro bono* services, and support changes to rules regulating the legal profession that encourage attorneys to provide *pro bono* services. The Commission will support and assist in

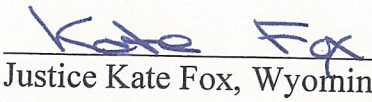
creating increased mentorship opportunities for *pro bono* attorneys taking a case outside their normal area of practice.

The Commission will strengthen its ties with existing partners including the State Bar and will look to identify and establish relationships with new partners across the state. This will be a component of the Commission's increased communication with Wyoming State Bar members (Initiative #2.A., above). The Commission will look for ways to explain the scope and benefits of *pro bono* services, investigate ways government attorneys may participate in *pro bono* cases, expand communications among State Bar members about citizens in need of legal services, and related issues.

IV. Conclusion

On December 16, 2008, the Wyoming Supreme Court established the Access to Justice Commission. For almost six years, the Commission has worked to promote access to justice, including access to legal services, across the State of Wyoming. Civil legal services are stronger today than they were in December 2008, but there remains an important role for the Access to Justice Commission. Our focus will be continued support for existing legal services providers, communication and education initiatives within and outside the legal community, and working to increase *pro bono* work by Wyoming lawyers.

Respectfully submitted:



Justice Kate Fox, Wyoming Supreme Court and
Chair, Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

On behalf of the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

Dated this 19th day of November, 2014.

V. Appendices

A. Commission's Prior Reports and White Paper

B. July 2014 Report of Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

APPENDIX A

INDIGENT CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES IN WYOMING

A REPORT TO GOVERNOR FREUDENTHAL AND

THE WYOMING LEGISLATURE

AND

A CALL TO ACTION TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE PROGRAM

Prepared by The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

E. James Burke, Chairman
Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court

December 14, 2009

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Hon. John St. Clair, Chief Judge, Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court
Hon. Scott W. Skavdahl, District Court Judge, Seventh Judicial District
Gen Tuma, District Court Clerk, Natrona County

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Appendix #1 – Summary of State Funding of Legal Services Across the Country

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(If your time is short please focus on pages 3–9 and 15-19)

Pulitzer prize winning author, David Shipler, in his most recent book, *The Working Poor: Invisible in America,* (2004, Alfred Knopf) illustrates how one problem for a poor person can impact others and produce a chain reaction that can plunge that person further into poverty and make them more dependent on government support to stay afloat. The timely provision of legal services, such as representing a tenant to get an apartment fixed, would help to avert this chain of calamities.

> "A run-down apartment can exacerbate a child's asthma, which leads to a call for an ambulance, which generates a medical bill that cannot be paid, which ruins a credit record, which hikes the interest rate on an auto loan, which forces the purchase of an unreliable used car, which jeopardizes a mother's punctuality at work, which limits her promotions and earning capacity, which confines her to poor housing."

We know who needs help getting legal services in Wyoming. They are the elderly or the disabled, struggling to deal with Social Security and Medicare, or in need of a guardianship or will. They are families living in sub-standard housing, who need help with a landlord. They are hard working families, who may have lost their jobs in the recession, thereby losing their health insurance, and who have suddenly been crushed under the weight of uninsured medical costs. They are young mothers, perhaps caught in abusive relationships, who need help with protection orders, divorce and custody proceedings. And they are children, who may simply need the protection of the law and a respite from strife. There are tens of thousands of people in Wyoming who cannot get the legal services they need.[1]

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[1] In 2008 the Census Bureau counts 48,776 people in Wyoming, 9.4% of the population, as living below the poverty level. This is based on a very strict definition of poverty that sets an income threshold for one person under 65 years old at $11,201. See: http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html, go to the American Community Survey. The definition of poverty is at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh08.html

In addition to helping desperate people, a well funded and organized civil legal services program for the indigent promotes respect for the rule of law, which underpins a law abiding and stable society. The law creates remedies and protections for all citizens, but significant numbers of poor people are unable to access those rights. What good is a protection order or child support order if the Mom or Dad cannot get into the courts to enforce it? Without meaningful access to the courts, through the assistance of competent counsel, people give up and conclude that the rules of an organized society apply to others, not to them.

Wyoming has tried hard, over several decades, to provide a legal safety net to the indigent. Many people of enormous good will - lawyers, judges, county officials, state health officers, University and college employees and local volunteer agencies have tried to fill the gap. Some services, in some counties, are available. But the system is a patch work, a quilt missing many panels, and there are many parts of the state where legal services are unavailable to those who cannot afford a lawyer. The need is staggering. The Legal Services Corporation ("LSC") estimates that only one in five low income people who need help get assistance from a lawyer.[2]

The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission (ATJ) has proposed the creation of a statewide program that will be committed to providing a uniform level of high quality service to those in need. The Commission has drafted a statute which will be the basis of legislation that Senator Tony Ross will sponsor in the 2010 session, which starts on February 8, 2010. It is a program that will utilize multiple resources, State, Federal, County, private and volunteer, to attempt to knit together a comprehensive program. The ATJ Program proposed here has the following features:

- A program based on the ABA Principles of a State System for the Delivery of Legal Services to the Indigent.

- The statewide program will be funded from two sources, an initial $500,000 one time appropriation from the Legislature and a $10 filing fee increase on all cases filed in state district court and circuit courts. Both the one time appropriation and the filing fee increase will be subject to legislative approval in the 2010 session. All monies will be appropriated into the Supreme Court budget. The Supreme Court will be given the authority to operate the program or to contract with a Non-Profit (NP), with appropriate oversight and fiscal accountability. The $500,000 initial appropriation will be fully repaid to the general fund (in installments) by July 2014 from the court fees collected. The $10 fee is estimated to raise $1.5 million per year when fully implemented in Wyoming courts beginning July 1, 2010.

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[2] *Documenting the Justice Gap*, A Report of the Legal Services Corporation, p. 14 (2nd Ed., June 2007).

- Assuming the Supreme Court elects to contract for the operation of the program, it will then be operated by the ATJ NP. The Wyoming Bar Foundation, an existing 501(c)(3), is considering restructuring its programs in order to serve as the ATJ NP. The ATJ NP will:

  (a) coordinate with all programs that are currently providing legal services to the indigent, including the program funded by the Legal Services Corporation, the programs and clinics at the University College of Law, the guardian ad litem program operated by the State and the counties;

  (b) establish eligibility criteria for civil legal services to the indigent, which will be limited by statute to serving individuals and families that are at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines;

  (c) be a vehicle to provide funds to existing programs to extend their reach beyond their current funding sources, and hire or contract with lawyers and other professionals where necessary to provide direct representation to all qualified people;

  (d) operate a statewide single point of entry, or an equivalent mechanism for centralized ease of access;

  (f) coordinate with the Wyoming State Bar and other entities on private attorney involvement, pro bono legal services, and educational programs;

  (g) receive grants and donations and make grants for legal services to the poor;

  (h) establish uniform standards for the delivery of civil legal services to the indigent;

- The statewide program will be accountable at all levels for the expenditure of public and private funds.

If this program and funding is adopted by the 2010 Wyoming Legislature, Wyoming will join 48 other states who are helping the indigent obtain legal representation. As shown on the chart in Appendix 1, 28 of 50 states fund legal services, either wholly or partially, through filing fees and other court fees. Of the 48 states that provide funding for legal services, 26 distribute the funds through the judicial branch. The Commission's proposal thus puts Wyoming squarely in the mainstream of legal services programs around the country.

BRIEF RECENT HISTORY OF EFFORTS TO ADVOCATE FOR ATJ PROGRAMS AND PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICE IN WYOMING AND DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT SERVICES

Low income people living in rural areas are often overlooked in the delivery of legal services, despite the prevalence and persistence of poverty in these areas.[3] The rural nature of Wyoming, which makes it so appealing to its residents, also makes it expensive and difficult to provide legal services statewide. In addition, socio-cultural, economic and geographic barriers create difficulties for legal and victim service providers to identify and assist victims. Furthermore, any delivery system for legal services must adequately address cultural, language, and other physical and cognitive barriers of people needing to access such services, and must recognize the sociological, cultural and historical approaches to providing legal services to unserved and underserved populations, including Native Americans.

Although the number of legal issues for low-income people is large and the problems widespread, there are few legal resources to help them. The gap for affordable or free legal services in the state is larger than ever. Up to 80% of poor households that confront a legal need do so without legal assistance.[4] In Wyoming, statistics indicate that there may be as many as 70,000 individuals and families who would qualify for legal assistance under appropriate guidelines.[5] Applying the Legal Services Corporation's standards of "minimum access" of 2 lawyers for every 10,000 low income people, Wyoming should have at least 14 lawyers who are employed full time to provide these services.[6] Wyoming currently has five such attorneys.

Unlike those with adequate resources, low income people are denied access to our legal system far too often. For people who are surviving on a fixed or low income, legal assistance joins health care, child care, gasoline and suitable housing as a privilege that remains just out of reach. As the Legal Services Corporation observed,

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[3] A 2004 study by the Rural Research Center has found that the more rural the area, the higher the poverty rate. In fact, of the 400 counties nation-wide that have significant (above 20%) and persistent (over 5 decades) poverty levels, 95% are in rural counties. Wyoming is a federally designated rural state where 493,782 people inhabit 97,818 square miles; it is the ninth largest in size, but has the lowest population of the fifty states.

[4] *Available at* http://www.nasams.org/DMS/Documents/1173539417.81/WIreportfinalATJ.pdf.

[5] See footnote 1. With 48,776 Wyoming people in poverty in 2008, at the most stringent level of poverty definition, applying a slightly more expansive definition of up to 200% of the poverty guideline would certainly identify over 70,000 people in need of legal assistance for the indigent.

[6] *Documenting the Justice Gap*, A Report of the Legal Services Corporation, p. 1 (2nd Ed., June 2007). The LSC concluded that the standard for "necessary access" requires the country to increase its capacity to serve the low income population by five times the current capacity.

"[M]any who are eligible for help never seek it – they do not know they have a legal problem, do not know help is available, or do not know where to go for help." [7]

Providing adequate funding for legal services to those who would otherwise have none promotes access to the civil legal system and makes the administration of justice more efficient so that individuals are not forced to represent themselves. By funding civil legal assistance for low-income and vulnerable populations, many Wyoming residents would access doors to economic independence otherwise not attainable. For instance, an unrepresented party in a divorce action with children is at an extreme disadvantage when it comes to the division of assets and the determination of child support upon divorce. For many low-income citizens, appropriate and well-executed legal services mean the difference between poverty and self-sufficiency.[8] Currently, Wyoming is one of only two states that do not have a legislative or other specific state appropriation[9] to directly support general, civil legal aid for low-income individuals.[10]

States have studied the cost savings derived from having a program that provides legal representation to low income clients. Massachusetts concluded that there was more than a dollar for dollar leveraging of state investment. In a study of FY 07 the State spent $9,470,000 on legal services and reaped revenue/cost savings of $11,305,000.[11] These cost savings arise from a variety of mechanisms, including recovery of public benefits (such as Medicare and SSI), payment of child support and alimony, housing representation where clients succeed in staying in their homes as opposed to public shelters (or worse), battered women services, and assistance with tax and unemployment benefits.

Minnesota concluded in 2003 that Legal Aid programs saved the state money by:

- Securing over $9 million each year in child support orders and Federal disability payments;
- Leveraging over $10 million each year in Federal, United Way, and foundation funding, and private attorney financial support;

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[7] *Id,* Preface.

[8] *High Times in Wyoming: Reflecting the State's Values by Eliminating Barriers and Creating Opportunities for Women in the Equality State*. 7 Wyo. L. Rev. 295, 313 (2007).

[9] Some states, including Montana, allocate a portion of civil filing fees directly to the state's LSC-grantee.

[10] ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, http://www.nh.gov/judiciary/access/press/060508atjsupport.pdf. Alaska and Alabama have joined the ranks of states receiving state legislative funding, leaving only two states that do not receive state funding.

[11] Memo from the Director of Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation dated December 10, 2007, describing the cost savings to the Commonwealth resulting from Legal Assistance provided to low income clients. On file with the ATJ Commission.

- Saving government about $3.96 million in shelter subsidy costs.

In July 2006 the Legal Services Committee of the Wyoming State Bar drafted a White Paper on "Access to Justice in Wyoming." That document summarized the lack of centralized services for legal aid to the indigent and described the status of programs as of that date. The White Paper recommended that the Legislature fund a legal needs assessment and requested a $100,000 appropriation for that survey. The 2007 Legislature declined to fund the assessment.

The current ATJ Commission was formed by the Wyoming Supreme Court in December 2008. The Commission has undertaken a broad review of the current programs and opportunities for providing legal services to the poor. The Commission has had the benefit of the prior work of the State Bar as well as the efforts of many states to implement ATJ programs. For example, New Mexico undertook an extensive review of ATJ programs in that state and designed, funded and implemented a statewide system. That effort, however, took almost five years. The Wyoming ATJ Commission believes that it can learn from the programs in other states and dramatically shorten the amount of time required to get a system in Wyoming up and running. The Wyoming ATJ Commission has been guided by MLKing's admonition of the "fierce urgency of now."

In order to get information and perspectives on the need and provision of legal services in Wyoming, the ATJ Commission held five public hearings - Cheyenne on July 27, 2009, Evanston on September 14, 2009, Riverton on October 29, 2009, Casper on November 9, 2009 and Gillette on November 10, 2009. The public hearings were very well attended and generated substantial media coverage. The costs of the hearings have been covered by a grant from the Wyoming Federal District Court Judges. Videos of the hearings have been prepared, which provide compelling testimony of the need for a statewide program. A short (30 minute) summary video is also being prepared and will be available by mid-January.

Wyoming's current efforts to serve the legal needs of the indigent are fragmented, and legal services, such as they are in December 2009, are provided in a number of different ways. The federal Legal Services Corporation makes grants to organizations around the country to provide legal services to those who cannot afford them. As with any Federal program, the LSC grants come with many limitations and strings attached, including federal oversight of the quality and operation of the programs.

The current LSC recipient agency is Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc.(LAWyo). At the Casper public hearing Ray Macchia, the Executive Director of LAWyo, said that his office has received more than 900 applications for assistance since it opened early in 2009. However, the program has had to turn away 80% - 90% of the applicants for a number of reasons, including the fact that they make more than 125% of the federal poverty guidelines and that their cases do not fall within the priority criteria that is the basis of the federal funding. If a person makes more than $10.00 per hour and works full time they will not qualify for LAWyo's services.

LAWyo has an office in Cheyenne staffed by two lawyers and support staff and an office in Casper that was opened in September 2009 and is staffed by one lawyer and a secretary. LAWyo opened an office in Lander in Fremont County in November 2009 and plans to operate a satellite office in Ft. Washakie to serve the Wind River Indian Reservation, and the indigent population in the central part of Wyoming. It has hired one lawyer and one tribal advocate to provide these services in Fremont County as of November 11, 2009.

Currently, LAWyo and the two legal services clinics at the University of Wyoming College of Law are limited to representing low income people in the state who qualify under the federal guidelines as "indigent" clients.[12] Indigent has been deemed for purposes of legal assistance in our state to be 125% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG)[13] even though academic and government experts in this field agree that measures of poverty like the FPG are outmoded and many urge adoption of a self sufficiency standard instead. Unfortunately, Wyoming's existing providers are unable to assist the vast majority of those who do qualify under the FPG, leaving a substantial number of low income people unable to qualify for legal assistance but also unable to hire a private attorney. Therefore, without more resources, the focus of the existing programs remains on the poorest of the poor.

The existing programs provide the following types of services. These services are only available in certain locations, and many parts of state have no services, requiring clients to travel long distances if they can find a provider willing to help them.

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[12] R. Sup. Ct. of Wyo. Providing Org. and Gov. of the Bar Assoc. and Attorney at Law of the State of Wyo. 12, *available at* http://courts.state.wy.us/CourtRules_Entities.aspx?RulesPage=OrganizationAndGovernmentOfWyoBarAssociation.xml

[13] *See e.g.*, http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/self-help/no_fee.htm.

Legal Services By Agency

Agency	Legal Aid of Wyo	Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault	UW Legal Services	UW Domestic Violence Legal Assistance	Casper College Referral Program	Protection & Advocacy
Types of Case						
Divorce	X	X	X	X	X	
Child Custody/Visitation	X	X	X	X		
Child Support		X	X	X		
Landlord/Tenant	X	X	X	X		
Immigration		X	X	X		
Civil Sexual Assault		X		X		
Bankruptcy	X					
DV Protection Orders	X	X	X	X		
Stalking Protection Orders	X	X	X	X		
Guardianships	X		X	X		
Housing	X		X	X		
Employment	X					
Consumer Finance	X				X	
Establishment of Paternity		X	X	X		
Income Benefits (food stamps, TANF, WIC, etc.)	X		X			
Simple Wills	X		X	X	X	
ADA	X					X
Representation of Ind. With Traumatic Brain Injury			X	X		X
Representation of SSI/SSDI Recipients in Employment Claims	X					X
IDEA and IEPs						X
Advice Only	X					
Pro Se Assistance	X	X	X	X	X	

University of Wyoming Legal Services Program and the University of Wyoming DV Legal Assistance Project

For over two decades, poor and underserved clients have been able to access legal representation through the College of Law's clinical programs. Clients are often referred to these programs through local domestic violence programs, private attorneys, County bar associations, former clients, and judges. Under Wyoming Court Rules, third year law students are able to provide direct representation to clients in a variety of settings while under the supervision of experienced attorneys.[14] Knowledgeable faculty members along with enthusiastic and committed students collaborate to make law school clinics a valuable community resource.

The clinics at the law school are funded through three separate sources. The University of Wyoming pays the salaries and benefits of the Faculty Supervisor, John M. Burman and the Assistant Faculty Supervisor, Dona Playton. The clinics have been fortunate in the past to receive funding from the Wyoming State Bar Foundation's IOLTA Grant Program which helps pay for overhead expenses, including telephone charges, office supplies, postage and travel. The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault contributes funds for the student director of the DV Clinic, including some office supplies.

Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc.

Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc. (LAWyo) is the current legal services agency in Wyoming funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation. It has replaced the prior statewide program, which was not successful. LAWyo attorneys handle civil, non-fee generating cases, including domestic relation cases. Potential clients must qualify under Federal Poverty Income Guidelines based on household income. The geographical location of the potential client and case are taken into consideration when determining whether adequate resources exist to handle the matter effectively.

Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Legal Assistance to Victims Project

The Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault's (WCADVSA) Legal Assistance to Victims (LAV) Project is a multi-jurisdictional legal services project that provides effective, direct legal representation to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking statewide in civil legal cases pertaining to the abuse.

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[14] Rule 12, Law Students Right to Practice Law, Rules of the Supreme Court of Wyoming Providing for the Organization and Government of the Bar Association and Attorneys at Law of the State of Wyoming (1989)., *available at* http://courts.state.wy.us/CourtRules_Entities.aspx?RulesPage=OrganizationAndGovernmentOfWyoBarAssociation.xml.

In collaboration with Wyoming's twenty-four local domestic violence and sexual assault (DVSA) programs, the Wyoming State Bar, the Wyoming State Bar Foundation, the University of Wyoming College of Law, and WCADVSA, attorneys represent victims in legal proceedings directly related to a client's experience of violence which are likely to increase the victim's safety and security, including child support, child custody, and divorce proceedings including increasing knowledge and capacity to handle civil sexual assault and immigration cases. LAV is federally funded and has experienced dramatic decreases in its funding each year for the past several grant cycles. The number of attorneys will drop from two to one in 2010, as a result of a federal budget cut to the WCADVSA grant application.

Casper College Paralegal Program

The Casper College Paralegal Program provides its students with experiences in the legal community through volunteer work with actual clients under the supervision of a pro bono attorney. The types of cases they are able to handle include simple wills, divorces, name changes, and landlord/tenant issues in Casper, Wyoming. While there is no criteria for income, the pro bono attorney will likely decline a case if a client has the ability to pay. There are currently 10 pro bono attorneys who are willing to accept/supervise cases.

Cases are accepted in the Fall on a first come, first serve basis. Paralegal/ graduate students perform intake interviews, draft the work product under the supervision of one of the 10 pro bono attorneys, and perform any other task the supervising attorney or manager assigns. The program accepts 30 cases each semester. All funding is provided by Casper College.[15]

Protection & Advocacy

Protection and Advocacy (P & A) employs attorneys and other professional staff who provide a variety of services for individuals with disabilities. There are several topic-specific programs within the agency focusing on such issues as mental illness, social security benefits, voter accessibility, and technology assistance.

The types of cases handled by P & A are civil matters directly related to the individual's developmental disability. These may include such issues as abuse and neglect investigations in institutions, special education rights, denial of due process in treatment, placement or review, and right to services delivered in a non-discriminatory fashion.

There are several criteria that are weighed when accepting a particular case. P & A will consider the merits of the claim and availability of resources, the ability to advocate for one's self, whether services are available elsewhere, and determine if the case falls within a Developmental Disability Program priority area. Furthermore, the case must meet P & A policies and procedures.

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[15] For more information, contact Mary Kubichek, Director (307)268-2618.

In order to be eligible for P & A services one must have a developmental disability that is severe and chronic. This impairment must have occurred before the client was 22 years old and it must limit functional capacities in three or more activities related to self-care, communication and independent living. There are no income requirements for eligibility for assistance and the funding is federal.[16]

Guardians *ad Litem* Program

This program appoints attorneys (GALs) to represent children in certain types of dependency court cases. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 1974 requires that "in every case involving an abused or neglected child which results in a judicial proceeding a guardian *ad litem* shall be appointed to represent the child in such proceedings."[17] This requirement is a prerequisite for states to receive federal grant funds for use in prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect; therefore, it is not income-determinative.

In accordance with CAPTA, GALs are appointed by the court for children in abuse/neglect, children in need of supervision (CHINS), termination of parental rights and sometimes delinquency cases.

When a GAL is appointed through the state's GAL Program in the types of cases listed above, the state and county pay for the representation. Eligibility is not income determinative and all funding is through a state appropriation with a county contribution for GAL-appointment.[18]

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[16] For more information, contact 320 West 25th Street, 2nd floor, Cheyenne, WY 82001; (307)632-3496 wypanda@wypanda.com.

[17] http://www.census.gov/popest/states/tables/NST-EST2008-01.csv.

[18] For more information, contact Stacey Obrecht, 2020 Carey Ave., Suite 201, Mezzanine Level, Cheyenne, WY 82002; (307)777-7480, sobrec1@state.wy.us; jsimen@state.wy.us.

PRINCIPLES OF A STATE SYSTEM FOR THE DELIVERY OF LEGAL AID TO THE INDIGENT

Adopted from the ABA Principles

A Wyoming system for the delivery of civil legal services to the indigent will achieve its goals if it:

1. Provides services to the low-income and vulnerable populations in the State.
2. Provides a full range of services in all forums.
3. Provides services of high quality in an effective and cost efficient manner.
4. Provides services in sufficient quantity to meet the need by seeking and making the most effective use of financial, volunteer, and in-kind resources dedicated to those services.
5. Fully engages all entities and individuals involved in the provision of those services.
6. Makes services fully accessible and uniformly available throughout the state.
7. Engages with clients and populations eligible for civil legal aid services in planning and in obtaining meaningful information about their legal needs, and treats clients, applicants and those receiving services with dignity and respect.
8. Engages and involves the judiciary and court personnel in reforming rules, procedures and services to expand and facilitate access to justice.
9. Is supported by the organized bar and judiciary that is providing leadership and participating with legal aid providers, law schools, the executive and legislative branches of government, the private sector and other appropriate stakeholders in ongoing and coordinated efforts to support and facilitate access to justice for all.
10. Engages in statewide planning an oversight of the system for the delivery of civil legal aid to coordinate and support the delivery of services and to achieve the principles set forth above.

Description of the Organization and Funding of a Statewide Program

The ATJ Commission has learned from discussions with ABA officials, who are experts on legal services delivery, that the most successful state programs are those that are closely allied with the Judiciary. This is the model we recommend for Wyoming.

The statewide program will be funded through the Wyoming Supreme Court's budget with a one time appropriation of $500,000 (to be repaid) and an increase of $10 in the court filing fees for all cases, civil and criminal, in the district courts and circuit courts.

The Supreme Court will be given the authority to operate the statewide program or it may contract with a 501(c)(3) non-profit. The overall program will be organized on the ABA Principles of a State System for the Delivery of Legal Aid to the indigent. The program will have a broad oversight role to ensure the development of a statewide program and it will have a direct operational role to provide funding assistance to program to provide direct legal services to the indigent.

If the Supreme Court chooses to contract for the operation of the program one possibility is using the Wyoming Bar Foundation, an existing 501(c)(3) of the Wyoming State Bar. The Bar Foundation is considering whether it will restructure its current operations to undertake the role of the ATJ NP.

If the Supreme Court contracts for the operation of the program, as a first task the ATJ NP will establish uniform standards for eligibility to receive free or reduced cost legal services. One of the problems with the funding provided by the LSC is that the eligibility standards are so strict (individuals may make no more than $1100 per month, with $400 per month for each additional dependent), that many people who desperately need legal services must be turned away. The proposed legislation sets the eligibility standards at 200% of the federal poverty guidelines. Another issue is that there are no uniform guidelines for judicial determination of who should be allowed to proceed *in forma pauperis* or when lawyers should be appointed in circumstances where domestic violence may be present and several family members may need attorneys.

It will organize and operate a single point of entry to the program, or establish other operations that allow for simple and easy access to all programs. (see the discussion below).

Ensuring that there are opportunities for direct access to a lawyer is one of the key roles of the statewide program. Direct legal assistance requires the most resources, greatest time commitment and prioritization policies in order to maximize the resources to meet the greatest need. Direct legal assistance is not possible without adequate government involvement. A successful legal assistance program must have adequate oversight and access to training and resources necessary to provide high quality, effective and meaningful legal representation to eligible clients. Without the resources necessary, ad hoc direct representation runs the risk of not improving the lives of the

people served and further undermines public confidence in our legal system. Policies pertaining to direct legal representation must include a prioritization of the most pressing legal needs of clients, a client-centered approach to delivery, consistency and evaluation of the quality of legal assistance provided statewide.

The current system of direct legal services by the various providers in the states is not coordinated, is overextended and has large gaps. The ATJ NP will likely not be a direct recipient of federal funding from the LSC but will integrate the services of the existing providers: Legal Aid of Wyoming (the current LSC funded entity), the University of Wyoming College of Law Legal Clinics, and the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

The ATJ NP may have a role to provide financial assistance to these organizations, perhaps by providing direct funding to hire additional legal staff or serving as an over flow for certain demands. The statewide organization could also help provide training and other administrative support to these vital organizations.

The statewide organization will also work with the counties and the court system in the administration of the GAL program. This relationship initially might just be one of coordination of resources to ensure adequate coverage. As the statewide program evolves it may be desirable to let it have a more significant role in managing, overseeing and evaluating services provided by the counties.

The statewide organization will serve the role as evaluator for those programs that receive funds directly from it. It will coordinate with the State Bar on pro bono services provided by Bar members, and organize the contribution of individual lawyers from around the state, whether on a fee or pro bono basis. It will help provide training to lawyers in private practice and other service providers, such as the Casper Paralegal program.

The current federal LSC funding to LAWyo is about $695,000. That covers the cost of 4 lawyers, staff and office space and office costs for two offices in Cheyenne and Casper. The program has also set up an office in Fremont County to serve the Wind River Indian Reservation and the indigent population in that county. Depending on the model that is adopted, operating a statewide program, with full-time and contract lawyers serving all nine judicial districts, and including the existing resources of the LSC funding of LAWyo and the University of Wyoming College of Law, results in projected costs of $2.0 - $2.5 million. The new additional funding needed is $1.3 million to $1.8 million.

The ATJ Commission proposes that the State invest $500,000 for the period April 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. This initial appropriation will be repaid to the general fund by July 1, 2014. By July 1, 2011, the funds generated by the collection of $10 per case filed in the District Court should be sufficient, in combination with all other resources, to operate the program in a sustainable manner that does not require State general funds.

This proposal is simple in concept, but, of course, there are many details to work out. Filing fees for all cases, civil and criminal, will be increased $10, with the money designated to fund legal services for the indigent and included in the budget of the Supreme Court. This will require legislative approval in the 2010 session. The Supreme Court has the authority to increase filing fees by court order, but any increase in fees goes to the general fund unless it is legislatively directed, hence the need for legislative authorization. It is estimated that such a fee increase would generate about $1.5 million per year if a $10 fee is imposed.

The ATJ Commission supports funding for civil legal services by an increase in court filing fees for a number of reasons. Wyoming's filing fees are very low in comparison to other states. The current fee is $60 in the District Courts (which includes the mandatory court automation fee), $30 in the Circuit Courts. The average fee across the country is about $150. The ATJ Commission is working with the District Court Clerks to address these issues.

In addition, fees are obviously not tax revenue. They are paid by those who use the court system and who benefit from a well organized and funded legal system.

Using court filing fees provides a permanent stream of revenue that does not affect the State's general fund. Although the Legislature will have to appropriate the funds from the indigent civil legal services account every two years, just as happens with the court automation fee, the program will not be a drain on the state's budget.

Also, using court fees imposes a limitation on the size of the program and prevents the development of an ever expanding bureaucracy. The court fee will only raise a certain amount of money each year, and the program administrators will know the financial constraints under which they will have to operate. Because the program will not have recourse to the general fund, it will reach its optimum size and grow no further, unless sources of funds outside the court fees are secured (private grants, federal funding).

Getting the program started in July 2010 will require some initial start up funding. Because the fees are only collected monthly and will need to be appropriated back to the Supreme Court budget in 2011, the $500,000 one time appropriation is essential to get the program underway and not miss almost two full years. A portion of these funds ($75,000) are proposed to be available on April 1, 2010, which will allow the statewide program to get started and organized for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. After that date sufficient fees should be generated so that the program is self sustaining and will not require any additional general fund appropriation, nor require raising filing fees, for at least the next couple of biennium.

The Supreme Court is used as an oversight and a granting authority because of its paramount role in the administration of the justice system in Wyoming. The Supreme Court administers funds derived from court filing fees for the court automation projects. Because of this role it has experienced personnel who can manage these accounts and audit the expenditures.

Below is the proposed language from the LSO draft of the bill (December 7, 2009) that will create the "civil indigent legal services account." The bill also describes the powers and duties of the program and Section 3 describes the appropriation.

5-2-121. Indigent civil legal services account created; purposes.

(a) There is created the indigent civil legal services account to be administered by supreme court. The account shall receive all funds paid to the state treasurer from the court filing fee or costs imposed to support indigent civil legal services, pursuant to W.S. 2-2-401, 5-2-202, 5-3-205, 5-3-206, 5-6-108, 5-6-204, 5-6-303, 5-9-135, 5-9-144, 6-10-102 and 6-10-103. Funds within the account shall be used by supreme court for the establishment and operation of a statewide program to provide civil legal services to indigent individuals within the state. Interest accruing to this account shall be retained in the account and shall be expended for the purposes provided in this section. No funds shall be expended from the account until the legislature appropriates the funds.

(b) For the fiscal biennium commencing July 1, 2012 and each fiscal biennium thereafter, the supreme court shall include in its proposed budget a proposed biennial budget and plan for the account. Each biennial plan and proposed budget shall be submitted to the joint appropriations committee and the joint judiciary interim committee. The joint judiciary interim committee may submit any comments it deems appropriate to the joint appropriations committee.

(c) The supreme court shall conduct internal audits of the account on a biennial basis beginning July 1, 2011.

5-2-122. Indigent civil legal services program created; purposes.

(a) An indigent civil legal services program is created to be operated in accordance with the following:

(i) The supreme court shall develop a comprehensive plan for funding a statewide program of civil legal services to the indigent from the account. By June 1, 2010 the court shall submit to the joint appropriations committee and the joint judiciary interim committee an initial plan of operation for the program, for the committees' review and comment. By November 1, 2010, the court shall submit to the joint appropriations committee and joint judiciary interim committee a final plan and a proposed appropriation for the expenditure of funds from the account for the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. The joint judiciary interim committee may submit any comments it deems appropriate to the joint appropriations committee.

(ii) The supreme court may operate the program directly, or contract with a non-profit organization to operate the program;

(iii) The court shall adopt rules and regulations for the program prior to implementation;

(iv) The rules shall establish eligibility standards for the receipt of services. The eligibility standards shall require that services be funded from the account only for individuals whose total household income does not exceed two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty level;

(v) The program shall be operated in coordination with other publicly or privately funded programs providing legal services to the indigent with a goal of developing an integrated system for the delivery of indigent civil legal services on a statewide basis by July 2011;

(vi) The program shall be coordinated with the Wyoming State Bar and other entities on private attorney involvement, pro bono civil legal services, and educational programs;

(vii) For funding under the program, the program shall establish a statewide single point of entry for indigent civil legal services or establish other operations that allow for simplified and easily available access to the program;

(viii) The program may grant funds to existing eligible programs to assist in providing services and may be used to enhance the services that the existing programs are providing;

(ix) The program may receive grants and donations which shall be deposited to the account;

(x) The program shall establish uniform standards for the delivery of legal services and operate programmatic and fiscal management programs to ensure accountability for all funds.

Section 3.

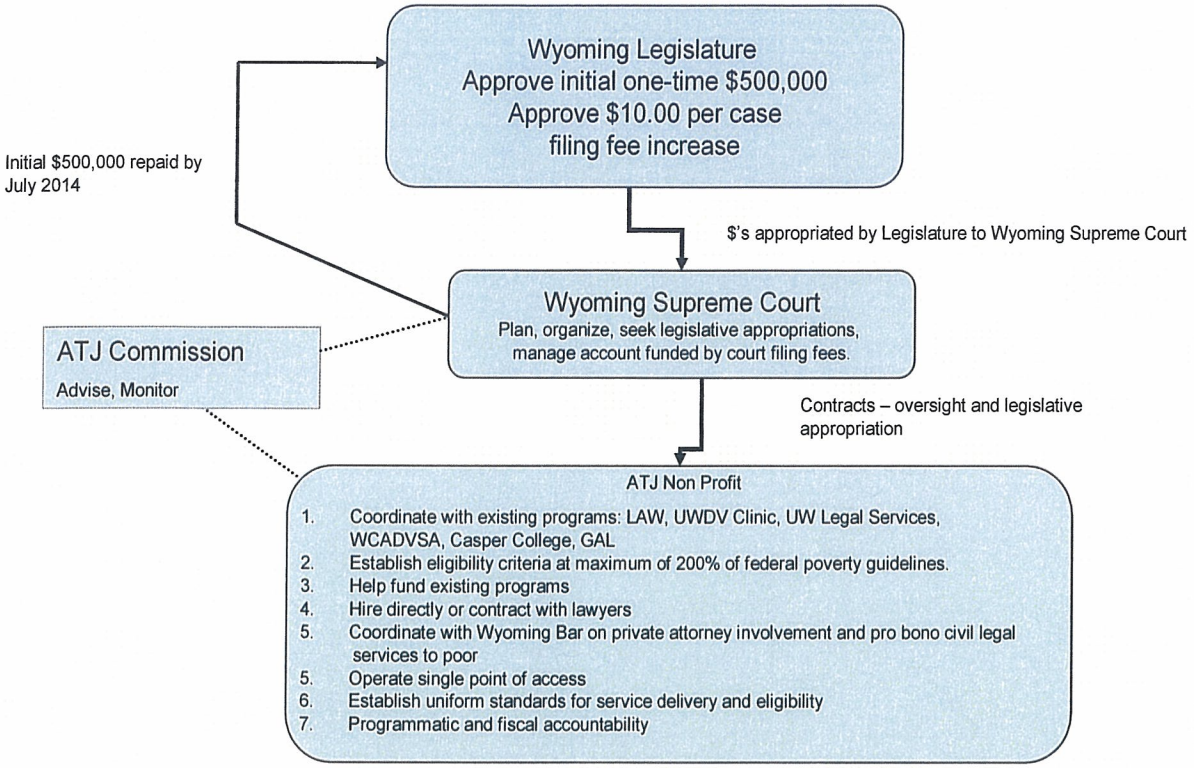
(a) There is appropriated from the general fund to the supreme court five hundred thousand dollars ($500,000.00). This appropriation shall be used by the supreme court to operate the indigent civil legal services program for the period July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Of this appropriation not more than seventy-five thousand dollars ($75,000) may be expended between April 1, 2010 and June 30, 2010 to fund the initial start-up and organization of the program. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this appropriation shall not be transferred or expended for any other purpose and any unexpended, unobligated funds remaining from this appropriation shall revert as provided by law on June 30, 2011. Beginning July 1, 2011, all funding for the indigent civil legal services program shall come from the account created by W.S. 5-2-121. Commencing July 1, 2012, the state treasurer shall transfer funds from the indigent civil legal services account to repay to the general fund the initial five hundred thousand dollar ($500,000.00) appropriation. The transfers shall be made quarterly in equal amounts as necessary to fully repay the appropriation by June 30, 2014.

Summary of Court Filing Fees in Wyoming

Note: All filing fees collected by the District Courts are remitted to the County Treasurer for the County general fund, except the court automation fee.
The filling fees collected by the Circuit Courts are remitted to the State Treasurer.
The court automation fee is remitted by all courts directly to the State Treasurer for deposit in the judicial systems account.
Filing fees collected by Cities and Towns are remitted to the City or Town Treasurer.
A proposed indigent civil legal services fee would be remitted by all courts to the State Treasurer for deposit in a supreme court account.

Court	Fees
Probate W.S. 2-2-401	Filing fee - $50.00 Inventory fees Court Automation fee - $10.00
Supreme Court 5-2-202	Filing fee - $75 (By Court order, 5/9/2000) Court Automation fee - $10.00
Appellate filing fees for District Courts, Circuit Courts, Municipal Courts	Filing fee - $50.00 (By Court order, 6/27/2000) Court Automation fee - $10.00
District Court 5-3-206	Filing fee - $50.00 Court automation fee - $10.00 Various incidental fees
District Court fee for transcripts for cases appealed to the Supreme Court. 5-3-206	Transcript fee - $50.00 Court automation fee - $10.00
City or Town Courts 5-6-108; 5-6-204; 5-6-303	Filing fee - $10.00 Court automation fee - $10.00 (if provided by City or Town ordinance).
Circuit Courts 5-9-135; 5-9-144	Filing fee $20.00 Filing fee in small claims court is $10.00 Court automation fee - $10.00
Criminal cases – court automation fee collected 6-10-102; 6-10-103	For all felonies – Court automation fee $10.00 For all misdemeanors – Court automation fee $10.00
Court automation fee is created by W.S. 5-2-120.	
Indigent civil legal services fee to be created by new W.S. 5-2-121.	

Access to Justice Statewide Program



Elements of the Proposed Operation of a Statewide System

Below is a discussion of the types of programs and projects that could be within the management purview of a statewide organization.

Assistance to Veterans

Veterans have special legal needs and the program will seek to address them, particularly for veterans who have returned from deployment in Iraq and Afghanistan and those who have been wounded. Private attorneys are not allowed to charge a fee for veteran's disability claims, so many of these service men and women are unable to get representation once they leave the service. Veterans may not be fully informed about their rights or the benefit programs available to them. Through a well operated civil legal services program for the indigent we can avoid leaving out of the system those who have responded to the call of their country.

Statewide Legal Information and Resource Website

Within the legal services community, "statewide websites" refer to websites that provide a central portal of state-specific legal information intended to assist low-income persons and the advocates and pro bono attorneys who represent them. It is a useful mechanism to inform low-income persons throughout the state of their legal rights and responsibilities. These websites, originally developed with funding from the LSC[19], seek to collaborate with the entire statewide justice community to provide a comprehensive source of high quality legal information, referrals to legal assistance, and resources to assist advocates assisting low-income clients.

Statewide websites include three primary components:

1. A public website designed to provide low-income persons with accurate, easy-to-understand information on relevant legal issues. These public websites also provide information on the available legal services in the state and where and how to access those services.

2. An advocate website, generally password protected, where legal service staff shares legal research, documents and communicate on a statewide level.

3. A portion of the advocate website dedicated to assisting pro bono attorneys with resources to support their representation of low-income clients.

LSC has funded statewide websites in 54 states and territories.[20] The majority of these websites are built using one of two templates: LawHelp[21], a website template

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[19] *See* http://www.lsc.gov/

[20] *See* tig.lsc.gov/presentations/SWEBinpractice.ppt at p. 5

developed by Pro Bono Net[22] or the Open Source Template, developed by Kaivo[23]. A listing of all the public statewide websites is available at LawHelp.

The Internet has become a central place for Americans to find information. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project[24], an estimated 77% of Americans use the Internet (at least occasionally).[25] Studies also show that approximately 57% of American adults making less than $30,000 per year use the internet, regardless of whether they have a computer in the home.[26] Use of the Internet cuts across all income, race and education levels.[27]

Additionally, Americans are increasingly using the Internet to seek legal assistance. In 2005, the LawHelp national, individual, and program sites received nearly 2.5 million combined visits, a 55 percent increase over 2004.[28] Lawyer and advocate support sites received more than 400,000 visits.[29] In 2005, OST public and advocate sites had 2.7 million visits (a 42% increase over 2004), meaning there were over 5 million visits to the statewide website network in 2005.[30]

Maintaining a centralized website has several other advantages, as well. First, it will enable individuals to find the answers to legal questions themselves, without having to go through the long process of applying to a provider for services and potentially being waitlisted or denied. Second, it requires minimal expenditures of time, travel, and money to maintain and update. Third, it is sustainable—the website is an autonomous unit that can operate largely independent of future funding or staffing issues and simply requires periodic updates and revisions. The centralized technology

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[21] *See* http://www.lawhelp.org/.

[22] *See* http://www.probono.net/

[23] *See* http://www.kaivo.com/TIG

[24] http://www.pewinternet.org/

[25] **Pew/Internet Study Finds Most Americans Get Their Answers From The Internet,** ***available at*** http://searchengineland.com/pewinternet-study-finds-most-americans-get-their-answers-from-the-internet-13028

[26] Information from Joyce Raby, presenter at the 2009 Equal Justice Conference. Her email address is: jaraby@gmail.com.

[27] *See* http://www.lsntap.org/bookshelf?tid=125&name=Trends%20in%20Technology%20Use. This section contains statistical information about who uses online resources.

[28] http://www.lsntap.org/sites/lsntap.org/files/Impact%20of%20Statewide%20Websites%20on%20Service%20Delivery.pdf.

[29] *Id.*

[30] *Id.*

system allows legal aid providers to simultaneously learn from what other providers have already accomplished while saving time and money.[31]

Prior to losing its funding, Wyoming Legal Services had a website in place hosted by "probono.net," which provides a powerful customizable platform.[32] The current website is the holdover from Wyoming Legal Services and must be audited for accuracy. This will ultimately require a total overhaul of the site. While the requisite contract with the probono.net team does not require renegotiation, probono.net requires a yearly fee of $6,000 which is currently past due.[33] Probono.net also comes equipped with an online password-protected system that maintains a database of pleadings, data on potential clients, and other requisite data for attorneys who desire to take cases *pro bono*. As such, a centralized website can reduce the temporal and financial burdens on both low-income clients and the providers of legal aid while simultaneously increasing overall coverage to the entire state.

Technology

Technology allows legal service providers to connect with many people in need, both sustainably and affordably. Technology is a critical aspect of a delivery system that will assist in lessening geographical barriers in Wyoming. It can be used to provide training to legal providers, resource sharing, E-Newsletters, webinars[34], podcasting, Twitter, Facebook[35] and other multi-media outreach, including video conferencing, remote computer access, and a web page with community legal education, pro se information and materials, and other appropriate legal information.

Assisting Self-Represented Parties

A major reason for the increase in self-representation is lack of financial resources. Furthermore, because of a lack of funding for legal services, many providers are forced to turn away eligible applicants in order to maximize resources. It is not only indigent people, but working and middle class individuals unable afford to hire private attorneys who also turn to *pro se* or self represented resources.

Cases involving self-represented litigants often require significantly more time from judges and court staff; they put judges and court staff in the difficult and

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[31] http://philanthropy.com/free/articles/v21/i09/09003601.htm

[32] http://www.wyominglawhelp.org

[33] Information provided by Alison Paul of Montana Legal Services, the agency that LSC has sought to provide support to the current and incoming LSC grantee in Wyoming.

[34] *See* www.lsntap.org and www.gotowebinar.org for ideas.

[35] As the largest social network, Facebook can allow for syndicated newsfeeds or target emails to search for attorneys to handle pro bono referrals, which could also be utilized on LinkedIn, a social network for professionals.

sometimes stressful position of trying to deal fairly with self-represented parties without compromising neutrality; they create ethical and practical challenges for counsel in cases where one side is represented and the other is not; and the inability of some self-represented litigants to understand and comply with court rules and procedures may make it impossible for their cases, however worthy, to be decided on the merits.[36]

Given the current economic downturn, there is every reason to expect that still more individuals will find it necessary to bring or defend civil cases of great personal importance involving family, housing, employment, and financial issues without the benefit of legal counsel.[37] The issue has become more prevalent over the years as costs of legal representation increase and the availability of affordable legal representation decreases.

The increase in self-represented litigants in civil matters has profound effects on ensuring meaningful access to justice. The good news is that many people can competently handle their own legal affairs *pro se* if provided adequate assistance. In recognition of this, Wyoming has taken the first major step in assisting self-represented litigants by adopting standardized forms for domestic violence and stalking protection orders as well as developing and making available self-help forms for divorce, child custody and child support actions. Other possibilities to assist *pro se* litigants include automating the forms, placing self-help resources on the internet, developing handouts and other educational materials, and coordinating with the bar and local county bar associations to establish lawyer for the day and other pro bono programs.[38]

Many states throughout the country now utilize automated *pro se* packets which operate through a simple Graphical User Interface (GUI). An individual enters their name and basic information and it is automatically propagated to the proper places throughout the forms. The end result is a polished set of pleadings. There is some funding available to develop online document assembly projects, including those that address legal issues such as foreclosure, criminal expungement and the needs of the Spanish-speaking community.[39] Automated forms can reduce the number of incoming potential clients requiring direct legal services and provide people in need of legal assistance speedier access to service. The Wyoming Supreme Court website currently has *pro se* packets available for download. Under a previous grant proposal, a contractor with LSC began to automate certain Wyoming pro se forms but stopped when Wyoming Legal Services lost their funding.

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[36] ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS IN OUR COURTS, FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS, The Supreme Judicial Court Steering Committee on Self-Represented Litigants November 21, 2008, available at http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/delivery/downloads/maselfrepfinalreport.pdf

[37] *Id.*

[38] *Id.*

[39] http://www.probono.net/library/item.259786-Pro_Bono_Net_Makes_Awards_to_Five_Innovative_Document_Assembly_Projects

Potential clients will likely have questions during the process of filling out the automated forms. To answer these questions, the website can eventually have a live-chat system, similar to the systems in place on websites that sell products to provide customer service to potential customers. The live-chat service in use by Montana Legal Services is through "liveperson.com." LivePerson contracts through probono.net at a discounted rate.[40] LivePerson allows individuals who require assistance filling out the automated forms to gain instant access to a live person with whom they can ask questions and receive general information about the forms or *pro se* process. The chat system will require staffing, but this can be provided by AmeriCorps volunteers, paralegals from Casper College, legal services staff or, potentially, law students from the University of Wyoming. Though ethics rules would prohibit volunteers from giving legal advice, volunteers could provide detailed assistance through each step of the automated system. It would cost little to keep the automated form system staffed, since the primary source of staffing would be volunteers or legal services staff who can work on other projects when not needed on the live chat.

Pilot Self-Help Sites in Courthouses

Before losing its funding, Wyoming Legal Services received grant money to (1) automate *pro se* forms and (2) create a *pro se* assistance center in the Seventh Judicial District Courthouse in Casper. Judicial approval took over a year to receive. The *pro se* assistance center would have been staffed by volunteers from the Casper College Paralegal Program. Unfortunately, Wyoming Legal Services dissolved before using the grant and the assistance center never materialized. However, the idea should not be abandoned because its benefits are too great for clients, attorneys and judges. Often a *pro se* party who goes to court has basic procedural questions which court officials are unable or simply lack the time to answer. Creating pilot sites in larger courts throughout the state will enable face-to-face contact with *pro se* parties, without the cost of a full-time attorney. These sites would be staffed by volunteers.

Many of the legal issues faced by low-income individuals in Wyoming can be solved by simplifying the *pro se* system and providing effective assistance through the process of filling out *pro se* forms. This will reduce the burden on direct legal providers. If *pro se* is insufficient, an individual can apply for direct legal assistance, but a simplified, guided *pro se* system would solve many of the more straightforward situations. Further, if individuals who began proceedings with the automated system found their situations too complicated and required direct legal assistance from an attorney, the standardization of the forms would make it easier for attorneys to pick up where the *pro se* party left off.

Other states have demonstrated success with the use of assisted *pro se*. For example, Illinois Legal Aid Online has been working with the state court system to set up legal self-help centers for two years. The organization's ability to automate the preparation of legal documents was critical in persuading the courts to join the effort:

[40] Information provided by Alison Paul of Montana Legal Services, the agency that LSC has sought to provide support to the current and incoming LSC grantee in Wyoming.

"When people are using the automated documents, the judges receive legible, complete, and accurate court forms and documents, [which] makes them happy."[41] Usually *pro se* centers are located inside courthouses, but in some of the most rural areas, the centers are located in libraries. Staff members and volunteers are available to help people make their way through the automated documents.[42]

Centralized Intake/Single Point of Entry

Currently, all three legal providers have separate intake procedures. When an individual calls, any staff available to take the call at the time answers and goes through a screening process. Sometimes individuals find they call every legal services provider they can find. Establishing a centralized call center will handle screening and eliminate confusion or multiple providers duplicating work. It will be necessary for an effective intake center to have policies or mechanisms for referral of service applicants among all the providers.

The centralized call center could be located in Cheyenne in the Legal Aid of Wyoming office. An employee would receive phone calls from a toll-free number, engage in a basic screening process determining income eligibility and ascertaining whether abuse is a factor. If domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking is an issue, the applicant could be forwarded to either the Coalition or the University of Wyoming DV Legal Assistance Project. Otherwise, the screener could forward the case to the other providers or direct the person toward the self-help forms or the statewide website. The screener would only determine basic eligibility and whether the domestic violence programs could take the case. Final decisions as to case eligibility and resource availability would remain the responsibility of each individual provider.

Centralized intake removes barriers preventing rural indigents from adequately accessing competent legal counsel. If individual offices utilize separate intake, it can serve to shut out indigent clients from receiving care, since it becomes confusing and unclear who provides services and who does not. Rural clients, already facing significant hurdles created by lack of funds and time, are likely discouraged from actively seeking legal assistance if they are denied by one of the offices utilizing individual intake, although other offices may have space available to represent the client. There is no way for a rural client to know up front the number of providers in the state or how to contact them, especially in an urgent situation. Further, it renders coordination between providers difficult, since one client could apply to multiple providers at once.

Given the prevalence of these problems nationally, centralized telephone intake has been shown to solve these problems and operates as the cornerstone of many state

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[41] Information from Lisa Colpoys, Executive Director, Illinois Legal Aid Online. http://philanthropy.com/free/articles/v21/i09/09003601.htm

[42] *Id.*

delivery systems.[43] Utah, for example, is able to screen almost 95% of indigent client applicants via a centralized telephone intake system. Minnesota and Nevada have seen similar success through the use of centralized intake.[44] Telephone intake facilitates speedier service to clients by allowing legal counselors to easily target the specific legal issues in question.

Similar to Wyoming, Alabama has faced the problem of individual offices utilizing separate intake systems for each individual office, which has rendered the delivery of services to rural indigents difficult and disorganized. Centralized intake has solved many of these issues. Other states faced with the daunting task of serving distant, isolated rural communities are able to better serve indigents from those communities with a centralized intake location and toll-free phone number. This removes geographic and socioeconomic barriers and allows indigents to receive help they need quickly and efficiently. With a centralized system, Wyoming will be able to link providers with eligible applicants in need of legal assistance, determine whether direct legal assistance is necessary or direct the applicant toward additional, self-help resources, regardless of where they live in the state. A single point of entry eliminates duplicative efforts and makes better use of limited resources.

Some states and counties are using a single telephone number and web based system utilizing the phone number "211." This number is being used with great success around the country as a single point of access for human services and health care programs. Adding legal services to the 211 phone center is a natural part of that resource and is included in such programs in other states.

Private Attorney Involvement

Another important aspect required for compliance with LSC regulations is the coordination and collaboration with members of the private bar. Even with a robust *pro se* system and offices strategically placed throughout the state, the demand for direct representation will likely outpace the number of available spots in each organization. Legal services can further meet this demand through private attorney involvement. Some states utilize the Judicare system, which has proven to be a successful system to involve private attorneys. Judicare incorporates a flat-fee structure that provides monetary incentives for private attorneys to take a case from a lower-income client.

Judicare is a program that some LSC providers use to deliver free legal services through private attorney involvement (PAI). The attorneys are compensated at a reduced rate with a set limit to how much can be earned on a particular case. This program seems to be most popular in rural areas of certain states where attorneys are sparsely located. Judicare connects low-income clients to attorneys who are located closer to the client. This is especially beneficial to clients who are unable to travel to urban areas.

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[43] *See generally* http://www.lri.lsc.gov/sitepages/stpl/stpl_rvwstpls.htm.

[44] Information from Ken Bresin, Utah Legal Services.

For example, a potential client could call in to a central intake number with a legal problem. If the client meets the qualifications and is accepted into the program, he or she could be given a list of Judicare attorneys in their geographic area and the client would contact the attorney directly. Another possibility is for the client to be matched with a particular attorney in the client's geographic region. Attorneys could be given the option to specify which types of cases they will handle. In Minnesota, for example, each attorney receives $50/hour and must follow the fee schedule for a specific type of case. Unless scheduled otherwise, the maximum fee payable per case is $1,000. However, the fee schedule ranges from paying $50 for a simple will to $250 for a Protection Order to $1,250 for Appellate Court cases. In other places that use the Judicare system, an attorney is paid a small stipend not exceeding $1,000, and any work he or she performs above that amount is considered pro bono. Attorneys could either apply to be a Judicare attorney or could be selected by a designated committee or person.

An advantage of implementing Judicare is that the legal service provider paying for the private attorney has more control over the funds being spent. This facilitates the budgeting process as well as makes the attorneys more accountable for the time they put into a case. With a limited budget, efficiency is critical for providing the best service to the most clients.

Legal Services Corporation requires 12.5% of its funds to be spent toward private attorney involvement.[45] Some states use this to pay private attorneys directly and others use the funds to pay for staff, resources and referral sources for PAI. For example, it is a requirement under LSC grant guidelines that there is follow-up with all private involvement attorneys at least once every six months. According to a source at Montana Legal Services, last year they referred 400 cases out to private attorneys; however, attorneys are not paid under Montana's PAI system. Instead, the money goes to pay staff members who do intake, match the client with a PAI and then conduct the follow-up.

Pro Bono Involvement

Direct litigation for low-income clients is impossible without attorneys willing to accept cases for which they receive little to no monetary compensation. Volunteer attorneys are essential for a state to provide legal representation to all of its citizens. The Wyoming State Bar has created a *Pro Bono/Pro Se* Ad Hoc Committee whose goal for 2009-2010 is to: "Take a leadership role on the issue of ensuring equal justice for all, with particular focus and attention on pro bono activities, pro se representation, playing a coordinating function with other access to justice partners, and exploring the timeliness in which justice is delivered.[46]

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[45] 45 C.F.R. § 1614 (1985), *available at* http://www.lsc.gov/pdfs/1614CFR.PDF.

[46] Information from Nancy Shore, Wyoming State Bar.

Other states with thriving legal service programs have been able to integrate their Bar Associations in various ways to further *pro bono* efforts. A successful delivery system in Wyoming should also collaborate with this newly formed committee to achieve its goals.

Currently there are 1,200 active, licensed attorneys, with 900 of those in private practice in Wyoming. While all attorneys are expected to provide *pro bono* service each year, it is not mandatory. Furthermore, there is no oversight or record keeping which tracks how many attorneys actually do pro bono work and the number of hours donated. As of February 2009, only 32 attorneys had completed the Pro Bono Pledge.

There are many ways that Wyoming can incorporate *pro bono* attorneys, especially in the more remote areas of the state. The American Bar Association has published a Rural Guide which details some of the innovative strategies that are being used in different states to meet the legal needs of indigent clients in rural areas. This Guide is also helpful because it provides a simple chart identifying the time, cost, staff and upkeep demands as low, medium or high.

One example of a strategy that is working is the Rural Law Center of New York which partners with local judges and law clerks to provide training to local lawyers. The participating lawyers receive free CLE credits as long as they commit to accepting pro bono cases in their area. In just over two years the program's number of committed attorneys jumped from 70 to 835. Coordinators estimate that the pro bono legal services provided in the first thirty months is valued at over $1,250,000.[47]

Many Bar Associations pursue recent law school graduates when recruiting pro bono attorneys. For law students, pro bono may be the first opportunity to perform legal work, while providing services essential to legal service organizations. "Pro bono and access to justice are at the core of what it means to be a lawyer," according to Susan Feathers, Executive Director for the Levin Center for Public Service.[48] "Through law-related service, law students gain invaluable legal skills, participate in the practice of law, and are inspired to commit to pro bono and public service for life. Increasing collaborations among law students, public interest lawyers, and the private bar are absolutely critical in a time of increasing need and decreasing resources."[49]

The University of Wyoming College of Law is a resource that will be incorporated into a statewide delivery system. In addition to recruiting recent graduates for pro bono, there are ways to connect existing students to low-income clients such as volunteering at the centralized call center or staffing self-help centers. These efforts are in conjunction with the law school clinics already operating.

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[47] ABA Rural Guide.

[48] http://www.imakenews.com/eletra/gow.cfm?z=probono%2C306617%2C0%2C2883137%2Cb11

[49] *Id.*

Other resources that can be utilized are the Casper College paralegal program and Legal Assistants of Wyoming. Casper College students and graduates can fulfill specific legal needs either as volunteers or at costs much lower than attorney rates. Legal Assistants of Wyoming is a nonprofit organization established in 1990 to promote continuing education, professionalism and networking to paralegals in Wyoming and the surrounding areas. "A legal assistant or paralegal is a person, qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity and who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible."[50]

Wyoming's legal community faces a challenge to consider how the practice of law may be reformed and to embrace the professional responsibility of assisting those who may otherwise be barred from accessing our legal system. Through continued, collaborative efforts with the private bar, ongoing training opportunities, the education of law students, and efforts to maintain the most qualified, highly trained attorneys, incredible progress to increase indigent access to the civil legal system can become a reality in Wyoming.

Ongoing Evaluation

A successful delivery system will require accountability and a rigorous system of checks and balances which ensure the best services are being provided while making the best use of limited resources. LSC suggests that an effective plan needs to have an articulated vision and over arching set of values which guide the planning effort. Measurable goals and objectives should be stated with specific time frames for their accomplishment. Responsibility for completion of tasks should be assigned to specific individuals to guarantee that goals are accomplished. Finally, all necessary stakeholders should be involved.[51]

Coordination With County Libraries

Many low-income individuals lack home access to a computer or internet. Even if home access is available, it may not be safe to procure legal advice if domestic violence is involved. All public libraries now have free access to the internet in Wyoming, and as such the libraries offer an invaluable venue in which low-income potential clients can procure advice from the website.

To help facilitate this goal, legal service providers would inform librarians about the website and its features. When a person comes into the library seeking legal information, a librarian could recommend the website. Libraries exist in small towns throughout Wyoming, and integrating them as part of the overall infrastructure of legal services further reduces cost and increases coverage. In addition to providing internet

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[50] http://www.nala.org/whatis.htm

[51] http://www.lri.lsc.gov/state_planning/rvwstpl/mtfd.htm

access, libraries would also provide ideal locations for self-help centers similar to those that can be placed in courthouses.

APPENDIX # 1

WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

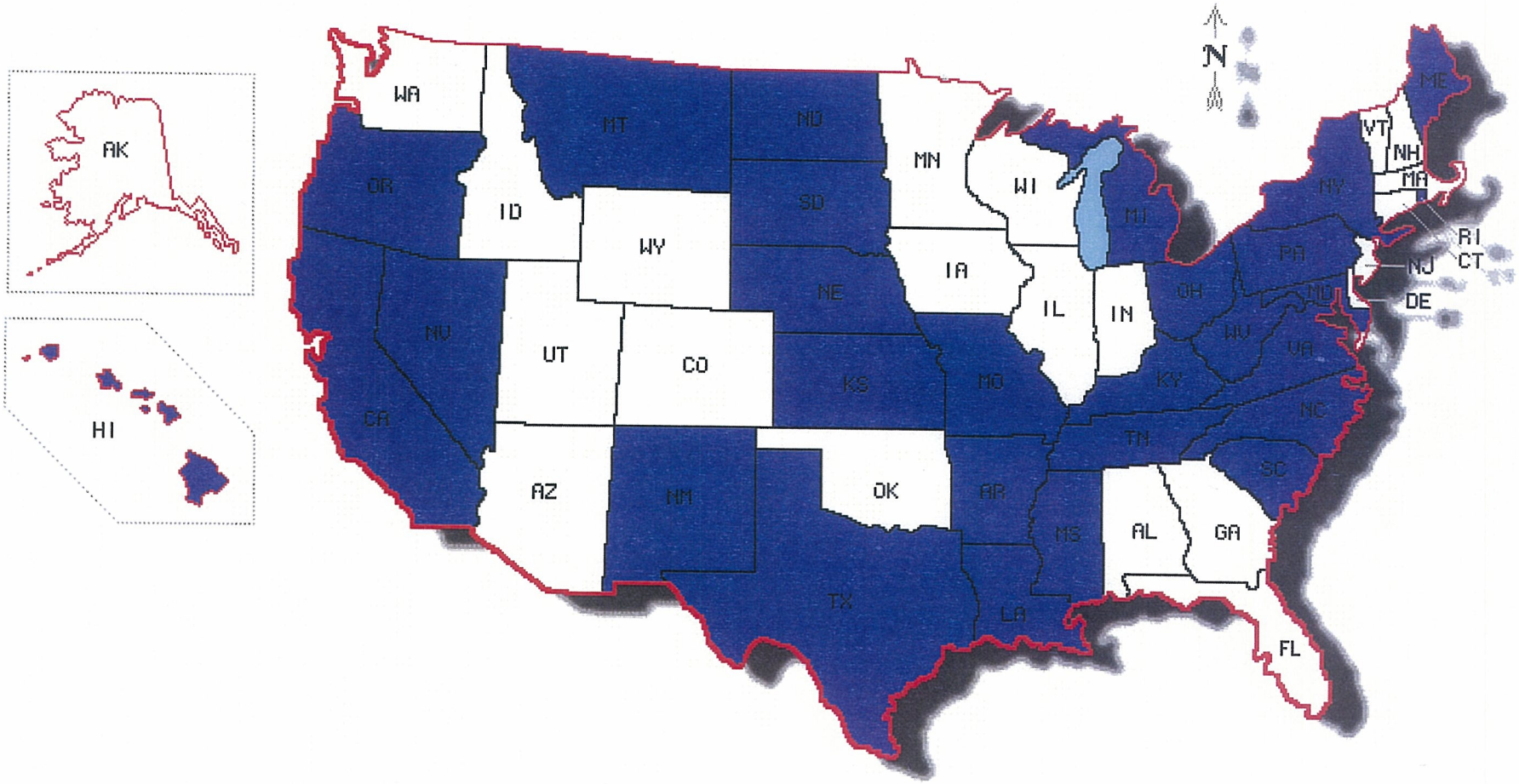
Summary of State Funding for Legal Services Across the Country

December 11, 2009*

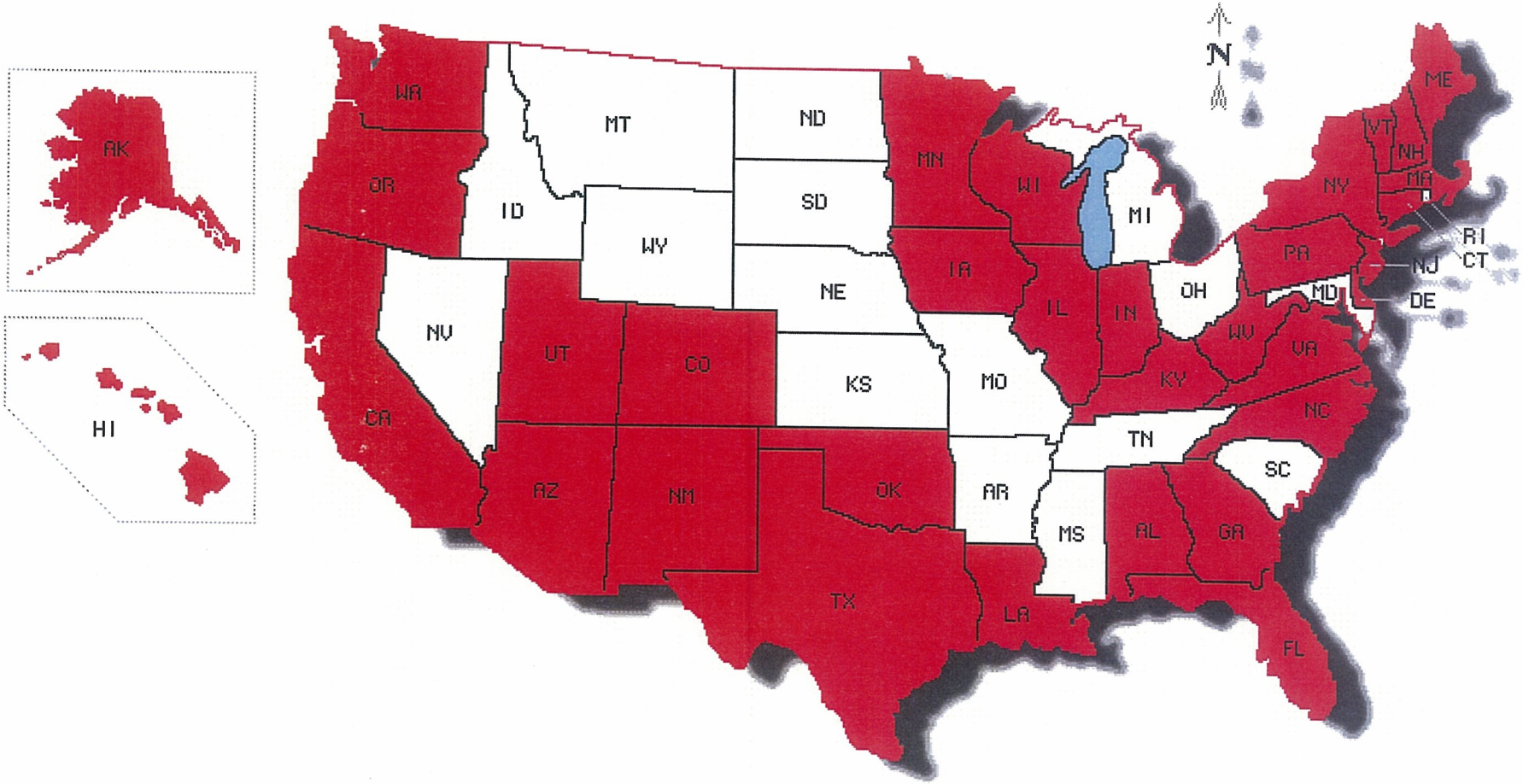
Quick Facts:

- 28 of 50 states fund or partially fund legal services through filing fees and other court fees
- 33 states and the District of Columbia fund or partially fund legal services through legislative appropriations
- 13 states fund legal services through both court fees and legislative appropriations
- Of the 48 states that provide funding for legal services, 26 distribute funds through the judicial branch
- One state, Ohio, administers state funding of legal services through the Public Defender's Office
- Executive agencies administer or partially administer state legal services funding in 17 states and the District of Columbia
- In 4 states and the District of Columbia, the Attorney General's Office administers or partially administers the funding
- Wyoming and Idaho provide no state funding for legal services (South Dakota initiated a filing fee in 2009)

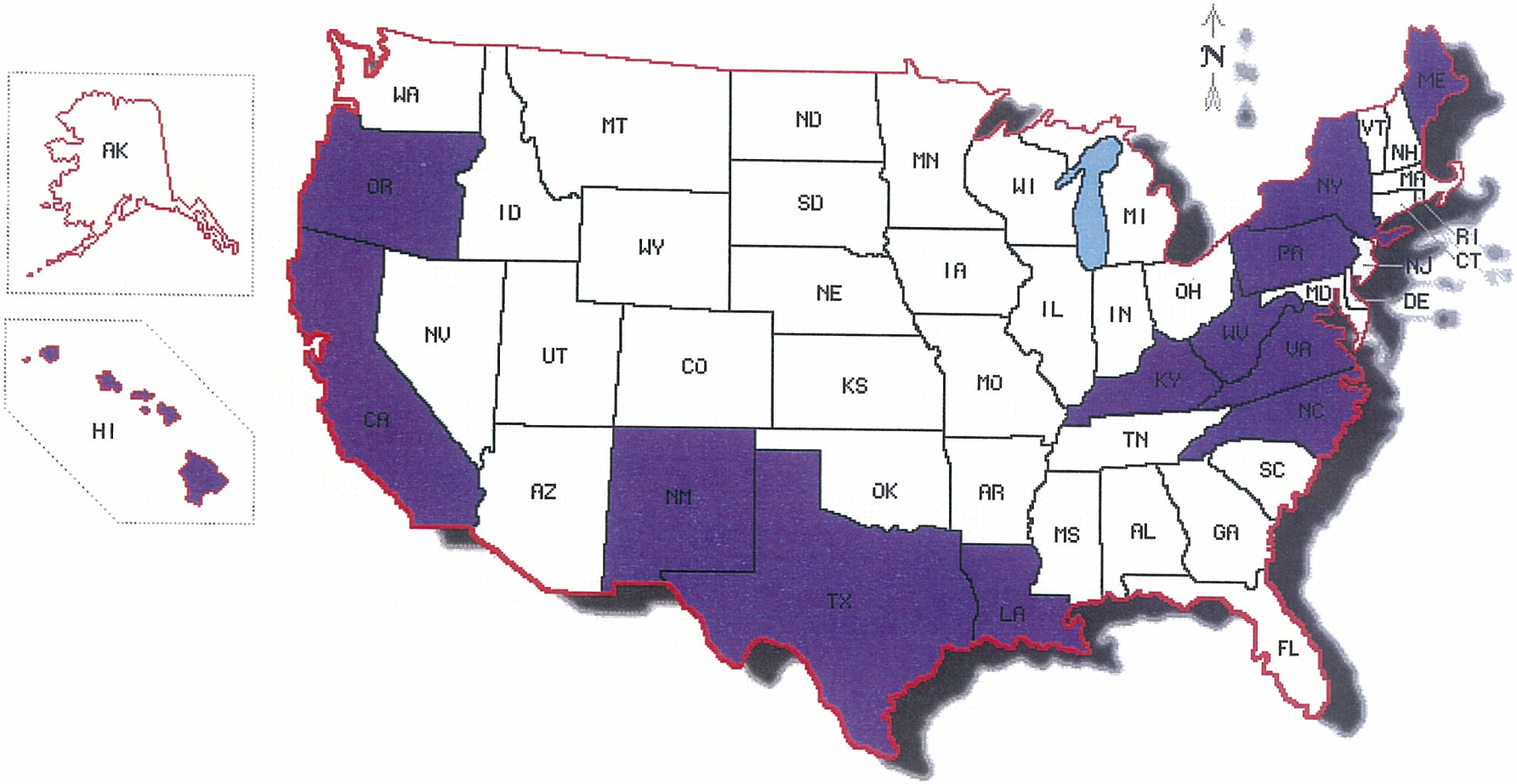
Blue Shading = Filing Fees and Other Court Fees



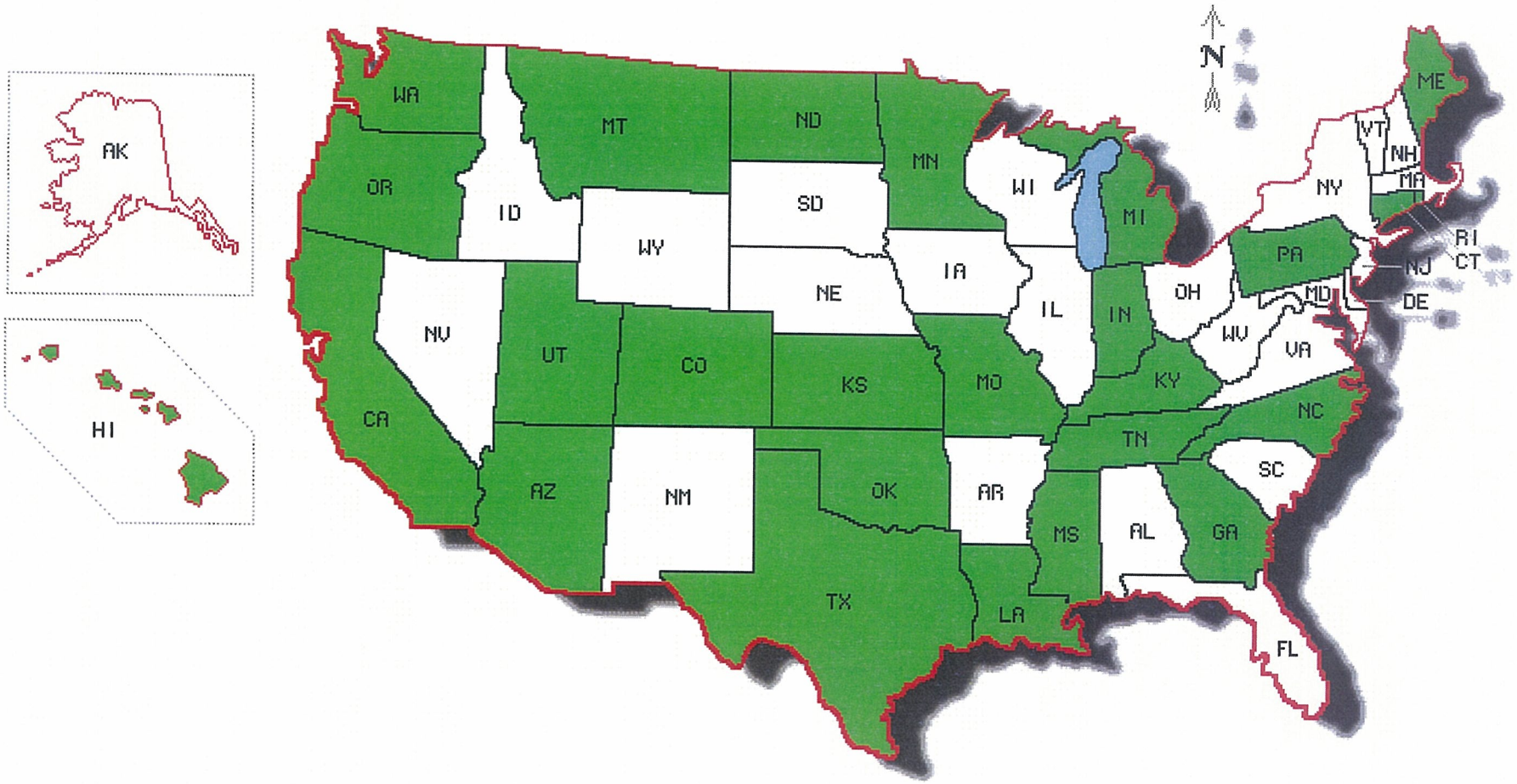
Red Shading = State Legislative Appropriations



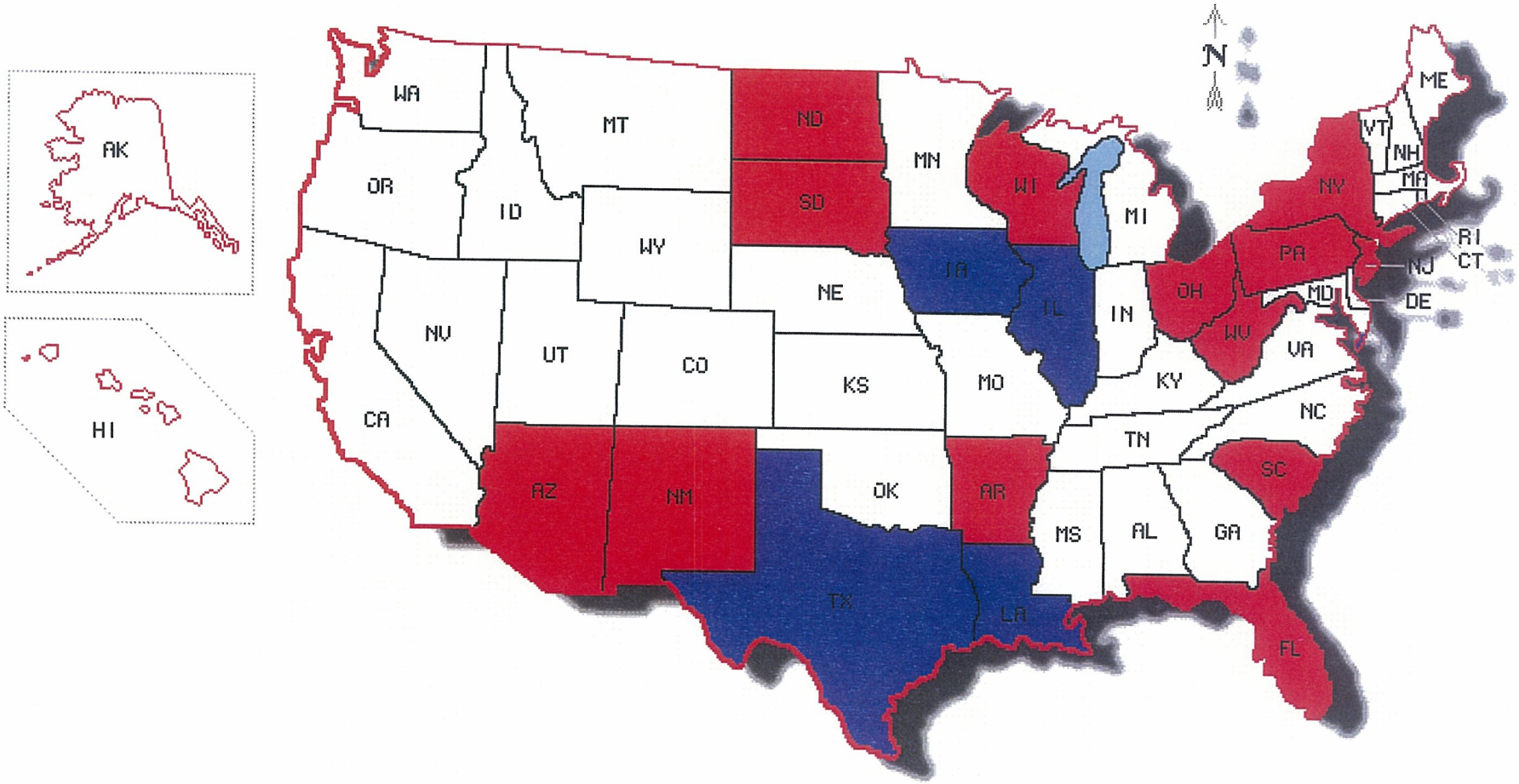
Purple Shading = Both Court Fees and Appropriations



Green Shading = Judicial Branch Administration



Blue Shading = Executive Branch Administration-Attorney General
Red Shading = Executive Branch Administration-Other Agency



State-By-State Summary of Legal Services Funding

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
AL	No	**Yes**				*(Please note: the exact funding process in Alabama is unclear – we are researching)*
AK	No	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Alaska Legal Services Corporation)	Appropriation to provider
AZ	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes** (Dept. of Economic Security)	**Yes** (Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education (AFLSE))	Administrative Office of Arizona Supreme Court administers elder law hotline; Dept. of Economic Security contracts with AFLSE to administer domestic violence legal funding
AR	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Treasurer, Auditor and Chief Fiscal Officer)	No	Filing fees paid into special Public Legal Aid Fund on books of State Treasurer, Auditor and Chief Financial Officer
CA	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Legal Services Trust Fund Commission)	Funds appropriated to the State Judicial Council, which oversees and distributes funds to Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (IOLTA program)
CO	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Appropriation to State Court Administrator who makes grants to providers
CT	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Bar Foundation)	Funds are a legal services line item in Judicial Department's budget; Judicial Dept. allocates to Bar Foundation for distribution

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
DE	No	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (appropriation to "Grant-In-Aid" program and Bar Foundation)	Direct appropriation to providers or to Bar Foundation for distribution
DC	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Attorney General)	**Yes** (Bar Foundation)	Funding moves from Attorney General to D.C. Bar Foundation
FL	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Dept. of Community Affairs)	**Yes** (County Governments and Bar Foundation)	In 2003-2004, Florida dropped filing fees as funding source, but required counties to fund legal aid. Appropriation to Dept. of Community Affairs which makes grant to Bar Foundation makes distribution.
GA	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (County Governments)	Cobb, Fulton and DeKalb Counties support pro bono programs through filing fees. State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) administers appropriation and makes grants to providers
HI	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Hawaii Justice Foundation)	Funding collected by Administrative Director of the Courts who deposits them in special Indigent Legal Assistance Fund; ILAF grants to Hawaii Justice Foundation (IOLTA Program, which distributes funds to providers

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
ID	No	No	No	No	No	**No State Funding**
IL	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Attorney General)	**Yes** (Illinois Equal Justice Foundation (IEJF))	Attorney General's Office distributes appropriated funds to IEJF, which makes grants to providers
IN	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Appropriation administered by Division of State Court Administration
IA	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Attorney General)	No	Attorney General disburses funds by contracting with eligible nonprofit organizations, which provide legal services
KS	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	No	Grant guidelines promulgated by Kansas Supreme Court; Court administers funds
KY	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Access to Justice Foundation)	Filing fee funds deposited in General Fund of State Treasury; Chief Justice of Supreme Court designates nonprofit organization that receives funds; appropriation goes directly to Access to Justice Foundation, which distributes funds to six programs

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
LA	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes** (Attorney General)	No	Filing fees applied on local basis for pro bono support and funding derived from filing fees administered by local courts; Appropriation part of Attorney General's budget
ME	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (direct appropriation to service providers)	Supreme Judicial Court (or designee) and court-appointed commission administer the filing fee fund; appropriation made directly to service providers
MD	**Yes**	No	No	No	**Yes** (Maryland Legal Services Corporation)	MLSC disburses filing fee funds, appropriated funds, and IOLTA funds to service providers
MA	No	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation (MLAC))	Appropriation goes directly to MLAC, which provides services and contracts with other providers
MI	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Bar Foundation)	Filing fee funding administered by State Court Administrator with recommendations from Bar Foundation; Legislature identifies service providers who receive funds on a 5-year basis
MN	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Appropriation is part of state court system's budget; Supreme Court establishes 11-person advisory committee to review applications and select recipients

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
MS	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	No	Filing fee funds administered by Supreme Court
MO	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	No	Filing fee funds paid into the Basic Legal Services Fund, which is administered by Missouri Supreme Court
MT	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	No	Filing fee funds administered by Supreme Court Administrator, who designates non-profit organizations that receive funds
NE	**Yes**	No	No	No	**Yes** (Commission on Public Advocacy)	In August 2009, administration of the Legal Aid and Services Fund (based on filing fees) moved from State Court Administrator to Commission on Public Advocacy
NV	**Yes**	No	No	No	**Yes** (county and local governments)	Filing fees collected by county clerk, who passes funds to county treasurer, who funds legal services programs
NH	No	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (New Hampshire Legal Assistance)	Direct appropriation to New Hampshire Legal Assistance
NJ	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Dept. of Community Affairs)	No	Appropriation is line item in Dept. of Community Affairs' budget

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
NM	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Dept. of Finance & Admin., Local Govt. Division)	**Yes** (Commission)	Local Government Division of Department of Finance and Administration administers Civil Legal Services Fund; 5-member Commission makes grants to providers
NY	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Governor's Office)	**Yes** (direct appropriation to service providers)	Legal Services Assistance Fund, based on fees collected when party makes criminal records search, is administered by Governor's Office and Legislative Leadership; direct appropriation to service providers
NC	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (State Bar and Bar Foundation)	Filing fee funds and appropriated funds move from Administrative Office of the Courts, to the State Bar, to the IOLTA Program for distribution to service providers
ND	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Joint Special Commission)	**Yes** (Joint Special Commission)	No	Filing fee funds deposited with the State Treasurer into an Indigent Civil Legal Services Fund, which is administered by a Special three-person commission made up of the lieutenant governor, the director of the office of management and budget, and the state court administrator; legal services providers apply to the commission for grants

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
OH	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Public Defender)	**Yes** (Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation)	Filing fee revenue collected by the State Treasurer for deposit in the Legal Aid Fund; the Fund is administered by the State Public Defender and the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation
OK	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Appropriated funds placed in Supreme Court's Legal Services Revolving Fund; distribution of funding administered by the Administrative Director of Courts
OR	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	All revenues deposited with the State Court Administrator, who provides funding to the State Bar for distribution to providers
PA	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes** (Dept. of Public Welfare)	**Yes** (IOLTA Board)	The Pennsylvania IOLTA Board administered the funding; any balance remaining after distribution of the filing fee surcharge is held by the Supreme Court
RI	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Rhode Island Legal Services)	The Superior Court collects filing fee surcharges and sends revenues directly to Rhode Island Legal Services
SC	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Treasurer)	**Yes** (Commission on Indigent Defense)	Funding moves from Treasurer to Defense of Indigents Per Capita Fund, which is administered by Commission on Indigent Defense, to service providers

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
SD	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Treasurer)	**Yes** (Commission on Equal Access to Our Courts CEAOC)	Funding moves from Treasurer to Commission on Equal Access to Our Courts Fund, which is administered by the CEAOC, which makes grants to service providers
TN	**Yes**	No	**Yes**	No	No	Filing fee revenues and bail bonds tax revenues deposited in the Civil Legal Representation of Indigents Fund (part of General Fund); funds allocated to service providers by Supreme Court
TX	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes** (Comptroller and Attorney General)	**Yes** (Texas Equal Access to Justice Fund – disbursing agent)	Filing fee revenues paid to Comptroller, who deposits revenues in Basic Civil Legal Services Account of judicial fund; funding provided to service providers approved by the Supreme Court; Appropriated funds are line item in Attorney General's budget; AG has interagency contract with Supreme Court, which authorizes the Texas Equal Access to Justice Fund to distribute funding
UT	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Funds go to Administrative Office of the Courts for distribution to service providers through competitive grant process

STATE	COURT FEE?	APPROPRI-ATION?	JUDICIAL ADMIN.?	EXECUTIVE ADMIN.? (AGENCY)	OTHER ADMIN.? (GROUP)	NOTES
VT	No	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (Vermont Legal Aid Society)	Vermont Legal Aid Society receives direct appropriation from legislature
VA	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	**Yes** (State Bar and Legal Services Corporation of Virginia)	All funds paid into special fund within State Bar's fund in the state treasury; distributed directly to Legal Services Corporation of Virginia
WA	No	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	No	Funds appropriated to Office of Civil Legal Aid, an independent judicial branch agency, which contracts with service providers
WV	**Yes**	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Dept. of Health & Human Services)	**Yes** (Legal Aid of West Virginia)	All funds deposited with state treasury; Department of Health & Human Services and Family Protection Services Board make grants to Legal Aid of West Virginia, which uses and distributes funds
WI	No	**Yes**	No	**Yes** (Dept. of Administration)	**Yes** (IOLTA Program)	Appropriation goes to Dept. of Administration, which pay the amount appropriated to the IOLTA Program for distribution to service providers
WY	No	No	No	No	No	**No State Funding, as of 2009**

*This information was compiled by Meredith McBurney, Resource Development Consultant, ABA Resource Center for Access to Justice Initiatives, a project of the Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants.

THE WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION'S THREE-YEAR EVALUATION AND REPORT TO THE WYOMING SUPREME COURT

IN THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WYOMING
FILED

DEC - 1 2011

JUDY PACHECO, CLERK
by DEPUTY

December 1, 2011

E. James Burke, Chairman
Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court

Members of the Commission:

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Stuart R. Day, Attorney at Law, Director of the Wyo. State Bar Foundation, and Member of Board of Commissioners of the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid
Hon. Timothy C. Day, District Court Judge, Ninth Judicial District
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Hon. John St. Clair, Chief Judge, Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court
Gen Tuma, District Court Clerk, Natrona County

Supporters of the Commission:

Joann Odendahl, Wyoming State Court Administrator
Lawrence J. Wolfe, Attorney at Law

Former Members of the Commission:

William L. Hiser, Attorney at Law, Former President of Wyoming State Bar
Brian E. Hultman, Attorney at Law, Former President of Wyoming State Bar
Hon. Scott W. Skavdahl, United States District Court Judge

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1. Introduction

The Wyoming Supreme Court created the Access to Justice Commission on December 16, 2008, finding that "Wyoming's justice system is based on the principle of equal justice for all people" and recognizing the need to coordinate the efforts of providers of civil legal services in the state. The Supreme Court set four priorities for the Commission:

> The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission will:
>
> 1. Evaluate the specific legal needs of low and moderate income people in Wyoming and identify strategies for addressing them;
>
> 2. Provide long-range, integrated planning among the numerous legal assistance providers and other interested agencies and entities in Wyoming;
>
> 3. Coordinate access to civil justice, foster the development of a statewide integrated civil legal services delivery system, and design and implement new programs to expand access to justice opportunities; [and]
>
> 4. Work toward securing adequate funding for access to civil justice.

Order Establishing the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission at 1 (Dec. 16, 2008; attached as Appendix A to this Report).

This is the Commission's report and evaluation of its work over the past three years. Among other achievements described in this Report, the Commission has analyzed the state of legal services in Wyoming, worked with the Governor's office, the Legislature, and other government leaders to secure the first state funding of legal services, and helped the Supreme Court create the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid (Center).

With the creation of the Center, the Commission has been evaluating its continuing role in meeting the original direction and goals set by this Court, and this Report includes our request to the Supreme Court to issue a new set of directions. At the conclusion of this Report, the Commission will propose a list of nine priorities for its future.

2. Measurable Improvements to Access to Justice in Wyoming

a. Assessing the Need

Wyoming has a long history of committed leaders and individuals seeking to expand civil legal services in the state. In 2001, for example, Chief Justice Larry Lehman of the Wyoming Supreme Court started a "Citizens Access to Courts Committee." Chief Justice Lehman's committee drafted *pro se* divorce forms and recommended rule changes to the Supreme Court, all in an effort to expand access to courts in domestic cases.[1] There were other efforts over the past 10 years to strengthen legal services, including work by past State Bar and Foundation President Joe Bluemel, past Foundation Executive Director Leigh Anne Manlove, and many others.[2]

In June 2008, Wendy Owens, the Executive Director of Wyoming Legal Services, Inc. (a federally-funded legal services program) delivered a report to the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration (BJPA) and recommended the formation of an Access to Justice Commission in Wyoming. At the same time,

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[1] Hon. Timothy C. Day, "The Wyoming Road to Equal Justice," Wyoming Lawyer, Vol. 32, No. 1 at pp. 16-17.

[2] *Id.* Leigh Anne Manlove is currently a member of the Access to Justice Commission and the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid's Board of Commissioners.

the Legal Aid Services Committee recommended to the BJPA that an Access to Justice Task Force be formed to study the need for a Commission. The BJPA created the Task Force in September 2008.[3]

Shortly after formation of the Task Force, Wyoming Legal Services relinquished its federal funding. The Task Force, recognizing a crisis caused by the suspension of Wyoming Legal Services' work, recommended that the Wyoming Supreme Court create the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission.[4]

On December 18, 2008, based on the recommendation of the BJPA, the Wyoming State Bar and the Wyoming Access to Justice Task Force, the Wyoming Supreme Court issued an "Order Establishing the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission." The Court set certain priorities for the new Commission, directed the composition of the initial Commission, and required the Commission to report on its activities.[5]

Wyoming is now one of twenty-six states that have formed Access to Justice Commissions; state bar associations in four states have access to justice committees, and one state has a task force charged with expanding access to civil legal services.[6]

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[3] *Id.*

[4] Federal funding of legal services in Wyoming was restored by the Legal Services Corporation in August 2009.

[5] Order Establishing the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission at 1 (Dec. 16, 2008), attached hereto as Appendix A.

[6] For a current list of Access to Justice organizations around the country, see: http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_aid_indigent_defendants/initiatives/resource_center_for_access_to_justice/state_atj_commissions.html

The Commission spent 2009 assessing civil legal services in Wyoming. Commissioners contacted legal service providers in Wyoming, met with national experts, and conducted a series of public meetings around the state. The Commission held public meetings in the following locations: Cheyenne (July 27, 2009); Evanston (September 14, 2009); Riverton (October 29, 2009); Casper (November 9, 2009); and Gillette (November 10, 2009). The Commission produced a short video written and directed by Dillon Petrillo summarizing the public meetings and titled, "Access to Justice: Report on Status of Indigent Legal Services."[7]

In July 2009, the Access to Justice Commission formed a Subcommittee on Access to Justice for Native Americans. Justice Burke, the Chairman of the Commission, appointed the Honorable Wes Roberts, Ninth Judicial District Court Judge, and the Hon. John St. Clair, Judge of the Shoshone/Arapaho Tribal Court, as Co-Chairmen of the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee was comprised of several lawyers: John Schumacher, Andy Baldwin, Kimberly Varilek, Bill Miller, Mark White, Ron Kopriva and Sara Robinson. The Subcommittee met several times to discuss and formulate ideas about Access to Justice issues. The Subcommittee took no formal action and its efforts have been on hold pending formation of the Center.

After the Commission's research and public meetings, on December 14, 2009, the Commission published a White Paper analysis titled, "Indigent Civil Legal Services in Wyoming: A Report to Governor Freudenthal and the Wyoming

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[7] Video available on the Commission's website at: http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC.aspx

Legislature and a Call to Action to Establish a Statewide Program."[8] The White Paper described the history of legal service programs in Wyoming and identified ten "Principles of a State System for the Delivery of Legal Aid to the Indigent," which the Commission adopted from the American Bar Association's principles for legal aid. The Commission will describe its efforts to meet these principles in Section 3 of this Report. The White Paper concluded with a proposal for Wyoming's first statewide legal services system.

b. 2009-2010 Legislative Effort

Based on its work in 2009, the Access to Justice Commission proposed legislation to establish the state's first funding of legal services. With remarkable assistance and support from the Wyoming Supreme Court, Governor Freudenthal's office, and key legislators including Senator Tony Ross (a member of the Commission) and Representative Mary Throne, the legislative effort was successful.

The 2010 Wyoming Legislature passed Original House Bill 61, Chapter 109 Wyoming Session Laws 2010, and Governor Freudenthal signed the Legal Services Act into law on March 11, 2010. The Act creates the Indigent Civil Legal Services Program. It directs the Wyoming Supreme Court to establish a statewide program to serve the civil legal needs of the indigent and provides for a funding mechanism through the imposition of a $10 fee on all civil and criminal cases filed in the State. The Law was made effective July 1, 2010. The

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[8] The White Paper is available at:
http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC/ATJWhitePaper.pdf

Commission anticipates that the funding mechanism will generate approximately $1 million per year, and this projection is consistent with the growth of the fund since July 1, 2010.

As required by the new statutes, the Wyoming Supreme Court, with assistance from the Access to Justice Commission and the new Wyoming Center for Legal Aid, has filed two reports with the Legislature. The Court filed the first report on November 1, 2010, and the second report on May 1, 2011.

c. The Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

Following passage of the Legal Services Act, the Commission worked with the Supreme Court on formation of a new entity, the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid. In July 2010, the Commission held an all-day meeting with an expert on the formation of legal aid programs, Jim Bamberger from Washington state. Mr. Bamberger helped the Commission draft a set of Core Values for the creation of the Center.

On October 28, 2010, the Commission hosted a public meeting to discuss the formation of the Center. The meeting, which was held at the Supreme Court in Cheyenne, also included participants from Casper, Rawlins, Jackson, and Lander, who joined by video conference.

In January 2011, the Supreme Court asked state bar members Stuart Day, Christopher Reimer, Mark Aronowitz, Leigh Ann Manlove and Patrick Day to serve on an organizing Board for the Center, joined by former legislator and educator Rae Lynn Job and Executive Director Ray Fleming Dinneen of CLIMB Wyoming in Cheyenne. The Court also asked Court Administrator Joann Odendahl and Commission member Walter Eggers to serve on the Board as *ex*

officio members. This initial group studied options for organizing the Center and recommended the creation of a judicial branch entity, headed by a Board of Commissioners. The Supreme Court accepted the recommendations and formally established the Center on April 19, 2011.

The Court has since appointed attorneys Tim Beppler and John Cotton to the Board, along with Mary Johnson of YoungWilliams Child Support Services in Sweetwater County. At the State Bar's request, the Center Board has made a permanent Board position available to a representative of the State Bar and added an additional *ex officio* position to ensure continuous State Bar participation in the Center. John Cotton is the inaugural State Bar representative on the Board and Devon O'Connell is the inaugural *ex officio* member. The Board has hired one full-time employee, Staff Attorney Rennie Polidora, and expects to add another position in the near future.

On July 19, 2011, the Center issued a Request for Proposals for funding, and has since awarded grants to several organizations.

The Commission remains committed to supporting all of the Center's efforts.

d. Other Commission Initiatives and Activities

In addition to its work on the Legal Services Act and the Center, the Commission has supported the Court's Domestic Relations Committee. For example, Commission members have studied Colorado's Family Court Facilitator program and analyzed whether a similar program might be beneficial to Wyoming courts.

The Commission also appointed a Local Access to Justice Subcommittee, headed by Rick Lavery from Evanston and the Honorable Mike Davis, First Judicial District Court Judge. The subcommittee has explored ways of promoting *pro bono* work by attorneys in Jackson, Evanston, Rock Springs, and Cheyenne.

3. Efforts to Meet the Commission's "Principles of a State System for the Delivery of Legal Aid to the Indigent"

After its first year of work, as part of its White Paper describing the state of legal services in Wyoming, the Commission determined that Wyoming's legal services system would meet the needs of Wyoming citizens if the system met ten principles. These principles will continue to guide the Commission's work, but it is helpful to review how the Commission has worked to meet these goals over the past three years:

Principles	**Commission's Efforts and Plans**
1. Provides services to the low-income and vulnerable populations in the State.	• The Legal Services Act, Wyo. Stat. § 5-2-122(a)(i)&(iv), provides state funding and requires a statewide system of legal services for those with income of 200% or less of the federal poverty level.
2. Provides a full range of services in all forums.	• Wyo. Stat. § 5-2-122(c) sets priorities and restrictions on the Center's work, and requires a legal services system that covers the entire state.
3. Provides services of high quality in an effective and cost efficient manner.	• The Legal Services Act requires the Wyoming Supreme Court to submit regular reports and to be accountable for the use of state funding. The Supreme Court Administrator is working closely with the Center Board on this issue. • The Commission is committed to working with the Center to ensure that legal services under the Act are provided in a high quality and effective manner.

4. Provides services in sufficient quantity to meet the need by seeking and making the most effective use of financial, volunteer, and in-kind resources dedicated to those services.	• The Commission, through its outreach programs including public meetings and the Local Access Subcommittee, is promoting and expanding *pro bono* services in the state. The Commission proposes in this Report that it will focus on this issue in the upcoming year.
5. Fully engages all entities and individuals involved in the provision of those services.	• The Commission held discussions with various stakeholders and the public before, during and after the 2010 legislative session concerning the provision of legal services in Wyoming; the Commission proposes in this Report that it will expand stakeholder contact in the next year.
6. Makes services fully accessible and uniformly available throughout the state.	• The Legal Services Act requires a statewide system of legal services. Making the system uniform across the state is a challenge for the Center and the Commission.
7. Engages with clients and populations eligible for civil legal aid services in planning and in obtaining meaningful information about their legal needs, and treats clients, applicants and those receiving services with dignity and respect.	• The Commission, through its outreach programs including public meetings, has interacted with legal services clients and potential clients. Expanding and improving outreach will be one of the Commission's priorities in 2012.
8. Engages and involves the judiciary and court personnel in reforming rules, procedures and services to expand and facilitate access to justice.	• The Commission has worked with the Court's Rule 1 Committee, the Domestic Relations Committee, and the Local Access to Justice Subcommittee. Those Committees are chaired by District Court judges. • The Commission has also worked with the District Court Clerks Association on family court facilitator issues.

9. Is supported by the organized bar and judiciary that is providing leadership and participating with legal aid providers, law schools, the executive and legislative branches of government, the private sector and other appropriate stakeholders in ongoing and coordinated efforts to support and facilitate access to justice for all.	• The leaders of the State Bar have always been members of the Commission. The State Bar President, the Bar's Executive Director, and the faculty director of the University of Wyoming College of Law's Domestic Violence clinic are active members of the Commission. • The Center's Board of Commissioners includes representatives of the State Bar. • The Commission and the Center have worked closely with the Director of Legal Aid of Wyoming, the federally-funded legal services provider in the state. • All of the Commission's proposed priorities for the next year described below involve coordination with the Bar, as well as legal service providers and government leaders.
10. Engages in statewide planning and oversight of the system for the delivery of civil legal aid to coordinate and support the delivery of services and to achieve the principles set forth above.	• Over the past three years, the Commission has led the effort to establish a state-wide system of legal services in Wyoming. The Commission believes that its most valuable role going forward will be assisting the Center Board of Commissioners as the Center grows into the entity responsible for legal services in the state.

4. Proposed Initiatives and Priorities for the Future

Over the past three years, we believe that the Commission has been a valuable resource, raising awareness around the state about the need for access to justice, and by working with the Legislature and other government leaders to secure financial support for legal services. The Commission believes it still has an important role in the objectives that the Court identified in its Order Establishing the Access to Justice Commission on December 16, 2008. With the formation and development of the Center, we believe the focus of the

Commission should change. The Commission has accomplished the Court's direction to "[w]ork toward securing adequate funding for access to civil justice." Order at ¶ 4. The Center is actively engaged in the other three objectives in the Court's Order:

> 1. Evaluat[ing] the specific legal needs of low and moderate income people in Wyoming and identify strategies for addressing them;
>
> 2. Provid[ing] long-range, integrated planning among the numerous legal assistance providers and other interested agencies and entities in Wyoming; and
>
> 3. Coordinat[ing] access to civil justice, foster the development of a statewide integrated civil legal services delivery system, and design and implement new programs to expand access to justice opportunities.

Order at ¶¶ 1-3.

Now, the Commission believes its focus should shift to several specific priorities, most of which address access to justice issues that are not centered on legal services for income-qualifying residents. The Commission asks the Court to issue an order directing the Commission to work on the following issues:[9]

a. <u>Priority A:</u> Support the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

The Commission proposes that it will serve as a resource for the Center and its Board of Commissioners. The Center has specific statutory obligations, priorities, and restrictions. As it conducts its work and grows its program, the Center will likely develop ideas and initiatives that might not fit into its statutory mandate. The Commission will work closely with the Center to "fill the gaps" and increase access to justice across the state.

b. Priority B: Study Wyoming's Rules Governing Unauthorized Practice of Law

Certain provisions of Wyoming's rules governing the unauthorized practice of law may be impeding access to justice by Wyoming's citizens. Professor John Burman of the University of Wyoming College of Law has commented that Wyoming's rules are extremely strict and rigid compared with other states' rules. The rules may be prohibiting non-lawyers from helping citizens with procedural issues, even when those issues do not require legal advice. For example, the Commission believes that District Court Clerks around the state should be able to advise parties on procedural and timing issues in domestic relations cases.

The Commission proposes that it work with the State Bar's Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee, study these issues, and possibly make recommendations for revisions to the rules.

c. Priority C: Support the Work of the Rule 1 Committee

Wyo. R. Civ. P. 1 requires that the civil rules "shall be construed and administered to secure the just, speedy, and inexpensive determination of every action." This provision goes to the heart of what the Commission considers "Access to Justice." District Court Judges Norman Young and Marvin Tyler are the Co-Chairs of a Rule 1 Committee studying ways that the Wyoming Rules of Civil Procedure may be impeding citizens' access to civil justice in Wyoming.

The Access to Justice Commission stands ready to support the work of the

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[9] The Commission has attached a proposed order for the Court's convenience as Appendix B to this Report.

Rule 1 Committee, through researching other states' laws and initiatives, and assisting the Committee with possible proposed revisions to the Wyoming Rules of Civil Procedure.

d. Priority D: Support the Work of the Domestic Relations Committee

District Court Judge Keith Kautz is the Chair of the Domestic Relations Committee established by the Wyoming Supreme Court earlier this year. Judge Kautz and his committee are studying ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of family law cases.

In September 2011, the Domestic Relations Committee held a workshop to discuss issues that Wyoming is facing in this area of the law. The Access to Justice Commission learned that there is a very high percentage of *pro se* parties in divorce and other domestic relations cases around the state. The Commission plans to study and make recommendations for improvements to the approach to domestic relations cases in Wyoming. For example, Commission members have studied Colorado's Family Court Facilitator program. All 22 Colorado judicial districts are allocated at least a half-time Family Court Facilitator to work to move domestic relations and juvenile cases through the court system. The Family Court Facilitator positions were allocated based on caseloads and a few larger metropolitan districts have two full-time Facilitators – one for domestic relations and one for juvenile cases. The Commission will continue to study Colorado's program and may recommend that the Supreme Court establish pilot facilitator programs in several Wyoming counties.

In addition to the Family Court Facilitator issue, the Commission will continue to provide research and help on revisions to Wyoming's *pro se* forms.

e. Priority E: Review, Analyze, and Make Recommendations to Improve Timelines for Specific Types of Cases

The efficiency of the court system is a major factor in whether citizens have effective access to justice in Wyoming. In early 2011, the District Judges of the First Judicial District and the Domestic Relations Committee recommended a statewide case flow and timing study. Based on those recommendations, the administrative office of the Wyoming Supreme Court conducted a study and concluded that cases are moving efficiently through Wyoming's District and Circuit Courts.

Many people in Wyoming could benefit if cases were resolved more promptly. The Commission believes that it should continue to study the current timing of cases throughout the state and make recommendations for the ideal timeline in certain types of cases, including divorce and other domestic cases. We recognize that certain cases are especially complex and may not follow a standard timeline. Other states have benefited from describing timelines for cases and Wyoming might benefit from adopting such protocols.

f. Priority F: Increase *Pro Bono* Contributions

Through the work of the Local Access to Justice Subcommittee, the Commission has been promoting *pro bono* work in communities around the state. The Commission believes that it should work with the State Bar and the Center to promote *pro bono* work.

In addition to direct *pro bono* work, the Commission strongly believes that the work of the Rule 1 Committee and the Domestic Relations Committee, as well as the Commission's proposed work on case management and family court facilitator issue, would benefit greatly from increased participation by members of the Wyoming Bar. The Commission will look for ways to involve Wyoming lawyers from around the state in these efforts.

g. Priority G: Assist the Center's Implementation of a Single Point of Entry for all Civil Legal Aid Cases

One of the statutory responsibilities of the Center is to "establish a statewide single point of entry for indigent civil legal services or establish other operations that allow for simplified and easily available access to the program." Wyo. Stat. § 5-2-122(a)(vii). The Commission has determined that providing a single point of entry is one of the biggest challenges that legal service providers face across the country. The Commission will continue to review programs in other states and make recommendations to the Center.

h. Priority H: Stakeholder Outreach

Over the past three years, the Commission has worked on access to justice issues; it has made a priority of reaching out to and interacting with the public and to groups that are interested and impacted by the Commission's work. The Commission's outreach efforts have included six public meetings held around the state, maintenance of a webpage that contains most of the Commission's work, and meetings with interested groups before, during and after the 2010 Legislative session.

The Commission plans to expand its outreach in the future, with a focus on certain key stakeholders including: the Wyoming State Bar, the University of Wyoming, the Legal Assistants of Wyoming, veterans groups, and the public. The Commission believes that increased coordination and engagement with the University of Wyoming College of Law is particularly important over the next year.

The Commission is considering hosting an Access to Justice Conference during the Spring of 2012, and may also schedule public meetings in areas where the Commission has not yet held hearings including the Big Horn Basin, Rock Springs/Green River, Sheridan, and Laramie.

5. Conclusion

The Commission has expanded Wyoming citizens' access to courts and justice over the past three years. Due in part to the Commission's work, Wyoming now provides state funding for legal services and has created a new entity, the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid, which has the statutory mandate to develop a statewide program of legal services.

With the development of the Center, the Commission believes that its focus should shift to access to justice issues that are not exclusively linked to providing services for low- and moderate-income citizens. There is still much work to be done. The Commission appreciates the Supreme Court's continued support and direction.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 1st day of December, 2011.

Hon. E. James Burke

Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court

and

Chairman, Wyoming Access to Justice Commission

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IN THE SUPREME COURT, STATE OF WYOMING

OCTOBER TERM, A.D. 2008

IN THE MATTER OF ESTABLISHING THE WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION	))))	Administrative Notice

IN THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WYOMING
FILED

DEC 1 6 2008

JUDY PACHECO, CLERK
by DEPUTY

ORDER ESTABLISHING THE WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

THIS MATTER came before the Court upon the recommendation of the Board of Judicial Policy and Administration (BJPA). The Wyoming State Bar and the Wyoming Access to Justice Task Force appeared before the BJPA and requested a favorable recommendation for this Court to create the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission for the purposes stated below; and the Court being fully advised finds Wyoming's justice system is based on the principle of equal justice for all people; and the Court further finds many agencies, organizations, private attorneys, and others in Wyoming provide civil legal services to low income people and there is a need to coordinate their efforts. It is therefore

ORDERED that the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission is established to improve access to Wyoming's civil justice system.

The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission will:

1. Evaluate the specific legal needs of low and moderate income people in Wyoming and identify strategies for addressing them;
2. Provide long-range, integrated planning among the numerous legal assistance providers and other interested agencies and entities in Wyoming;
3. Coordinate access to civil justice, foster the development of a statewide, integrated civil legal services delivery system, and design and implement new programs to expand access to justice opportunities;
4. Work toward securing adequate funding for access to civil justice;

5. Be initially composed of eleven (11) members nominated as set forth below and as appointed by the Wyoming Supreme Court. The chair or leader of the following entities, or a delegate thereof, may initially be members of the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission:

(1) The Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court, or his or her designee;
(2) A State District Court Judge appointed by the Chief Justice;
(3) A State Circuit Court Judge appointed by the Chief Justice;
(4) The President of the Wyoming State Bar, or his or her designee;
(5-7) Up to three (3) members of the Wyoming State Bar appointed by the President of the Bar;
(8) A representative of the University of Wyoming College of Law;
(9) The President of the Clerk of District Court's Association, or his or her designee;
(10) An appointee of the Wyoming Legislature's Joint Judiciary Committee;
(11) A member of the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court, or his or her designee;

6. Except as noted above, the President of the State Bar of Wyoming may nominate Commission members from the entities listed above and submit their names to the Wyoming Supreme Court;

7. The Court recognizes that one member of the Commission may represent more than one category listed above. In such case, the Commission may be composed of less than eleven members;

8. The members of the Commission listed in paragraph 5 may nominate up to five (5) additional members, considering active participants in the justice system, including but not limited to the: Federal District Court for the District of Wyoming; Executive Branch of Wyoming Government; Wyoming County Commissioners Association; Wyoming Bar Foundation; Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Wyoming Guardianship Corporation; Wyoming Association of County Attorneys; Wyoming Protection & Advocacy System, Inc.; and Legal Assistants of Wyoming; the Wyoming recipient of the Legal Services Corporation grant; a representative from the University of Wyoming College of Law's Legal Services Programs;

9. As additional members are needed due to term expirations or resignations, the President of the State Bar of Wyoming will nominate additional members consistent with the format outlined herein, provided, however, that judiciary members may be nominated by their respective District Court and Circuit Court Judges' Conferences and appointed by the Chief Justice;

10. The Commission has authority to increase or decrease the number of Commission members and will give notice to this Court of any changes to the number and composition of the Commission;

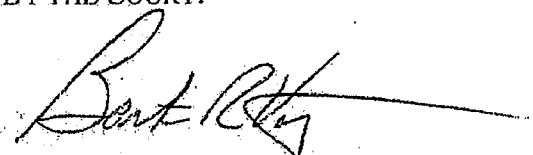
11. The members of the Wyoming Access to Justice Task Force will be ex officio members of the Commission and will act as an advisory committee to the Commission;

12. The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission will report to this Court at least annually as to its findings, progress and recommendations;

13. The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission shall have authority to promulgate administrative policies and rules consistent with this Order, subject to the approval of the Wyoming Supreme Court.

DATED this 16th day of December 2008.

BY THE COURT:



BARTON R. VOIGT
Chief Justice

Appendix B: Proposed Order of the Wyoming Supreme Court

-DRAFT-

ORDER ESTABLISHING 2012 PRIORITIES FOR THE WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

THIS MATTER came before the Court on the Three-Year Evaluation and Report filed by the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission (AJC) on December 1, 2011. The AJC reported on its efforts and progress since the Court's Order Establishing the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission, issued December 16, 2008. The AJC also recommended that it work on nine (9) objectives over the next year. The Court having considered the AJC's report, it is therefore

ORDERED that the AJC will:

1. Provide all necessary support to the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid;

2. Study and make recommendations concerning Wyoming's Rules of Procedure Governing Unauthorized Practice of Law;

3. Actively support the work of the Rule 1 Committee;

4. Support the work of the Domestic Relations Committee;

5. Review, analyze, and make recommendations to improve timelines for specific types of cases;

6. Examine ways to increase *pro bono* contributions across the state and to involve Wyoming lawyers in Access to Justice issues;

7. Assist the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid in implementing a single point of entry for civil legal aid cases;

8. Expand outreach to stakeholders in the provision of legal services, including the University of Wyoming College of Law; and

9. Address other Access to Justice issues that may arise.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the AJC will report to this Court at least annually as to its findings, progress, and recommendations.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2011.

_____

STATE OF WYOMING ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION

REPORT TO THE WYOMING SUPREME COURT

July 1, 2013

HONORABLE E. JAMES BURKE, CHAIRMAN
JUSTICE, WYOMING SUPREME COURT

Members of the Commission

John M. Burman, ***Ex-Officio Member, University of Wyoming College of Law, and Attorney at Law***
C. John Cotton, ***President, Wyoming State Bar, and Attorney at Law***
Honorable Shelley Cundiff, ***Circuit Court Judge, Fourth Judicial District***
Stuart R. Day, ***Attorney at Law***
Honorable Timothy C. Day, ***District Court Judge, Ninth Judicial District***
Denise Burke, Executive Director, Wyoming State Bar
Walter F. Eggers, III, ***Attorney at Law***
R. Daniel Fleck, ***Attorney at Law***
Honorable Marilyn S. Kite, ***Chief Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court***
Honorable Richard L. Lavery, ***District Court Judge, Third Judicial District***
Ronda Munger, ***Deputy State Court Administrator, Wyoming Supreme Court***
Paul Phillips, ***Legal Aid of Wyoming Board Member and Attorney at Law***
Dona Playton, ***University of Wyoming College of Law and Attorney at Law***
Amanda Kay Roberts, ***Attorney at Law***
Senator Anthony F. Ross, ***Wyoming Legislature, Senate President, and Attorney at Law***
James Salisbury, ***President, Wyoming State Bar Foundation, and Attorney at Law***
Honorable John St. Clair, ***Chief Judge, Shoshone and Arapaho Tribal Court***
Gen Tuma, ***District Court Clerk, Natrona County***
Lawrence J. Wolfe, ***Attorney at Law***

The Wyoming Access to Justice Commission (WAJC or Commission) is pleased to submit this report to the Wyoming Supreme Court. The Commission continues to play an important role in overseeing the implementation of landmark legislation passed in 2010 that is providing essential funding to a range of legal aid programs in Wyoming. Minutes of the Commission's meetings are posted on the Wyoming State Courts' web site (http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJCMinutes.aspx) and minutes of the Commission's November 1, 2012 meeting and May 20, 2013 meeting are attached to this Report as Exhibit A.[1]

I. History

Wyoming's Access to Justice programs have made significant strides in the last four years. In December 2009, the WAJC published a White Paper (Dec. 14, 2009; http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC/ATJWhitePaper.pdf; Exhibit B to this Report) that examined the status of Access to Justice programs in the state and made recommendations for legislation and funding sources to expand Wyoming's commitment to indigent citizens. The Commission drafted and helped sponsor legislation in the 2010 Wyoming Legislative Session which created a funding source for Access to Justice programs ($10 filing fee on civil and criminal cases) and set up an umbrella structure for programs. That structure contemplated establishing a non-profit corporation under the direction of the Wyoming Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court created the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid (Center) in 2011, a non-profit corporation with a volunteer board, to initiate and oversee programs and grant awards. The Center hired staff and began making grants to organizations, such as Legal Aid of Wyoming, that are providing direct legal assistance to the indigent population.

The WAJC filed a report with the Supreme Court on December 1, 2011, summarizing the important developments that occurred over the prior three years (Exhibit C; http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC/ThreeYearReportFiled.pdf). On January 17, 2012, the Supreme Court issued its Order Adopting 2012 Priorities for the Access to Justice Commission (Exhibit D; http://www.courts.state.wy.us/AJC/OrderEstablishing2012Priorities.pdf). The current report updates the Court on the considerable progress that has been made, and identifies the areas where further efforts will be expended by all involved.

The work of the Commission has been recognized by the American Bar Association. The ABA announced in June 2013 that the Wyoming ATJ Commission was one of seven state commissions to receive a grant to help expand access. The grant is for the development of pilot Skype-based remote law offices for civil legal aid at rural sites, as part of a broad redesign, coordination and expansion of the state's legal aid delivery system.

[1] The Commission has met 23 times since its inception in December 2008.

The Center published its first report to the Supreme Court on July 31, 2012 (Exhibit E; http://www.legalhelpwy.org/files/2613/6622/8415/WCLA-2012AnnualReport.pdf. That report outlined the progress that the Center has made to construct a new organization to oversee the Access to Justice programs and invest the appropriated funds in programs that are making a demonstrable difference in the lives of Wyoming citizens.

In the last year the Center has worked closely with established programs to expand the availability of direct legal services to parts of the state that have been historically underserved. The success of the Center and its related programs is described briefly below. The Commission is also working with the Wyoming State Bar Association and the Courts to encourage and help support other programs that provide direct services or that hold out the opportunity to help address access issues.

The Supreme Court recently appointed four new members to the Commission: James Salisbury, who is an attorney in Cheyenne and President of the Wyoming State Bar Foundation; C. John Cotton, an attorney from Gillette and President of the Wyoming State Bar; the Honorable Shelley Cundiff, Circuit Court Judge for the Fourth Judicial District; and Paul Phillips, an attorney in Gillette who is a member of the Board of Directors of Legal Aid of Wyoming.

II. Current Programs

A. The Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

The Legislation passed in 2010, through the active support of Commission member Sen. (now President of the Senate) Tony Ross, created a reliable stream of revenue for legal services. *See* 2010 Wyo. Sess. Law, Ch. 109.[2]For the first time in its history Wyoming could begin to fund legal aid programs with predictable revenue, and begin to build the infrastructure that will ensure the long term operation of these complex endeavors. The revenue stream is approximately $1.2 million per year, which allows the Center to award grant funding of about $750,000 to $900,000 each year. The Center is staffed by three attorneys, including Director Angie Dorsch, who has considerable experience leading legal aid programs. Most recently she held positions with Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

The Center has developed an excellent working relationship with Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc. (www.lawwyoming.org). The Center has been working on ways to expand direct access to lawyers in other parts of Wyoming, particularly Southwestern Wyoming and Northeastern Wyoming. The Center was the driving force behind the efforts to establish a new office for Legal Aid in Sweetwater County. The Center has funded the hiring of an attorney through Legal Aid who is working out of the Sweetwater County Family Justice Center (see the Legal Aid discussion below). The Centers hopes to work with Legal Aid to establish a similar office in Gillette.

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[2] Creating Wyo. Stat. §§ 5-2-121; 5-2-122; amending Wyo. Stat. §§ 2-2-401; 5-2-202; 5-3-205; 5-3-206; 5-6-108; 5-6-204; 5-6-303; 5-9-135; 5-9-144; 6-10-102; 6-10-103.

The Center has provided financial assistance to support the statewide Hot Line - 1-877-432-9955 - which is the central point of contact for people seeking legal services. The Hot Line is staffed from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day. Clients can be screened immediately for income eligibility and speak directly with an attorney. Clients who need more extended service are referred to the closest office for appointments. In the three month period of January 2013 – March 2013, over 780 people received direct services through the Hot Line.

Two web sites, one operated by Legal Aid of Wyoming and the other by the Center (www.legalhelpwy.org), provide information on specific legal topics, forms for pro se representation and an ability to contact lawyers directly. The web sites are constantly updated, with new content areas being added every month. In the first quarter of 2013, the Center's website had 1,352 "hits" or visits from all over the state, including individuals from Freedom, Pine Bluffs, Lovell and Saratoga.

The Center has awarded numerous grants to legal services organizations in the state including the Wyoming Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Coalition), Legal Aid of Wyoming, the Teton County Access to Justice Center, and the Wyoming Children's Law Center. The results of that funding include:

- The grant to the Coalition came at a time of massive federal funding cuts – the Center's grant allowed the Coalition to maintain its staff of two full-time attorneys. In the first quarter of 2013, the Coalition has opened 15 new cases based on the funding from the Center.

- The Teton County Access to Justice Center opened 22 new cases and addressed 33 self-help reference questions during the first quarter of 2013.

- The Wyoming Children's Law Center opened 11 new cases and provided limited assistance in an additional 5 cases in the first quarter of 2013.

The Center and Legal Aid of Wyoming are working on automating the forms for *pro se* divorces, so that an interactive program can be used by individuals to produce the court required forms. The system will ask the individuals a series of questions and then use the responses to populate the necessary forms and prepare them for filing. This will hopefully help overcome the difficulties with the divorce packet, which until now presented an intimidating 200-page package of documents. Investing in simplifying and automating the forms is a giant step forward for the large number of divorce cases (estimated at 60%-70%) that proceed *pro se*.

The Center has also been working with the Wyoming State Bar to publicize to lawyers the availability of Limited Scope Representations, also called unbundled legal services, authorized by Rules 1.2 and 6.5 of the Wyoming Rules of Professional Conduct. These types of representations, which are authorized under a rule adopted by the Wyoming Supreme Court, allow lawyers to undertake defined tasks, such as preparing a divorce complaint or helping draft an answer, without assuming responsibility for a case start to finish. They help individuals by providing access to lawyers for limited, but significant, parts of the litigation process at

reasonable cost and they allow lawyers to earn fees that might not otherwise be forthcoming if the lawyer had to be involved in every aspect of the case.

The Center and State Bar have created a packet of materials describing and facilitating limited scope representation (Exhibit F), and have presented CLE programs to lawyers in two locations in Wyoming about limited scope representation and has developed informative instructions on how to structure such representations.

Starting in January 2013, the Center began publishing a quarterly newsletter reporting on the Center's activities, as well as Access to Justice developments generally. The Center published a newsletter on January 11 and April 23, 2013, and those newsletters are attached as Exhibit G (available at: http://www.legalhelpwy.org/index.php/about-us/news/legal-hub-volume-1-issue-1/ ; http://www.legalhelpwy.org/index.php/about-us/news/legal-hub-volume-1-issue-2/). The Commission is working with the Center to distribute the newsletter across the state.

B. Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc.

The Center has awarded more than $200,000 in grants to support and enhance Legal Aid of Wyoming's programs. Legal Aid of Wyoming is the federally funded statewide legal services provider. Unfortunately, its federal funding has continued to decline, but the Center has been able to help sustain the program's work.

Legal Aid of Wyoming operates offices in Lander, Casper and Cheyenne, and has opened a new office in Rock Springs, with funding support from the Center, as part of the Sweetwater County Family Justice Center. This is the first Family Justice Center in Wyoming and was the result of a collaborative effort between the Center, Legal Aid of Wyoming, the Sweetwater County Attorney's Office led by Brett Johnson, the Wyoming Office of the Attorney General, Division of Victims Services, and other entities.

Legal Aid of Wyoming is also planning to open an office in Gillette to serve Northern Wyoming, including the Big Horn Basin.

C. "I'll Do One" (Pro Bono case, that is)

The Commission continues to work with the State Bar, the State Bar Foundation, the Center and Legal Aid of Wyoming to encourage the expansion of lawyer pro bono service. These entities are developing an innovative program called "I'll Do One" which will be announced at the September 2013 Bar Convention. The program will encourage all lawyers in the state to take on one pro bono case for a client who financially qualifies for legal services.

F. District Court Facilitator/Resource Program

The Commission recognizes that Wyoming's District Court Clerks are an essential first point of contact for parties and the clerks can therefore play a major role in the smooth functioning of our system of justice.

The Commission and the Center continue to work with the District Court clerks to develop and implement programs to train the clerks to provide non-legal information to *pro se* litigants. Commission members are meeting with the clerks in mid-June to discuss ways to more broadly implement these programs. The clerks are on the front lines when people pursue *pro se* matters or simply need to understand how the court system works.

G. Language Access

The Commission has long been concerned about access to the courts by those who do not speak English. Fortunately much progress has been made in the last several years by the Wyoming courts to ensure that language translation services are available to litigants. While the Commission will continue to monitor progress in this area it does not appear to require significant attention from the Commission or the Center at this time.

H. Rule 1 Initiative

Chief Justice Kite and other judges and lawyers continue to work on mechanisms to streamline the civil litigation process. This is a long-term undertaking that the Commission strongly supports but that at this point does not require resources from the Commission or Center. As these programs evolve the Commission may be asked to take a more prominent role. This will remain on the Commission's agenda for future meetings and reports to the Court.

I. Local Access Subcommittee District Court Survey Program

In January 2012, the Access to Justice Commission created a Local Access Subcommittee. The Subcommittee includes co-chairs, the Honorable Richard L. Lavery, Third Judicial District Court Judge, and the Honorable Michael Davis, Supreme Court Justice, as well as subcommittee members, the Honorable E. James Burke, Supreme Court Justice, the Honorable Timothy C. Day, Ninth Judicial District Court Judge, Amanda Roberts, Attorney at Law, Anita Schroeder, President of Legal Assistants of Wyoming, Jon Aimone, Attorney at Law and former Chair of the Wyoming State Bar's Young Lawyers Section, and Walter Eggers, Attorney at Law.

From June through September, 2012, the Local Access Subcommittee of the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission conducted interviews with all of the District Court Judges in the State. The purpose of the interviews was to analyze and understand the current environment for domestic relations cases in the District Courts around Wyoming. Nineteen of Wyoming's twenty-two District Court Judges participated in the interviews. The Commission and Local Access Subcommittee thank those Judges for taking time from their extremely busy schedules to participate in this process.

Justice Burke started the interview process by coordinating with then current president of the District Judges Conference, the Honorable Judge Wade E. Waldrip of the Second Judicial District Court, to seek the District Court Judges' input on domestic relations issues in their courts. Justice Burke sent a "talking points memo" to the District Court Judges in advance of the interviews. The memo is attached to this report as Exhibit H. The Subcommittee prepared

summaries of each interview and those summaries are attached to this report as Exhibit I. With the permission of the Judges, the Subcommittee provided redacted summaries of the interviews to Mark Gifford, Dick Honaker and John Greacen, who used the summaries in their presentation at the Wyoming Bar Convention on September 19, 2012.

J. Participation in National Access to Justice Programs

Representatives of the Commission and the Center continue to be involved in national programs that are dedicated to providing legal aid to the indigent. Commission member Walter Eggers, Center Director Angie Dorsch, Center Staff Attorney Kristin Karr and Rennie Polidora, a staff attorney with the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse, attended the American Bar Association's Equal Justice Conference in May in St. Louis. Other states are vitally interested in the way that Wyoming is supporting its access to justice programs, so it was important for Wyoming to be well represented at this conference.

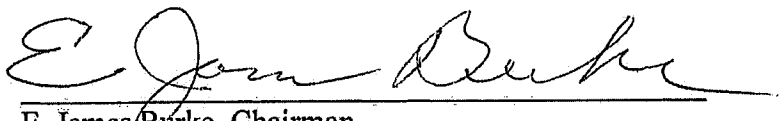
Commission Chairman Justice Burke and Commission Member Stuart Day have attended this annual conference in previous years. The Commission will continue to participate in the national discussion about these issues.

III. Conclusion

The protracted economic recession in Wyoming and across the country continues to extract an enormous toll from the poor and most vulnerable of our citizens. While the Commission is very pleased with the progress that has been made in the last three years by Wyoming's Access to Justice programs we are mindful that we are just making a small dent in the problem. Tens of thousands of individuals each year need legal help and yet are unable to get it. The resources that are available, while significant and being put to good use, remain small by comparison to the magnitude of the challenges. The Commission will continue its diligent oversight of the programs and it remains optimistic that the good will and efforts demonstrated by many people who are committed to this work in Wyoming will continue to help make many lives a bit better.

Dated July 1, 2013

Respectfully submitted:



E. James Burke, Chairman
Justice, Wyoming Supreme Court

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APPENDIX B

Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

Annual Report to the Wyoming Supreme Court

July 2014

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the staff and Board of Commissioners of the Wyoming Center for Legal Aid, it is my pleasure to present our 2014 Annual Report. This report provides a benchmark of our progress and accomplishments for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. It also serves as the platform upon which we will continue to build.

The work of the Center in our three years of existence has helped to create, support, and expand Wyoming's network of legal aid and *pro bono* programs and initiatives. However, the accomplishments of the Center would not be possible without the collaborative partnerships we have with our grantees, community organizations, the Wyoming State Bar, and the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission, and the tremendous support we receive from the Wyoming Supreme Court. I am very lucky to have the opportunity to work with so many talented and passionate people who share the vision of equal access to justice for the people of Wyoming and I look forward to continuing our unified work towards those ends.

- Angie Dorsch

There can be no equal justice where the kind of trial a man gets depends on the amount of money he has.

-Hugo L. Black
U.S. Supreme Court Justice

CENTER'S HISTORY

The Wyoming Center for Legal Aid (the "Center") was created by the Wyoming Supreme Court on April 19, 2011, and is authorized and funded by the Wyoming Civil Legal Services Act, Wyo. Stat. 5-2-121 et. seq. The Center is governed by a Board of Commissioners appointed by the Supreme Court.

The Center is Wyoming's first state-sponsored civil legal aid program and is charged with developing and sustaining a statewide program for improving access to justice and providing civil legal services to low-income individuals in Wyoming. The Center provides a variety of legal resources for the public and helps connect individuals with information and legal services.

In its third year of operation, the Center continued to create and expand the availability of legal services and resources throughout the state. Utilizing our collaborative efforts, the Center is in the best position to facilitate, coordinate, and support the network of statewide legal services.

The Center continues to focus our efforts on working with stakeholders to leverage resources in order to have the greatest possible impact throughout the state.

HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past year, the Center once again made significant progress in expanding legal services and resources throughout the state.

Long-term projects began to bear fruit as the Center, launched the much anticipated Wyoming Interactive Self-Help Form Center. The Center continued work on many other ongoing projects while also launching new initiatives and programs, including launching the I'll Do One *pro bono* campaign and setting up five remote access sites to deliver legal assistance to low-income individuals in rural Wyoming communities.

Due to funding from the Center, legal services were again greatly expanded to previously underserved areas of the state. In September 2013, Gillette saw the arrival of its first legal aid attorney. This was also the first year that the Rock Springs office was fully up and running. These two offices serve a total of eight counties that previously did not have regular access to legal aid.

In total, 3,497 low-income individuals received direct legal services from the Center and Center funded programs.

A total of 3,497 individuals received legal assistance through the Center and Center funded programs over the past year. This is a 22 % increase from FY 2013.

Self-Help & Technology Projects

LEGAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The Center launched a legal information and self-help website, www.legalhelpwy.org, in November of 2012. In the past fiscal year, the Center has seen a fourfold increase in the number of visitors to the site. The website saw **19,660 visits** in the past 12 months.

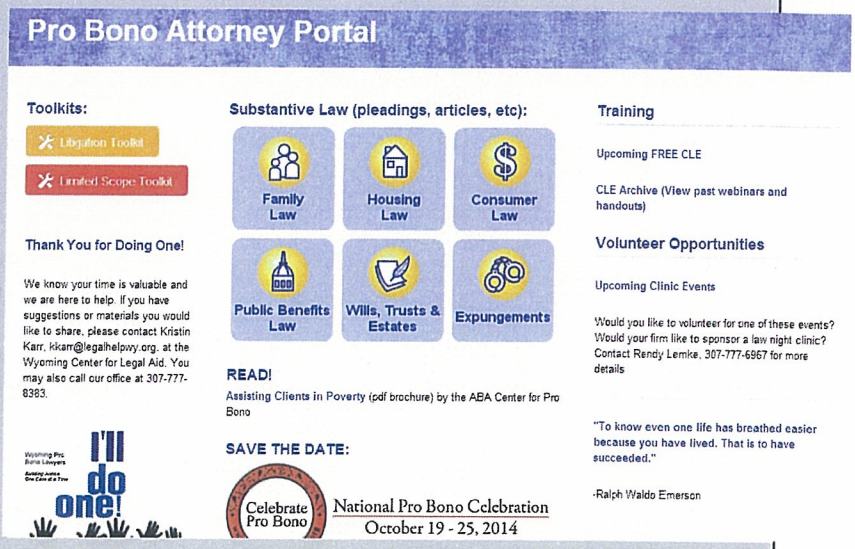
A significant amount of new content has been created and added to the site during the past year, with contributions from all three Center attorneys and a few outside attorneys. The site now contains information on 11 areas of law and **180 pages of valuable legal information and resources**.

Of particular interest to individuals representing themselves in court, the Center has established a **forms library** containing downloadable, fillable forms for the types of cases that frequently affect low-income clients. Each set of forms has detailed instructions to assist the user. The forms have proved popular with litigants, clerks and judges.

www.legalhelpwy.org

- ⇒ **19,660 site visits**
- ⇒ **180 pages of legal information and resources**
- ⇒ **Legal self-help forms with detailed instructions**
- ⇒ **Pro Bono Portal for volunteer attorneys**

The Center distributed over 4,000 wallet-sized cards to all District and Circuit Court Clerks' offices in the state. The cards contain information about the self-help website on one side, and the statewide legal aid hotline on the reverse. A training regarding the Center's website and resources was also offered to the District Court Clerks Association at their annual meeting in June of this year.



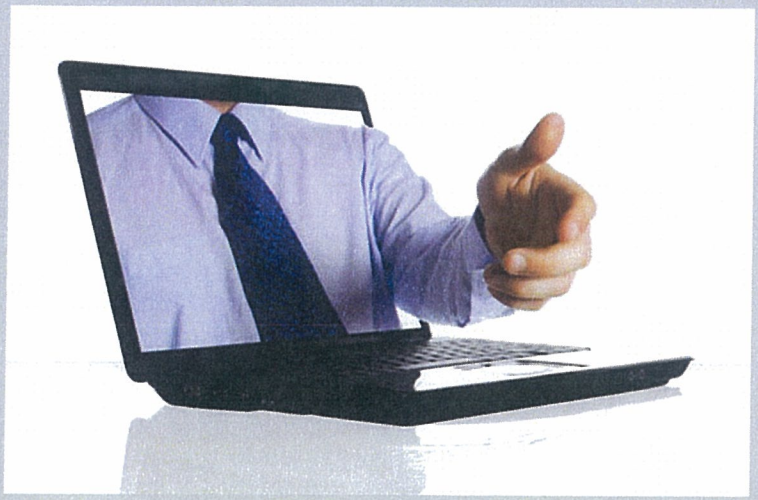
The Center's new Pro Bono Portal provides a variety of resources to assist volunteer attorneys.

PORTAL LAUNCHED TO AID PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

The Center launched a **new *Pro Bono* Portal** to support *pro bono* attorneys in their work. The portal contains downloadable resources, resource links, and sample pleadings. The portal currently contains six topic areas including: family law, housing, consumer law, public benefits, trusts & estates, and expungements. Additional resources on the website include a CLE archive, litigation toolkit, and a limited scope toolkit. The Center plans to add significantly more resources in the coming year. Since launching the portal in April 2014, 139 *pro bono* and legal aid attorneys have been provided access to the portal.

WYOMING INTERACTIVE SELF-HELP CENTER

After two years of planning, preparation and programming, the Center has completed the first in a series of interactive *pro se* form interviews based on the Family Law *Pro Se* packets currently available from the Wyoming Supreme Court. This was a time intensive project that finally saw fruition when the Center, in collaboration with the Wyoming Supreme Court and Court Technology department, launched the portal in June 2014.



Litigants can access the interactive interviews at the new **Wyoming Interactive Self-Help Center**, available at https://wise.courts.state.wy.us. The first packet in the series to be automated was the Divorce Without Children packet. Remaining form packets are also near completion. A Divorce With Children interview is planned to be released this fall, and will be followed by interviews for modification, enforcement or establishment of a child custody order.

The portal enables litigants to create an account, save their information and return later to complete the forms, at their convenience. The automation process, using a document assembly software called Hotdocs, walks the litigant user through a series of question and answer interviews while collecting their essential information. At the end of the interview, the litigant is presented with complete and accurate family law forms, ready for printing and filing.

Wyoming Interactive Self-Help Center

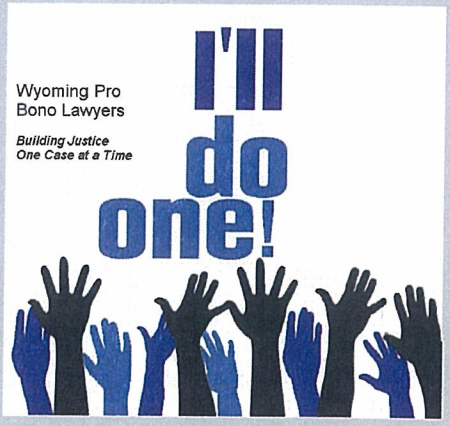
- ⇒ **https://wise.courts.state.wy.us**
- ⇒ **Users can create an account, save information and print forms that are ready for filing**
- ⇒ **User-friendly plain language format**
- ⇒ **Increases efficiency for users and Courts**

CENTER'S BOARD PRESIDENT RECOGNIZED

Patrick Day, President of the Center's Board of Commissioners, was recognized for his leadership role in shaping the Center when he received the 2013 Community Service Award from the Wyoming State Bar in September 2013. Pat was nominated for the award by the Hon. James Burke, Chief Justice of the Wyoming Supreme Court. Pat's vision and dedication has been instrumental to the Center's progress and accomplishments.

PRO BONO PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

During the past year, the Center began to build a formal *pro bono* program to attract and retain volunteer lawyers who are willing to donate their time and talents to provide legal services to low-income individuals.



The Center, in partnership with the Wyoming State Bar, launched a *pro bono* recruitment campaign in the fall of 2013, entitled "I'll Do One". A total of 27 attorneys have formally signed up under this initiative to undertake a *pro bono* case, however , many more attorneys who have not signed up have also agreed to take a case.

Additionally, and also in conjunction with the Wyoming State Bar, the Center launched what was a national initiative to recruit *pro bono* attorneys to assist veterans through the Army One Source program. A total of 60 attorneys from across the state have signed up to provide legal services to veterans.

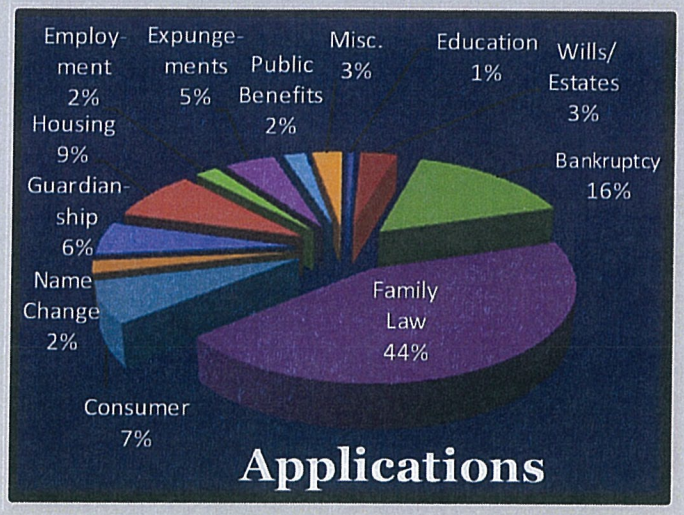
In March of this year, the Center received support from the statewide bankruptcy bar. Five bankruptcy attorneys volunteered to take *pro bono* bankruptcy cases. The Center works with the clients to gather the majority of the documents required to file a bankruptcy petition before placing the case with a *pro bono* attorney. This method has been highly favorable amongst the volunteer attorneys and has been an efficient and effective way to get legal assistance to those facing financial hardships.

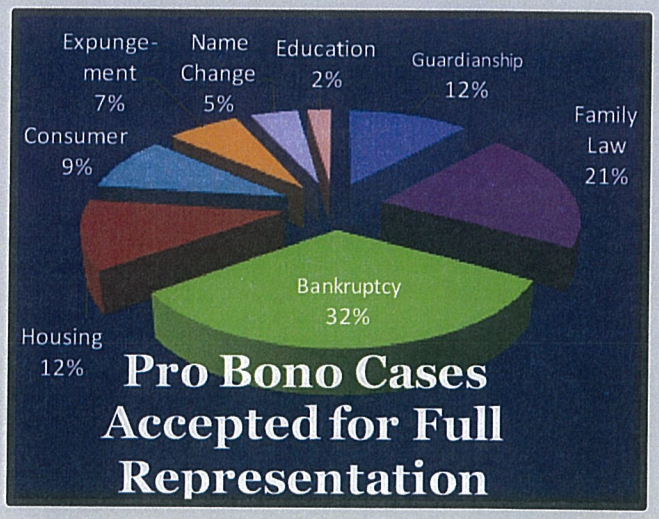
- ⇒ **118 clients received legal help from a *pro bono* attorney**
- ⇒ **30 attorneys accepted a *pro bono* case**
- ⇒ **45 attorneys volunteered at legal advice clinics**
- ⇒ **4 clients received legal representation from a reduced-fee attorney paid by the Center**

PRO BONO CASE STATISTICS

During the 2014 fiscal year, **118 clients received some form of legal assistance from a *pro bono* attorney** through the Center's *pro bono* programs. Of those clients, **43 client's cases were accepted for full-representation by a volunteer attorney**. The remainder of the clients received either advice or limited scope representation from a *pro bono* attorney.

The majority of the Center's applicants needed assistance with a family law matter. Fifty percent of the applications received last year were in the areas of family law and guardianships. Although family law was the highest need, it remains the area of law that the Center has the fewest volunteer attorneys. One of the highest priorities of the Center's *pro bono* program in the next year will be to recruit and train more attorneys who are willing to accept family law cases.





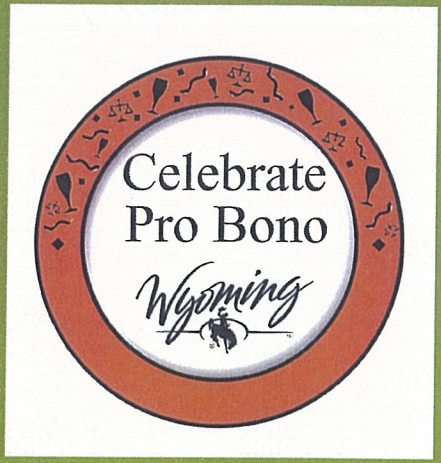
REMOTE ACCESS SITES

In 2013, the Wyoming Access to Justice Commission received an Access to Justice Innovations Grant from the American Bar Association. The Commission, in collaboration with the Center, developed a plan to place remote access sites in five underserved rural communities in Wyoming. The Center identified community partner organizations in each of the communities who volunteered to provide space for the sites and their staff to man the sites. The Center equipped each site with computers with Skype capabilities. The computers were used to host Skype clinics in order to match the need for legal advice and assistance in rural areas with *pro bono* attorneys willing to meet with the client remotely using Skype.

The remote access sites are also available for any of the Center's grantees or the legal clinics at the University Of Wyoming College Of Law to meet remotely with clients in those communities. The goal of the project is to provide clients in rural areas with "face-to-face" legal help from an attorney without the travel time and expense.

WYOMING CELEBRATES NATIONAL PRO BONO WEEK

October 20-26, 2013, the Center joined with the Wyoming State Bar, legal aid programs and local bar associations across the state to hold *pro bono* events in recognition of National Celebrate *Pro Bono* Week. This was the first year that Wyoming organized statewide participation in the event. Sixteen *pro bono* events were held throughout the state with 50 attorneys volunteering at these events. Governor Matt Mead signed a proclamation declaring the week *Pro Bono* Week in Wyoming in recognition of the contribution and impact volunteer attorneys have in their communities. *Pro Bono* Week was a success and we have already begun planning for the 2014 celebration.



⇒ **120 Individuals received free legal services**

⇒ **50 Attorneys volunteered at *Pro Bono* Week events**

⇒ **16 *Pro bono* events held throughout Wyoming**

LEGAL ADVICE CLINICS

The Center began hosting monthly walk-in legal clinics in September, 2013. In addition, a clinic was held in Rawlins, and three walk-in clinics specifically targeted to veterans were held in Laramie and Cheyenne. A total of 72 clients were served, and 45 attorneys volunteered their time. The Center plans to continue the Laramie County clinics on a monthly basis, and hopes to assist more county bar associations in holding clinics in their respective counties. The Center offers assistance to the local bars to help get these started.

⇒ **45 Attorneys volunteered at clinics**

⇒ **72 Clients received assistance**

⇒ **3 Veteran specific legal clinics**

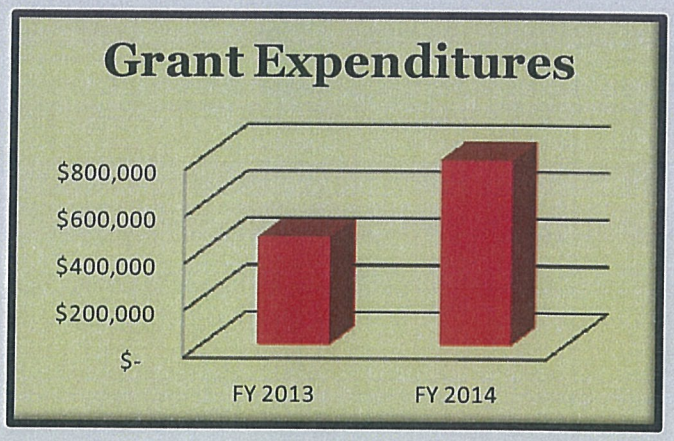
FREE TRAINING AND CLE FOR PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

In the past year, the Center began offering regular, monthly CLEs statewide, via webinar, on topics that are often encountered by low-income clients. The goal is to encourage attorneys to take on a *pro bono* case in an area of law they may not typically practice. The Center will continue to offer these training opportunities in the upcoming year, with four CLEs already scheduled for the next four months.

GRANTS AND CASE DATA

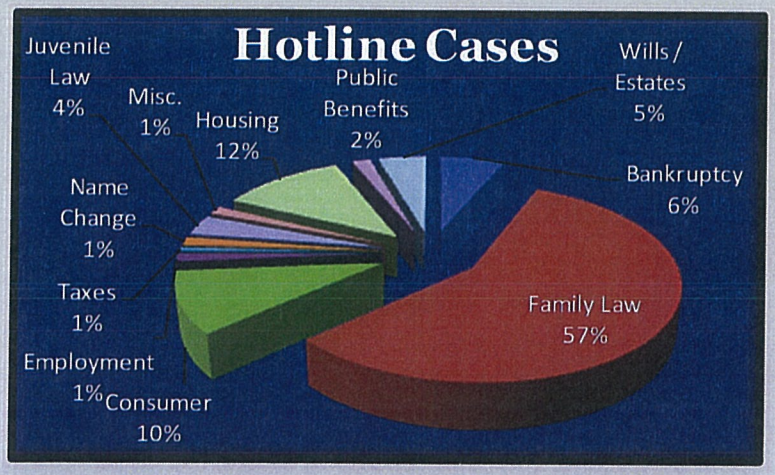
STATEWIDE DELIVERY OF CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES

The Center's mission to establish and maintain a statewide delivery system for civil legal aid is made possible through our partnerships with community organizations and *pro bono* attorneys, and also through the services provided by the Center's grantees. Funding from the Center has greatly expanded the availability of legal services across the state over the past two years. Although the Center awarded $750,000 in grants in fiscal year 2013, because many of the grantees' programs were new, it took some time to get the new projects off the ground and only $459,000 of grant funds were expended in 2013. During the 2014 fiscal year, the Center provided **$789,000** in grant funds to our four grantees. This was a **71 percent increase** in the Center's grant expenditures and help expand services offered by our grantees.



LEGAL ADVICE AND INTAKE HOTLINE

The Center worked with **Legal Aid of Wyoming, Inc.** to establish a statewide advice and intake hotline which began operation in November 2012. The Center provides the funding for the hotline, and the hotline is operated by Legal Aid of Wyoming. The hotline is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The hotline plays an important role in increasing access to legal services in our large, rural state. The hotline allows applicants to call and speak to an attorney and make an application for legal services over the phone, making legal help accessible to any eligible applicant, no matter how far they live from the nearest legal aid office.

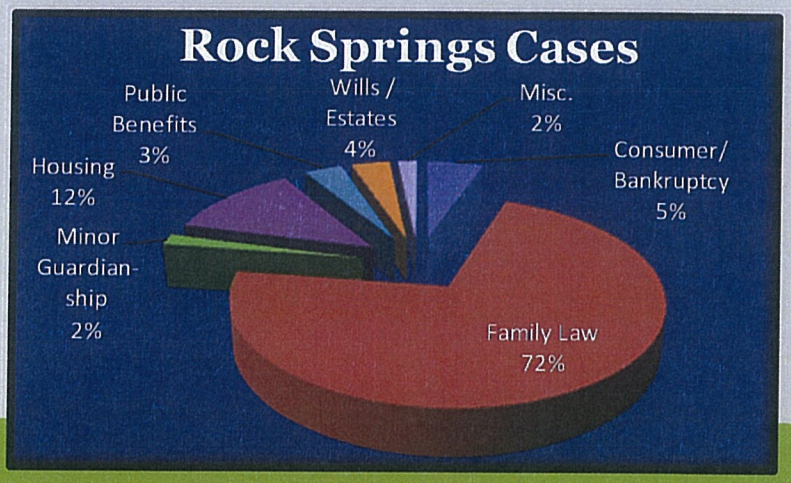


3,105 eligible callers received legal assistance from a hotline attorney in FY 2014.

ROCK SPRINGS PROJECT

June 2013 saw the arrival of Rock Springs' first legal aid attorney. Since last fiscal year saw only one month of this project, in reality, this was the first year for the project. A collaboration between organizations has made this expansion of services possible. The Center provides the necessary funds to **Legal Aid of Wyoming** to employ a full-time attorney in Rock Springs. The **Sweetwater County Family Justice Center** has donated the space and overhead. This collaborative relationship between organizations has made it feasible to open the Rock Springs office.

Prior to the Center's grant, Legal Aid of Wyoming had opened only three cases in Rock Springs and the surrounding area. **In FY 2014, the Rock Springs office opened 57 cases.**



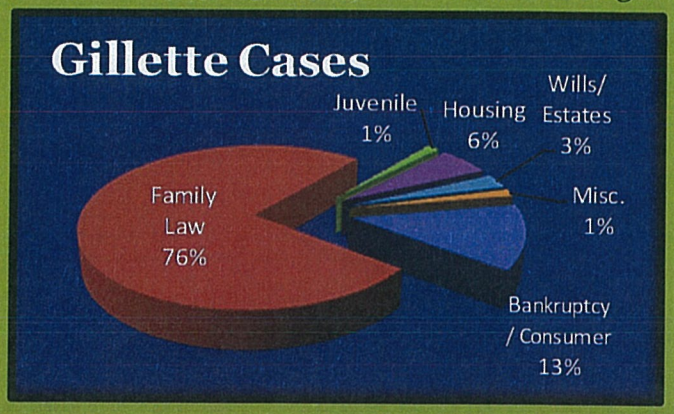
GILLETTE PROJECT

In September 2013, a grant from the Center made it possible to open a legal aid office in Gillette for the first time. Based on the success of the Rock Springs office, the Center used the same model in planning the Gillette office. The Center approached the **Council of Community Services** in Gillette and they agreed to donate the space to house the attorney. The Center provided the grant funds to **Legal Aid of Wyoming** in order to employ a full-time attorney for the position.

Prior to the grant from the Center, Legal Aid of Wyoming had only represented two clients in litigation and provided brief services, such as document review, to an additional 12 clients in the Gillette area.

After opening the Gillette office, 70 clients received legal assistance in the Gillette service area.

Having a full-time staff attorney in Gillette has greatly expanded services to Gillette and the surrounding area. The staff attorney provides services to Campbell, Crook, Weston, Johnson, and Sheridan Counties.



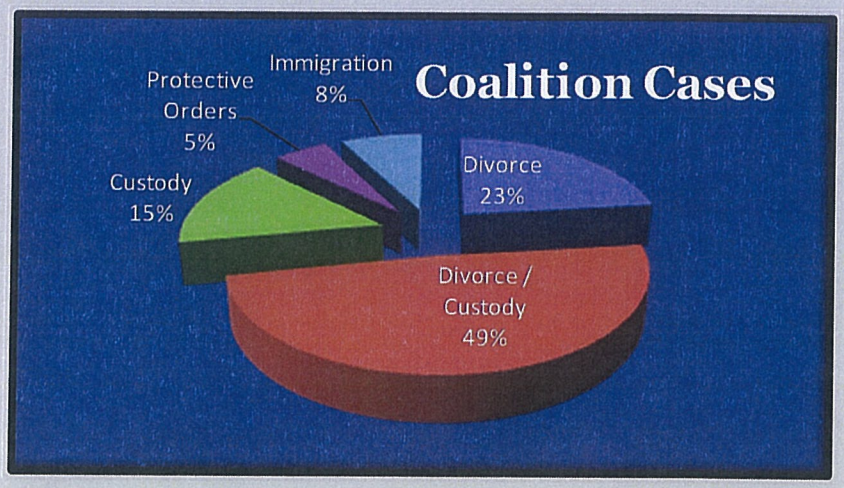
In addition to the hotline, Rock Springs, and Gillette grants provided to Legal Aid of Wyoming, the Center also provided a Private Attorney Involvement grant. However, no new cases were opened under the grant as Legal Aid of Wyoming moved away from this model of service delivery and the funds were used to complete cases remaining open from FY 2013.

COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

This was the second year the Center provided grant funds to the Coalition. The Center's funds have allowed the Coalition to maintain two full-time attorneys to handle cases throughout Wyoming to assist victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Center's grant pays 100 percent of one attorney's position and a portion, roughly 25 percent, of a second full-time attorney position.

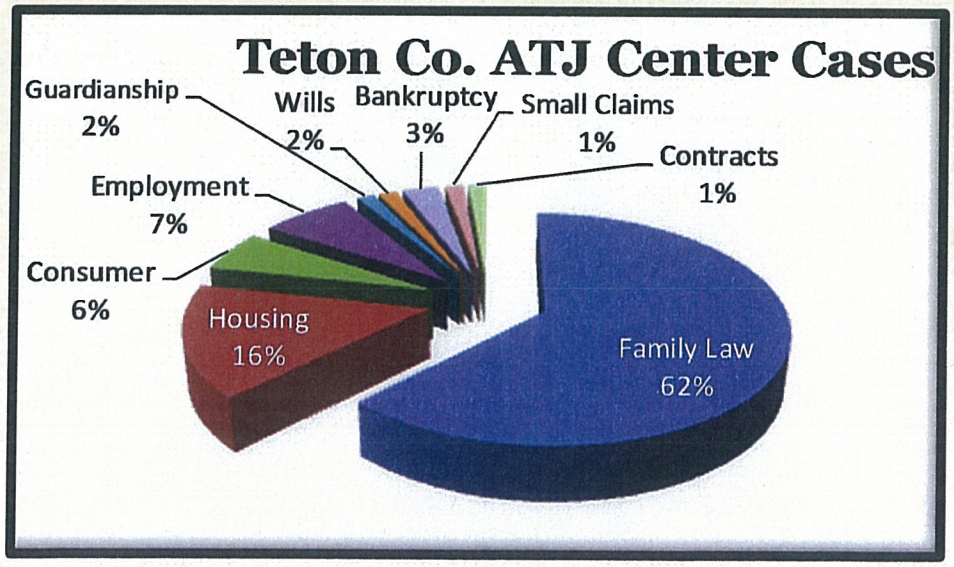
The Coalition provides holistic and comprehensive legal services to clients throughout the state. The Coalition currently has cases pending in 15 counties across Wyoming.

During FY 2014, 39 victims received comprehensive legal services from the Coalition.



TETON COUNTY ACCESS TO JUSTICE CENTER

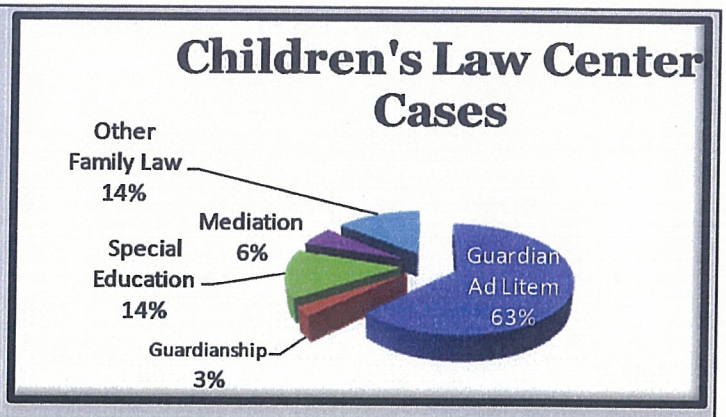
The Teton County Access to Justice Center was created in 2012 with a Center grant and has continued to expand its services since that time. The TCAJC is housed in the Teton County law library and provides legal information and self-help services in addition to providing legal representation through a panel of private contract attorneys. Eligible clients may be referred to a private attorney who provides service at no charge to the client. The services are paid at a reduced rate by the TCAJC using the Center's grant funds.



The TCAJC provided an attorney for 69 clients and provided legal information and self-help resources for an additional 105 individuals.

WYOMING CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER

The Wyoming Children's Law Center received a grant from the Center to provide assistance to children and families with legal needs. The WCLC continues to fill an important need by providing advocacy to ensure children receive special education services to which they are entitled. This helps ensure children with disabilities receive an appropriate education.



35 families received assistance from WCLC

CENTER FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Center's financial position remains strong. The special revenue funding from filing fees has remained stable and continues to generate adequate revenue to cover the Center's authorized budget.

The Center's total expenditures for the 2014 fiscal year increased due to several of factors. The largest increase was in the amount expended on grants. Although in 2013 the Center awarded $750,000 in grants, many of the projects and programs were new and took time to get off the ground, which resulted in grant expenditures of only $459,004 during the 2013 fiscal year compared to $788,975 in the 2014 fiscal year.

The Center reduced spending in other areas and refocused resources. The Center has focused on increasing grant funds available for direct representation of clients as well as increased focus on *pro bono* programs. For these reasons, the Center's expenditures for private attorney contracts were also reduced.

The total expenditure for staff salaries and benefits was substantially higher than previous years due solely to the fact that this was the first year the Center was fully staffed for the entire year. All staff salaries remained unchanged from the previous year.

The Center spent slightly less than budgeted for the year, but as programs and services continue to expand, a growing demand for the limited resources will continue.

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

Salaries and Benefits	$350,043
Office Expenses and Travel	$25,006
Telecommunications	$3,482
Grants	
Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault	$267,216
Legal Aid of Wyoming,	$347,825
Teton County Access to Justice Center	$112,500
Wyoming Children's Law Center	$61,434
Professional Services	
Private Attorney Contracts	$10,290
Other Professional Services	$529
TOTAL*	**1,178,325**

*Total includes the June 2014 grant expenditures of $65,032 which were paid in July 2014.

Wyoming Center for Legal Aid

Legal Assistance and Information for the Equality State

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Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002
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VISION

Equal access to justice for the people of Wyoming.

MISSION

Serving the legal needs of low-income persons of Wyoming through community engagement, education, information and expansion of legal services throughout the state.

Wyoming Center for Legal Aid
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