



CALIFORNIA INDIAN LEGAL SERVICES

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CILS's Response to LSC's Recommendations in the 2015 PQV Draft Report

PQV Report Corrections Needed

Page 7, text line# 10: "one day retreat" should be corrected to "two day retreat"

Page 7, text line# 11: "March" should be corrected to "June"

Page 7, text line# 19: "five" should be corrected to "four"

CILS Responses to PQV Recommendations

PERFORMANCE AREA ONE: Effectiveness in identifying the most pressing civil legal needs of low-income people in the service area and targeting resources to address those needs.

Recommendation L2.2.1.⁵ CILS should consider developing a case acceptance policy to identify more specifically the types of cases and accompanying levels of service that may be accepted throughout the program.

CILS Response: CILS is currently revising its intake manual and plans to incorporate a revised case acceptance policy.

Recommendation 1.3.3.1. CILS should continue to monitor its progress in meeting the goals of the strategic plan.

CILS Response: CILS is currently and will continue to implement and monitor the progress on meeting the goals and objectives of its Strategic Plan.

Recommendation 1.4.3.2. CILS should consider developing procedures to capture quantitative and qualitative outcome benefits of the work that it produces.

CILS Response: CILS had already similar discussions over the last year about this very issue and does want to develop procedures/processes to capture these outcomes. CILS is currently revising its intake manual and plans to incorporate this recommendation into the revision process to the extent that it does create an additional administrative burden on our staff and/or case management system.

PERFORMANCE AREA TWO: Effectiveness in engaging in and serving the low-income population throughout the service area.

Dignity and Sensitivity, including intake

Recommendation 11.1.4.1. The program should consider adding online intake through its website as an additional portal for client access.

***CILS Response:** CILS will begin the process to prepare for this function by revising its website. Our newly-hired Director of Marketing & Development is currently working on the website revision.*

Recommendation 11.1.4.2. Staff should be trained to enter information from the intake applicant directly into the case management system concurrent with the interview process.

***CILS Response:** CILS is currently revising its intake manual and plans to incorporate a revised intake procedure to include this requirement.*

Engagement with and access by the low-income population

Recommendation 11.3.6.1. CILS should review its LEP policy taking into account suggestions outlined in the Guidance to LSC Programs for Serving Client Eligible Individuals with Limited English Proficiency.

***CILS Response:** Because CILS service population is Native American and has not experienced any client who is not proficient in English it does maintain a robust LEP policy. However, under our Eastern Sierra Legal Services Program we do have occasional Spanish speaking client who are not proficient in English, we will revisit our LEP policy to ensure that adequate accommodations are made for this limited client population.*

PERFORMANCE AREA THREE: Effectiveness of legal representation and other program activities intended to benefit the low-income population.

Native American Grant

Recommendation IIL1.7.1 CILS should develop a comprehensive manual for legal work management and supervision that incorporates important aspects of file maintenance, time management, oversight and casework review, trial preparation and other skills requirements, including topics associated with practice in the tribal courts.

***CILS Response:** As part of its overall policy updating, CILS will be developing a Legal Management and Litigation Manual designed to address the issues outlined in this recommendation.*

Basic Field Grant

Recommendation 111.1.8.1 As resources permit, CILS should consider ways to reach communities in Alpine County, perhaps through the use of videoconferencing to provide community legal education.

CILS Response: *CILS welcomes this recommendation and will be considering approaches to better service and provide community education in Alpine County.*

PERFORMANCE AREA FOUR: Effectiveness of governance, leadership and administration.

Governance

Recommendation IV.1.11.1. CILS should consider providing quarterly reports to the board of trustees on units of service provided, along with the report on significant legal work.

CILS Response: *CILS welcomes this recommendation and is always interested in new ways to share the work we do with our Board. CILS will incorporate quarterly statistical information on the services provided to compliment the report on the significant legal work. We will begin this new report at the September 2015 meeting.*

Recommendation IV.1.12.1. CILS should explore and implement measures to retain the participation of effective members who may become ineligible to serve as client members of the board.

CILS Response: *CILS values its former Board members who have contributed to the successful of our program. CILS is currently establishing “Friends of CILS” (name is subject to change) to capture the talent of our former Board and keeping them active in supporting and promoting.*

Leadership

Recommendation IV.2.13.1. CILS should develop a written leadership succession plan for trustees and key staff leadership.

CILS Response: *A leadership succession plan for staff leadership has been discussed at both the Administrative staff level and our Board. We will be moving forward with this effort hopefully in the immediate future. While not formalized, currently Board members leaving CILS are encouraged and often do recommend an individual to replace to replace them. Potential Board members, as well as staff, continually try to identify good candidates for our Board, which can be challenging at times. Recommendation noted.*

Technology

Recommendation IV.3.14.1. CILS should adopt a disaster plan addressing the continuity of operations, preservation of data and safety of staff

CILS Response: *CILS is currently communicating with Lonestar Legal Aid and is in the process of researching information to develop a comprehensive disaster plan.*

Recommendation IV.3.15.1. CILS should engage in a detailed assessment of the structure and capability of the program's technologies, including the website and case management system, using as a framework the recently published Legal Services Corporation Baselines: Technologies That Should Be in Place in a Legal Aid Office Today (Revised April 2015).

CILS Response: *CILS is currently in the process of working with its IT vendor to assess the current technologies; plan for upgrades and maintenance including annual budgeting; and will be developing a more comprehensive long-term technology plan. CILS will use the LSC referenced technology report recommended as a resource while developing this plan. CILS's newly hired Director of Marketing & Development is currently already working on the revision of CILS's website that will include ongoing development and maintenance.*

Financial Management

Recommendation IV.4.16.1 In the immediate future, CILS should consider soliciting bids for award of its annual financial audit contract.

CILS Response: *CILS appreciates the recommendation and will be discussing it with both Committees (finance and audit) with a decision on issuing an RFP likely to be made at the September 2015 Board meeting.*