



LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

Office of Program Performance

***FINAL
PROGRAM QUALITY REPORT***

FOR

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey

Recipient Number: 331016

March 14 – 18, 2011

Team Members:

John Idleman, Senior Program Counsel (Team Leader)

Christy Fisher, Program Counsel

César Britos, Temporary Employee

Nancy Glickman, Temporary Employee

John E. Johnson, Jr., Temporary Employee

Robert Denney, COLPM Fellow

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey
Recipient # 331016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Program Overview	1
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	2
FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ITEMS FOR ACTION	4
PERFORMANCE AREA ONE. <i>Effectiveness in identifying the most pressing legal needs of low-income people in the service area and targeting resources to address those needs.</i>	4
Criterion 1. Periodic comprehensive assessment and ongoing consideration of legal needs	4
Criteria 2 and 3. Setting goals and objectives, developing strategies, allocating resources and their implementation	5
Criterion 4. Evaluation and adjustment	6
PERFORMANCE AREA TWO. <i>Effectiveness in engaging and serving the low-income population throughout the service area</i>	6
Criterion 1. Dignity and sensitivity	7
Criterion 2. Engagement with the low-income population	10
Criterion 3. Access and utilization by the low-income population	10
PERFORMANCE AREA THREE: <i>Effectiveness of legal representation and other program activities intended to benefit the low-income population in the service area.</i>	11
Criterion 1. Legal representation	11
Criterion 2. Private attorney involvement	15
Criteria 3 and 4. Other program services to the eligible client population and other program activities on behalf of the eligible client population	16
PERFORMANCE AREA FOUR: <i>Effectiveness of governance, leadership and administration</i>	17
Criterion 1. Board governance	17
Criterion 2. Leadership	18
Criterion 3. Overall management and administration	19
Criterion 4. Financial administration	21
Criterion 5. Human resources administration	22
Criterion 6. Internal communication	22
Criterion 7. General resource development and maintenance	23
Criteria 8 and 9. Coherent and comprehensive delivery structure/Participation in an integrated legal services delivery system	23

INTRODUCTION

Background.

The Legal Services Corporation's (LSC) Office of Program Performance (OPP) conducted a program quality visit to Legal Services of Northwest Jersey (LSNWJ) from March 14 – 18, 2011. The team members were John Idleman, OPP Senior Program Counsel/team leader, Christy Fisher, OPP Program Counsel, César Britos, Temporary Employee, Nancy Glickman, Temporary Employee, John E. Johnson, Jr., Temporary Employee, and Robert Denney, COLPM Fellow.

Program quality visits are designed to ensure that LSC grantees are providing the highest quality legal services to eligible clients. In conducting its assessment, the team carefully reviewed the documents LSC received from the program including its renewal narrative for 2010, its case service reports (CSRs) and other service reports (OSRs), the numerous documents the program submitted in advance of the visit, including advocates' writing samples, and the results of a survey of LSNWJ staff conducted on the Internet. On-site, the team visited the program's five offices. In addition to speaking to most of the LSNWJ staff members, the team interviewed a sample of board members, judges and community organization members.

In performing its evaluation of the grantee's delivery system, OPP relies on the LSC Act and regulations, LSC Performance Criteria, LSC Program Letters, and the ABA Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid. Its evaluation is organized according to the four LSC Performance Areas that cover needs assessment and priority setting; engagement with the low-income community; the quality of the legal work performed, including legal representation, its management and the written work produced; and program management including board governance, leadership, strategic planning, resource development, and coordination within the delivery system.

Program Overview.

LSNWJ was created in 2003 as the result of the merger of Somerset/Sussex Legal Services, Hunterdon County Legal Services, Legal Aid Society of Morris County, and Warren County Legal Services. LSNWJ is a nonprofit law firm that provides a full range of legal services to Somerset, Sussex, Hunterdon, Morris, and Warren Counties. LSNWJ uses the staff delivery model that employs substantive law teams based on areas of practice. It has a vibrant private attorney involvement (PAI) program and significant community outreach. The 2010 Census figures reflect that 16.5% of the population is Hispanic, 9.7% is Black, and 6.8% is Asian. The composition of the service area is mixed; it contains towns such as Somerville (Somerset County) and Morristown (Morris County) along with rural sparsely populated areas in Sussex and Warren Counties. The economic status of the population in the service area varies significantly. According to an April 11, 2011 Forbes Magazine article, annual household income estimates provided by the U.S. Census' American Community Survey indicate that Hunterdon, Morris and Somerset Counties are the fourth, eighth and ninth richest counties in the country. The

median annual household income in Hunterdon County is \$102,500. In contrast, the median annual household income in Warren County is \$69,767. Of the 1,117,356 people residing in the service area, 46,001 (3.9%) live below the federal poverty level. Fifty-three Fortune 500 businesses have headquarters, offices or a major facility in Morris County.

LSNWJ provides civil legal services from five offices strategically located throughout the service area. The program's office in Somerville, New Jersey (Somerset County) is home to a service office along with the program's administrative staff. The program's other offices are located in Morristown (Morris County), Flemington (Hunterdon County), Belvidere (Warren County), and Newton (Sussex County). LSNWJ, like other legal services providers in the state, has faced plummeting funding since 2008. IOLTA funds dropped drastically by more than 80%. LSNWJ cut its costs significantly in a number of areas to address the loss in revenue. Unfortunately, despite its cost-cutting measures, the program could not avoid undergoing a reduction in force in 2010.

In 2011, the LSNWJ budget consisted of \$433,592 in LSC basic field funding. Non-LSC funding, including IOLTA, is approximately \$2,841,300. The program will receive a reduction in its 2011 LSC funding of \$18,046 under the federal budget passed April 14, 2011.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey consists of a staff that is dedicated to their clients, their work and access to justice for the low-income population of the service area. A number of the attorneys are highly experienced and very knowledgeable in their area of practice. Many of them were with the programs that existed prior to the merger. Before joining LSNWJ a number of the attorneys were in private practice engaged in civil and, in some cases, criminal practice and they bring that experience and perspective to their current work.

The program and its leadership are highly respected by judges, other stakeholders and peers and are perceived as leaders in the legal community. The judges remarked on the advocates' high level of professionalism, their preparation and the quality of the advocates' work in the representation of clients. The advocates are described as "passionate" and zealous in their representation.

The program is very productive and the number of cases closed per 10,000 poor persons in 2010 (630) is more than double the national median for closed cases/10,000 poor persons (284). For 2010, the program's percentage of cases closed as extended service is higher than the national average. In addition, the PAI program closed almost 70% of the cases for 2010 as extended service cases.

The program is engaged in a strategic planning process, which is the first since the strategic planning it undertook in 2003 at the time of the merger.

LSNWJ last conducted a comprehensive assessment of the most pressing legal problems and needs of the low-income population in its service area in September 2004. Since that time it has relied on the 2009 Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) *Unequal Access to Justice Study*, and other studies conducted by stakeholder organizations to inform and guide it in determining the legal needs of the community and help form the program's priorities.

With an emphasis on providing a "client-centered" delivery structure, LSNWJ is effective in serving the client community with dignity and sensitivity. It uses a coordinated telephone intake system that is supplemented by walk-ins and outreach, operates offices that are, on the whole, convenient and accessible, and engages closely with the community stakeholders that also serve the low-income community.

LSNWJ's intake is conducted primarily on the telephone using a recently-implemented, sophisticated telephone system and the staff on the intake team is overseen by a new supervisor. The system allows intake workers in various offices to participate in answering telephone applications for the entire service area. LSNWJ's system is supplemented by LSNJ's statewide telephone intake and referral hotline, which provides brief service, advice and referrals to all of the New Jersey legal services programs.

The program serves diverse populations that speak a number of languages other than English as their first language. LSNWJ has a sufficient number of intake workers fluent in Spanish, the most common language spoken by clients. Its language access coordinator provides English-Spanish interpretation and translation, and coordinates services in other languages. LSNWJ uses Language Line-as well as contract interpreters and translators to address other language requests.

LSNWJ is actively engaged with the low-income population through its numerous partnerships with organizations and agencies that serve the client population. The client eligible board members are actively engaged at board meetings; their participation complements the voice of the community articulated by other stakeholders.

LSNWJ uses a substantive law team delivery approach. The teams include the Autonomy Team, Family Team, Housing Team, Consumer Team, Protective Services Team, and Public Entitlements Team. Each team has a team leader and members from various offices. The team leader is tasked with guiding the legal work of the team.

In 2011, LSNWJ's substantive law teams developed impressive work plans addressing both the matters to be handled within the team's purview and the method of delivery; (i.e. referral, advice only, extended representation), and providing a solid framework for conducting work and managing the team's resources.

LSNWJ advocates have a considerable breadth of legal experience and a general breadth of knowledge about the programs and issues affecting their clients. The program

does not have a legal work management/supervision manual. LSNWJ lacks formal periodic systems for evaluating the effectiveness and quality of the program's legal work, its projects and the work of each of its teams. While the teams are to meet quarterly, and some meet more often than others, there is inconsistent ongoing supervision of legal work by the team leaders. The team leaders and other supervising attorneys have "open door" policies as a part of the supervision system. Individual case supervision is primarily self-directed.

LSNWJ primarily utilizes its Volunteer Program to supplement its services. Many PAI referrals for individual representation are comprised of clients who present a conflict of interest for LSNWJ. Its PAI efforts include private attorneys, corporate attorneys and in-house volunteers. LSNWJ crafted a comprehensive Private Attorney Involvement Plan for 2010-2011 that clearly enumerates the program's challenges, its use of volunteer attorneys to help address those challenges and the goals for 2010-2011. LSNWJ has recently appointed a program-wide PAI Coordinator to guide the PAI efforts.

The LSNWJ Board of Trustees is actively involved in critical policy decisions and works closely with the management of the program on governance issues, strategic planning and addressing LSC compliance issues. Board members are knowledgeable and dedicated to ensuring high quality legal services for eligible clients in the service area.

The executive director has held this position since the program was created in 2003 and is supported by the board and staff. She is devoted to the program and has a clear vision of its mission. She is recognized as a strong leader and serves as an integral component of the legal services community. She assumes and retains significant control of the management and administrative responsibilities.

Financial administration appears to be very well-handled by the chief financial officer (CFO) and the financial team. The CFO and the executive director work closely on financial and human resources issues.

LSNWJ has a coherent and effective overall delivery system and it is an active participant in the regional and statewide justice community and legal services delivery system.

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ITEMS FOR ACTION

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

Criterion 1. Periodic comprehensive assessment and ongoing consideration of legal needs.

Finding 1. LSNWJ completed its last comprehensive legal needs assessment in 2004.

Legal Services of Northwest Jersey (LSNWJ) conducted a comprehensive assessment of the most pressing legal problems and needs of the low-income population in its service area in September 2004. Since that time it has relied on the 2009 Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) *Unequal Access to Justice Study*, an annual review of its own statistical data and reports from other sources, including the Northwest New Jersey Community Action Program, Inc. (NORWESCAP), and Somerset County Compass Disability Service, as well as the Comprehensive Emergency Assistance System (CEAS) plans formulated by the county human services agencies for each of the five counties that are in the service area. LSNWJ received from LSNJ the county-specific results for the five counties in its service area that were gathered as part of the *Unequal Access to Justice Study*. This information enables the program to better understand the needs of the community.

In addition, LSNWJ conducts and attends meetings with social services providers, partner agencies and members of the bar and the bench to help determine the low-income population's most pressing legal problems and needs. It continues to expand these discussions through its ongoing association with community organizations and stakeholders.

The program also considered LSC's *Documenting the Justice Gap* for 2005 and 2007 as well as its Suggested List of Priorities, and the American Community Survey demographic information.

Although LSNWJ did not conduct its own independent survey, its review of other organizations' reports, its own data and LSNJ's needs assessment is sufficient, especially in these difficult economic times, to meet the requirements of 45 CFR 1620 and Standard 2.1 of the ABA Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid.

Criteria 2 and 3. Setting goals and objectives, developing strategies, allocating resources and their implementation

Finding 2. The LSNWJ board engages in an annual review of the program's priorities that are grounded in the recommendations of the substantive law teams.

LSNWJ formulates its priorities with input from its substantive law teams. The teams review demographic data, reports from other sources and case statistics to develop proposed priorities in each substantive area. The input from the program's substantive law teams is received by the board on an ongoing basis to assist it in the identification of legal needs and the board of trustees reviews the information to help it set the program's priorities.

Finding 3. LSNWJ is acutely aware of and addresses emerging needs and adjusts its work accordingly.

LSNWJ identifies needs as part of its engagement with the client community and by reviewing the requests for services made to the program's offices. Each year the substantive law teams develop a work plan as to what legal issues the program will handle in each substantive area and the level of service to be provided. The teams adjust their work plans each year to address emerging client needs and ever-changing program resources. For example, in the latter part of 2010, the plans were adjusted in response to the program's reduction in force.

In addition, LSNWJ adjusts its resources and seeks additional funding to address the emerging needs it identifies. LSNWJ hired a Housing Preservation Attorney to address the subprime, predatory lending and mortgage foreclosure crisis that has overwhelmed low-income people in the service area.

Criterion 4. Evaluation and adjustment

Finding 4. LSNWJ has not engaged in strategic planning since its merger.

LSNWJ last engaged in organized strategic planning in conjunction with the 2003 merger. Due to LSNWJ's funding crisis, program-wide strategic planning has not been a recent priority. The program plans to engage in strategic planning in the near future and has engaged a consultant to assist in the process.

The individual substantive law teams conduct annual reviews of their work when developing their work plans. LSNWJ is thus cognizant of the emerging legal needs presented by changing social issues and responds where possible after studying clients' needs and the program's capacity to address them. For example, beginning in 2008 LSNWJ carefully evaluated the needs of the client population in light of the increase in foreclosure cases, established a foreclosure project and maintained the position when decisions were made to reduce staff.

Recommendation I.4.4.1*¹: The program should continue with and complete its strategic planning in 2011.

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

¹ Recommendations in this report will have a Roman Numeral to identify the Performance Area, followed by three numbers identifying, respectively, the Criterion addressed by the recommendation, the number of the finding and a number designating whether it is the first, second, third, etc., recommendation under that finding. For example, III.2.14.3 designates Performance Area III, Criterion 2, Finding 14, third recommendation under Finding 14. There are two levels of recommendations in this report: Tier One and Tier Two. Recommendations that are indicated with an asterisk are Tier One recommendations and are intended to have a direct and major impact on program quality and/or program performance. In your next grant renewal application or competitive grant application, your program will be required to report what it has done in response to Tier One Recommendations instead of submitting a full narrative.

Criterion 1. Dignity and sensitivity

Finding 5. On the whole LSNWJ treats clients with dignity and sensitivity.

LSNWJ seeks to maximize access to its services for the low-income community by locating offices near public transportation and in areas that are close to the courts and state agencies. LSNWJ has an office in each of the five counties in its service area. It maintains reasonable office hours, 8:30 am - 4:30 or 5 pm, which reflect the schedules of the courts and agencies with which the clients engage. In Morristown the office is provided rent-free in a county building; the Newton office is across the street from a social service agency used by many of LSNWJ's clients. Each waiting room has various legal education materials as well as copies of LSNJ's bilingual monthly newsletter. Additionally, each office ensures that the newsletter is distributed to various social service agencies within its service area. Most of the offices have appropriate signage, are handicapped-accessible and provide areas for private client conversations.

The team noticed that the Morristown office has no interior waiting room. Applicants and clients must stand at a window in the public hall when discussing their legal issues with the support staff and possibly reveal confidential information to third parties. In addition, one of the computers designated for intake is in a public area. As a result, when applicants are speaking with an intake worker at that office, some interviews are not conducted in private and the intake worker may have to interrupt the screening process to field other calls or respond to in-person contacts.

LSNWJ in collaboration with other legal services providers accepts referrals from other state programs to avoid multiple referrals. The program no longer takes out-of-state referrals. Staff members regularly make home visits or schedule appointments at senior and community centers close to the client because they realize that transportation is a major challenge for their clients. The entire staff is engaged in making sure that clients obtain access.

The program strives to achieve a "client-centered" vision that informs all firm and board members in their decision-making, including how to allocate resources between offices and substantive units.

It is the program's policy that when determining which priority applications to accept and what level of representation to provide LSNWJ should not only examine whether a case presents sufficient merit, but also analyze the case applying uniform criteria developed by the program. Advocates should determine if the applicant confronts barriers to self-representation or could be empowered to act on information LSNWJ provides and whether there is a volunteer attorney or other provider who would handle the case. Interviews with attorneys indicate that not all of them consider the possibility of such referrals when making case acceptance decisions.

Recommendation II.1.5.1*: LSNWJ should consult with the landlord at the Morristown building to make arrangements to reconfigure its office space so that every individual seeking assistance can confer privately with LSNWJ staff.

Recommendation II.1.5.2*: LSNWJ should take steps to adjust the placement of its intake computer so that all applicants can meet in private with intake staff when engaging in the intake process, and that intake workers can conduct intake interviews in private and without interruption.

Recommendation II.1.5.3*: LSNWJ should ensure that staff attorneys follow its case acceptance policy and incorporate the possible referral of cases to volunteer attorneys or other service providers when making case acceptance decisions.

Finding 6. LSNWJ is implementing a new coordinated intake system.

LSNWJ conducts intake daily from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday - Friday. A staff of eight intake workers located throughout the program answers intake calls on a rotating basis. Approximately four workers are on intake duty at any one time. Three of the eight designated intake staff are bilingual in English-Spanish, and there is a separate intake queue for Spanish-speaking callers. The applicant's call, from any part of the service area, is answered by the next intake worker that is available to take the call from any of the five offices. The intake workers enter the eligibility and fact information contemporaneously into the Case Management System (CMS). After completing eligibility screening and some general fact gathering the intake worker reviews the appropriate attorney's calendar and schedules the applicant for a call-back from the attorney for either advice or extended representation. Each substantive law team has members available on a team advice panel to address issues needing only advice. Applicants calling with emergencies are referred immediately to the appropriate substantive law team member for advice or brief service. It may take as long as two weeks for a non-emergency applicant to speak with an attorney to receive information and advice or to commence legal representation and up to six months for a bankruptcy appointment to be scheduled.

There is a detailed intake procedure manual. Intake workers know which cases to schedule for appointments with which attorneys at each location, by case type and available appointment time. Intake workers, utilizing a prepared script and working under the supervision of an attorney, give information on landlord tenant issues. A support staff member who is located in the Somerville office now heads the intake team.

Each intake takes anywhere from ten minutes to a half hour to complete, with the average call lasting approximately fifteen minutes. Most workers complete seven to ten intakes a day.

At the time of the visit, the program had just installed additional management software that will allow it to determine, among other things, call volume and wait time, in order to monitor and adjust the system as needed.

Initial data from October - December 2010 reflects that, on an average, 103 intakes were completed through this system weekly and that 66 cases were accepted for appointments and 37 rejected. Data from January - March 2011 reflects that, on an average, 103.4 telephone intakes were completed through this system weekly and that 68.2 cases were accepted for appointments and 35.2 rejected.

LSNWJ continues to conduct local intake for persons who directly walk-in or call to a local office. In an effort not to erect barriers to its services, in many such cases walk-in applicants speak directly with a staff member; in other instances, they are given the opportunity to call the Legal Services of New Jersey (LSNJ) hotline from a phone in the office.

Most staff and stakeholders interviewed believe the coordinated intake system is an improvement and helpful to both applicants and staff. There are a few dissenters claiming that it does not address local nuances or that because it separates the case handlers from the staff member conducting intake it ultimately is a detriment to clients.

LSNJ operates a toll-free, multi-lingual statewide legal hotline that supplements intake at the local level. The hotline maintains the case acceptance policies of the local offices and refers cases to LSNWJ. The statewide hotline provides advice and brief service, and includes statewide computerized referral banks listing all other legal and non-legal social service providers.

Recommendation II.1.6.1: The substantive law teams may want to consider whether there are other areas where intake workers could provide information in order to streamline the system and free up attorney time.

Finding 7. LSNWJ's coordinated intake system lacks vigorous supervision.

Although considered a "team," the intake workers do not meet as a group to address concerns or discuss best practices. Their supervisor in Somerset does not meet with them in person and does not go out to the offices to review their work. Most direction is provided via e-mails or by reference to manuals. It does not appear that the intake supervisor reviews closed intakes or that there is a uniform system for review of the quality of the intakes by the substantive law team members.

If intake staff members have a question, they will approach the intake supervisor, either in person, by phone or through e-mail, and, if the supervisor is able, she will respond. According to the supervisor some intake staff members are still doing things differently from office to office. It is hoped that eventually there will be universal procedures followed by all intake staff.

Recommendation II.1.7.1*: LSNWJ intake staff should regularly meet in-person or by conference call under the direction of the intake team leader to address intake concerns and share best practices to assist in improving the system.

Criterion 2. Engagement with the low-income population

Finding 8. LSNWJ is involved with the low-income community and the organizations in its service area providing services to that community.

A distinctive attribute of LSNWJ's delivery system is its engagement with the client community. Many staff members are engaged with the community outside of their regular working hours. In most offices staff members regularly attend meetings of community organizations, including homeless consortiums, coalitions of service providers, and bar associations. Staff members routinely conduct outreach to vulnerable populations including the homeless, seniors, disabled, veterans, and domestic violence victims, among others. In addition, the staff works collaboratively with and as a component of an array of human services organizations, client-centered groups and governmental agencies that serve the low-income population. This involvement includes attending meetings, conducting outreach, intake, and educational programs and clinics, and accepting referrals of eligible clients. Most advocates in the program are involved in outreach. Staff members conduct a significant amount of community education. Staff members also serve on the boards of local community agencies or coalitions.

As part of the work done with its Legal Intervention Brings Recovery and Empowerment (LIBRE) Program funding, advocates regularly conduct intake at local domestic violence shelters, conduct trainings for clients as well as staff of agencies such as the Jersey Battered Women's Services and serve on committees to discuss systemic issues.

Interviews with representatives of community organizations and with staff and board members confirm that the program is actively engaged with the low-income population and with organizations and agencies that serve the poor. Many of the stakeholders had high praise for the LSNWJ staff they engaged with in their work with clients.

LSNWJ has a client satisfaction survey mechanism. However, for the past two years it has surveyed only senior clients.

Recommendation II.2.8.1*: LSNWJ should expand the use of client satisfaction surveys to cover all clients.

Criterion 3. Access and utilization by the low-income population

Finding 9. LSNWJ is committed to serving a diverse group of clients in the service area including those with limited-English proficiency (LEP).

The program has procedures for communicating with non-English speaking people and makes reasonable accommodation for their special needs. LSNWJ has an LEP plan that provides for training of staff on working with LEP clients and for hiring

bilingual staff members. LSNWJ prioritizes bilingual capacities in its recruitment of new staff. LSNWJ provides services to clients in their preferred language and has receptionists who are bilingual in English and Spanish in the Somerville and Morristown offices but not in the Flemington, Newton and Belvidere offices. LSNWJ uses Language Line to provide telephone access to interpreters in more than 140 languages. In each waiting area, LSNWJ posts “Point to your Language Posters” as well as a notice in Spanish and several other languages that free interpreting services are available.

LSNWJ has a full-time interpreter based in the Somerville office who is focused on ensuring that the language needs of clients and advocates are met throughout the service area. In addition to participating in the intake system two days a week, she coordinates requests for interpreters for interviews, attends court and other hearings to interpret for the attorneys and clients, and translates documents such as correspondence, court pleadings, questionnaires, and informational flyers.

There are no Spanish-speaking attorneys; however, the program is currently addressing this issue by attempting to fill a vacancy with a bilingual attorney.

The program has a good Limited English Proficiency (LEP) policy that addresses all of the issues raised in LSC Program Letter 04-02, *Services to Client Eligible Individuals with Limited English Proficiency*.

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

Criterion 1. Legal representation

Finding 10. LSNWJ has a staff of very highly experienced advocates.

LSNWJ has a number of highly experienced advocates who are very knowledgeable in their area of practice. Many of them were with the programs that existed prior to the 2003 merger. Many of the attorneys were in private practice engaged in civil and, in some cases, criminal practice. They bring that unique knowledge and perspective to their practice at LSNWJ. Most remain very enthusiastic about their work and are willing to learn new areas of the law and different ways to help clients. A few appear to be engaged in case handling that is not commensurate with their experience and are handling cases that could be adequately accomplished by advocates with much less experience.

Service delivery is effectuated primarily through advice panels comprised of team members and individual extended representation cases. Both the number of cases closed per poor person population and the percentage of extended representation cases is above the national average for LSC grantees. The knowledge level of attorneys within a designated specialty is very impressive. Based on our interviews with advocates, judges and stakeholders and the results of the senior client satisfaction surveys it appears that advocates achieve good outcomes for their clients.

The program's senior staff attorneys are very experienced. The executive director has 32 years of legal experience. The Morris County program director/protective services team leader has 39 years experience. The Warren County senior attorney has 20 years experience. The Sussex County managing attorney/autonomy team leader has 21 years experience. The Hunterdon County program director/public entitlements team leader has 28 years experience. The Somerset County program director has 25 years experience. The family team leader has 23 years experience. The consumer team leader has 28 years experience and the housing team leader has 32 years experience. The average number of years of experience for staff attorneys is more than 10 years. The average number of years of experience of the paralegals is over 17 years. The advocates are highly dedicated in their representation and strive to ensure that each client receives some legal help from LSNWJ.

Recommendation III.1.10.1: LSNWJ should conduct an evaluation of case distribution to ensure that the attorneys' talents are put to the best use for clients and the program.

Finding 11. LSNWJ falls short of meeting the legal work management and supervision requirements of LSC Performance Criteria, Performance Area Three, in a number of respects.

LSNWJ lacks formal periodic systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the program's legal work, its projects, and the work of each of its units. Most of the substantive law team leaders do not provide routine and ongoing supervision of legal work.

LSNWJ uses a substantive law team delivery approach. The teams include the Autonomy Team, Family Team, Housing Team, Consumer Team, Protective Services Team, and Public Entitlements Team. Each team has a team leader and members from various offices. Many advocates are on more than one team. Some attorneys cover their area for more than one office and smaller offices often have only one person covering a specific substantive area.

The team leader acts as the supervisor of team members for cases within that substantive area and is tasked with guiding the legal work of the team. Each office also has a manager, some of whom are lawyers, to deal with operational issues. The program director or managing attorney of each office operates as a supervisor for administrative and/or office matters. Yearly evaluations are to be conducted by the appropriate team leader and office supervisor. An advocate can thus have anywhere from two to four different supervisors. This matrix management model has caused confusion for some of the staff members who are not certain of the lines of authority and the role of the team leader versus the managing attorney/program director. Some staff expressed concern that supervisory lines were not clearly drawn.

The program does not have a legal work management/supervision manual. There is no written legal work supervision policy. There is no litigation director. There is no

one person responsible for the overall supervision of legal work. Individual case supervision is primarily self-directed. All supervising team leaders have an “open door” policy and are routinely available for consultation. However, there is no review of an individual advocate’s decision to accept or reject a case for ongoing representation. Nor are there any formalized periodic open case reviews or case closing review procedures. In fact, there was no evidence that closed cases are reviewed at any time.

The substantive law teams are to meet quarterly. On the whole this appears to occur, although some team leaders have more frequent meetings. Outside of the quarterly meetings, some of which include case clinics so that particular client issues can be addressed, legal work supervision is largely an advocate-initiated system. At times the managing attorney may provide supervision to attorneys in the office. New attorneys receive closer supervision, which includes review of written work and observations of court or administrative hearings. However, for other legal staff, written products are only reviewed upon request of the case handler and court or hearing appearances are not observed or critiqued.

It did appear, however, that offices use calendars to document hearings and client appointments, and that there is a tickle system that is used to keep track of critical case handling dates.

Recommendation III.1.11.1*: Before the end of calendar year 2011, LSNWJ should review the LSC Performance Criteria, Performance Area Three-Criterion 1.b., conduct an assessment of the systems, approaches and techniques it uses to carry out its representation, and implement changes in its practice that follow the indicators listed in the Performance Criteria. In particular, LSNWJ should develop and follow clear systems for supervision of legal work that include regular affirmative supervisory review of cases.

Recommendation III.1.11.2*: LSNWJ should create a plan for conducting periodic reviews of open and closed cases of all staff using the LSC Performance Criteria and the ABA Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid.

Finding 12. LSNWJ substantive law teams have developed impressive work plans.

A detailed work plan is thoughtfully developed each year as to both the matters to be handled within the team’s purview and the method of delivery; i.e. referral, advice only, extended representation. These plans provide an excellent framework for conducting work and managing the team’s resources. There is no prioritization of those cases accepted for extended representation such as to easily allow for resource reduction. With the exception of housing, the plans do not allow for basic information to be provided at the initial intake level. The plans list individual case handling/closing numerical expectations, but do not specifically discuss a strategy or method for dealing with larger systemic issues.

Recommendation III.1.12.1: LSNWJ should consider prioritizing the type of cases accepted for extended representation.

Recommendation III.1.12.2: LSNWJ should consider a format for providing basic information in all priority substantive legal practice areas.

Recommendation III.1.12.3: LSNWJ should reflect on developing a methodology for considering how to address systemic issues.

Finding 13. The program's advocacy is competent in all substantive areas.

Interviews with judges before whom LSNWJ advocates practice, on-site interviews with staff attorneys and a review of the writing samples submitted reflect that the program is doing conventional legal work and that advocates are providing professional representation to clients. Judges told the LSC team that LSNWJ attorneys are doing excellent work, are well prepared, professional, zealously represent their clients, are “passionate” in their representation, courteous, ethical and honest, and thoroughly know their area of the law. Uniformly, judges have the highest regard for the LSNWJ attorneys appearing before them and admire their commitment to the clients and program.

The writing samples from LSNWJ exhibited predominantly well-researched and persuasive legal writing. However, a few could have benefited from review before submission.

Recommendation III.1.13.1: As part of legal work management, supervisors should periodically review written work of all attorneys.

Finding 14. The program closes a comparatively high number of cases and a significant number of those are closed as extended service cases.

The program is very productive and the number of cases closed per 10,000 poor persons is more than double the national median for closed cases/10,000 poor persons. In 2009 the national median for closed cases/10,000 poor persons was 261 and the actual closed cases/10,000 poor persons for LSNWJ were 617. The program’s percentage of cases closed as extended service is higher than the national average. In 2010, the national average for cases closed as extended service was 21.8% of all closed cases. LSNWJ closed 24.7% of its cases as extended service.

Finding 15. LSNWJ has strong training and support mechanisms.

LSNJ provides comprehensive support systems that are utilized by LSNWJ. Attorneys and other staff have access to regular training events that can be attended in person or viewed remotely. Attendance at training events is encouraged by management and training requests are routinely approved. Staff members told us that they frequently take advantage of training. Attorneys have attended national trainings and uniformly

cited program support systems as one of the program's strengths. LSNJ also hosts statewide taskforces in the various substantive law areas. To ask questions and conduct research, advocates routinely use statewide listservs organized by substantive legal areas.

Criterion 2. Private attorney involvement

Finding 16. LSNWJ effectively integrates private attorneys in its work to supplement its representation and other services.

LSNWJ primarily utilizes a Volunteer Program to supplement its services. Currently, the majority of Private Attorney Involvement (PAI) referrals for individual representation are comprised of cases presenting a conflict of interest for LSNWJ. But it also uses volunteer attorneys in Chapter 7 bankruptcy cases and in representing clients in the Somerset Tenancy Project and the SAFE project in Hunterdon County. In addition, volunteers participate in community legal education efforts and draft documents. Its PAI efforts include private attorneys, corporate attorneys and in-house volunteers. There are about 225 attorneys on the pro bono list but many of them are inactive. In 2010, the program closed 233 cases; of those, 161 (69%) were extended service cases. Nationally, 34% of all PAI cases were closed as extended services cases.

LSNWJ crafted a comprehensive Private Attorney Involvement Plan for 2010-2011 that clearly enumerates the program's challenges and outlines its plan to use volunteer attorneys to help address those challenges and to achieve the program's goals for 2010-2011.

LSNWJ has recently appointed a program-wide PAI coordinator to guide the PAI efforts. Currently, each LSNWJ office has a list of private attorneys who are assigned cases. A staff member in each office is responsible for referring cases to the PAI participants and overseeing those referrals; that person interacts with the program's volunteer coordinator who supervises the efforts of the local coordinators. The intake supervisor makes referrals under the Merck Somerset Tenancy Project.

The PAI coordinator is working with bar associations in two counties to formalize their involvement in delivering legal services to clients and engage them in organized recruitment efforts. LSNWJ continues to recruit local private attorneys to provide free legal services to low-income residents in all five of the counties in the service area. Attorneys may also volunteer through the program's website. Volunteers receive training through LSNWJ.

LSNWJ is attempting to broaden its PAI efforts. The Hunterdon County Bar Association has established a Legal Services Committee whose charge is to raise money for LSNWJ and provide a pool of attorneys to take cases. The Sussex County Bar Association allows LSNWJ personnel an opportunity to solicit assistance during its meetings, and asks its members to make financial contributions to the program.

For more than 15 years, LSNWJ has had a partnership with Merck & Company that has allowed it to expand the services it provides. Merck attorneys, trained and supervised by LSNWJ staff attorneys, have volunteered in local housing courts. Other Merck attorneys have taken on representation of clients in Social Security and other matters. LSNWJ, Merck and the law firm of Loewenstein Sandler PC are in the process of establishing a program to provide comprehensive legal services to veterans at the Community of Hope, which provides shelter and other services for returning veterans.

In individual offices, LSNWJ has incorporated volunteer attorneys into the fabric of the program. In the Newton office, a retired Exxon attorney has been volunteering since 2003. He is now a regular presence at the local housing court. Two other attorneys volunteer on a part-time basis to ensure representation of clients with family law-related issues.

Recommendation III.2.16.1: As the program expands its PAI program, it may want to consider not only individual representation beyond conflict cases but also alternative delivery such as advice panels, mentorship opportunities and clinics.

Recommendation III.2.16.2: LSNWJ should follow the five tasks set out in its 2010-2011 Private Attorney Involvement Plan to improve its pro bono program.

Criteria 3 and 4. Other program services to the eligible client population and other program activities on behalf of the eligible client population

Finding 17. LSNWJ engages in a number of activities on behalf of the eligible client community that have a beneficial effect on clients.

LSNWJ engages in community education presentations. In 2010, the program staff conducted 47 community outreach education activities including some on fair housing, home ownership, tenancy, financial issues, credit, bankruptcy, domestic violence, employment law, autonomy/seniors, family law, and mortgage foreclosure prevention. LSNWJ worked in conjunction with many of its community partners including the Northwest New Jersey Community Action Program, Inc. (NORWESCAP), domestic violence shelters/providers, agencies for the homeless, and bar associations.

Each substantive law team work plan contains a community legal education component. The team members engage in various community legal education activities aimed at both clients and service providers. The extent and level vary among offices.

In some localities, the program offers on-site assistance at tenancy court that has recently been reduced due to resource limitations. Pro se clinics are periodically given in the family law area.

LSNWJ staff members engage in other activities on behalf of the eligible client community through collaboration with the judiciary, bar associations, social service agencies, and other service providers. Attorneys are active in both the local and state bar

associations; they have served as presidents of county bar associations and on bench-bar committees. Attorneys have also served on state Supreme Court Committees. LSNWJ staff members serve on boards of other non-profits, including domestic violence service providers, community action programs, senior service providers, and homeless service providers.

Recommendation III.3.17.1: LSNWJ may want to consider, as part of the strategic planning process, the value to the client community in creating pro se classes where eligible persons could be taught by staff or pro bono attorneys to represent themselves in the types of cases where the demand clearly overwhelms the program's resources.

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

Criterion 1. Board governance

Finding 18. The LSNWJ board of trustees demonstrates a commitment to the program and its mission, is appropriately involved in major policy decisions and is asserting effective oversight.

The LSNWJ by-laws provide for 15 to 25 board members. Seventeen seats are currently filled. Fourteen are attorney members and three are client members. The client membership number is out of compliance with LSC guidelines. There have been four client vacancies for more than one year. The board lacks diversity. There is one African American on the board and sixteen Whites. This does not reflect the diversity of the service area. Seventy-nine percent of the client population is White, nine percent is African American and sixteen percent is Hispanic.

The board has six committees: Executive, Finance/Audit, Benefits, Fund-Raising, Client Grievance/Personnel Grievance, and Search/Evaluation. The members of the Finance Committee receive appropriate information from the management and are very active in carrying out their duties. The board was very engaged in advising management and supporting decisions dictated by the loss of funds over the past three years. The board carries out regular evaluations of the executive director by polling staff but apparently not external constituents. Although the executive director completed a self-evaluation, it appears that the board prepared no written evaluation.

There are six or seven very active members, with a highly engaged Executive Committee; however, no client members are on the Executive Committee.

Attendance at board meetings had been problematic but is now better since the number of meetings was reduced and the meetings can be attended by telephone.

There is healthy interaction and exchange of ideas between the board and the executive director, with some initial disagreements ultimately leading to what appear to be proper and widely accepted decisions.

There is no board manual or training materials for new board members. The executive director provides new board members with training and orientation when they first come on the board. In the past, the trainings of new members have concerned the history of each of the merged organizations, LSC requirements, board roles, and financial oversight.

Board members receive meeting materials sufficiently in advance to enable them to prepare for the meetings. The executive director spends time with the client board members prior to board meetings when there are complex issues on the agenda.

The program had no succession plan prior to the team's arrival. On the fourth day of the visit the team was presented with a succession plan.

Recommendation IV.1.18.1: While the written "succession plan," developed by the program and submitted to the team during its on-site visit, captures valuable policies in the event of an executive director transition, the board should be encouraged to continue thinking strategically about future leadership, long-term planning and capacity building.

Recommendation IV.1.18.2: LSNWJ should add to its succession plan its obligation pursuant to LSC Grant Assurance Number 14, to notify the LSC Office of Information Management within thirty (30) calendar days after a change of chief executive officer.

Recommendation IV.1.18.3: The board of trustees should complete future evaluations of the executive director in writing and place copies in her personnel file.

Recommendation IV.1.18.4: As board vacancies occur, LSNWJ should seek to develop a more diverse board, including appropriate representation of minorities.

Criterion 2. Leadership

Finding 19. LSNWJ's leadership is centered in the program's executive director.

The executive director has 32 years of legal experience, including eight years as the executive director of LSNWJ. Prior to 2003 she was the executive director of Somerset/Sussex Legal Services for seven years. She shows persuasive leadership in addressing issues of concern to the program such as dealing with funding issues and making difficult decisions on staff composition. She is recognized by the staff and the community as the voice of the program. The job description submitted to LSC for the Program Quality Visit lists twenty major obligations that fall on the executive director with little or no support from the rest of the staff.² The director is very hands on and

² Duties & Responsibilities: 1) Directs the overall operations of the agency in compliance with the mission of LSNWJ, the policies established by the Board of Directors, the regulations established by the Legal Services Corporation, and requirements of funding sources; 2) Sets agency and program objectives and outcomes, and develops organizational structures and functions consistent with those objectives and outcomes; 3) Provides advice to the Board of Directors on the establishment, development and

engages personally in the listed duties. Under her leadership, the program has had to weather extremely difficult financial times and make difficult personnel decisions in addition to restructuring some of the program's delivery methods by developing the substantive law team approach, installing the coordinated intake system and restructuring the PAI program. There is little delegation of workload and the executive director performs these tasks rather than giving responsibility to others and conducting oversight. Interviews with staff attorneys indicate that the executive director maintains tight control over all spending, including the approval of all training and litigation expenses.

In the branch offices the program directors and/or senior-managing attorneys are well-known and respected in their communities and recognized as the principal guide for the offices. It does not appear that these staff members or any group of the program staff work in consultation with the executive director and the board to help formulate LSNWJ's vision and mission but that the vision and mission is what the executive director articulates.

Recommendation IV.2.19.1: The program may want to provide additional managerial support for the executive director and build additional organizational capacity for the future.

Criterion 3. Overall management and administration

Finding 20. LSNWJ management is concentrated in the executive director.

The executive director is primarily responsible for the management and administration of all program activities and functions. The managers in the five offices are to oversee the county offices and the substantive law team leaders are designated to supervise the legal work of the attorneys on their teams.

implementation of policy and priorities; 4) Works cooperatively with the Management Team; 5) Communicates the work of the Management Team to staff and seeks staff input on agency policy and procedures; 6) Establishes and maintains caseload management systems; 7) Provides legal supervision and co-counseling; 8) Evaluates personnel, agency and program performance; 9) Evaluates training needs of staff and Board and provides for relevant training; 10) Oversees the financial matters of the agency; 11) Recruits, hires and oversees the employment of staff and all other personnel matters of the program; responsible for Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, procedures and implementation; 12) Maintains the public relations activities of the program, i.e., communicates and establishes contacts and relations with courts, Bar Associations, private bar, governmental agencies, and community organizations; 13) Participates in committees, task forces and working groups; speaks to community groups, schools and others about legal rights and LSNWJ services; prepares materials relating to these presentations; 14) Provides training to other legal advocates; prepares materials relating to these presentations; 15) Oversees all contacts and communications with the press; 16) Develops and supervises LSNWJ's private bar involvement program; 17) May provide occasional civil legal service to clients and client groups including advice, negotiation, litigation, and administrative advocacy pursuant to program priorities and policies; 19) Prepares and submits administrative (e.g., travel) reports as required; 19) Maintains case handler time records on a timely basis; 20) Performs such other duties as may reasonably be requested.

Program supervisors, whether they are program directors, senior/managing attorneys or team leaders, do not meet on a periodic basis as a management team. In the past there was a management team, which initially included the former program directors and the executive director. This team originally met weekly and then, quarterly; it does not appear to meet with any regularity now. Instead, the management group has now expanded to include substantive law team leaders and program directors, one of whom is not an attorney. However, this group does not meet regularly. Some members of this larger group did meet to review layoffs and to reconcile performance appraisals, to ensure that they were uniform, but not all were involved. The executive director does rely significantly on the chief financial officer's (CFO) input on administrative and programmatic decisions in addition to fiscal decisions. The program expressed a different opinion on management's decision making in its response to the draft report. That response is attached to the report.

It does not appear that program directors, senior/managing attorneys or team leaders have recently attended management training. The executive director makes major decisions with little input from the supervisors. She consults with the board and obtains its approval prior to implementation of any new major policy. Decisions are made timely. However, the lines of authority are not clear to the entire staff.

LSNWJ has a written disaster recovery plan that addresses preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery in an emergency; protection of staff, office property, case files and technology; alternate sites for meeting; and the continuity of operation for LSNWJ. While many areas of the plan are very detailed, others give responsibility to the executive director and program directors to develop specific plans for the county offices. The executive director is very knowledgeable in the area of disaster legal services and shares her expertise with others on a local state and national level.

Recommendation IV.3.20.1: The program should explore ways to make the best use of the executive director's skills while building the capacity of the organization through expanded leadership responsibilities for other members of program management. LSNWJ should provide opportunities for staff to have input in program policy decisions.

Finding 21. The technology needs of the program are administered by LSNJ.

LSNJ provides all programs in the statewide legal services network with computer hardware and software, network capabilities, website and telephone systems. LSNJ is responsible for technology planning, systems maintenance and technical support. The programs in the statewide system are connected through a single phone system and share a statewide intranet. LSNJ has implemented plans to convert from Kemps Clients for Windows to Legal Files and anticipates that this move will occur in June or July, 2011. This change will assist in the electronic storage of documents and the sharing of client information between programs.

LSNWJ has recently integrated a sophisticated telephone intake system that allows the program to closely track calls, hold time and disposition of intake.

On the whole, LSNWJ staff members were satisfied with the technology available to do their work. However, several are frustrated because periodically the technology fails and the server or phones go down.

Criterion 4. Financial administration

Finding 22. The program appears to have adequate financial policies, procedures and practices in place.

LSNWJ appears to have experienced financial staff responsible for managing the program's fiscal operations. In order to reduce expenses, LSNWJ went to Central Purchasing in December, 2009. It also outsources certain tasks such as COBRA.

The team's review of the program's financial administration was limited. The program's budget is prepared by the executive director and the CFO and presented to the board's finance committee and then to the full board twice a year: in October and then an up-date is presented sometime between May and August. Cash flow reports are prepared twice a month and an accrual financial statement is given to the board six times a year.

The executive director and CFO also prepare an accrual profit and loss statement for the Finance Committee and the board six times a year and a total profit and loss statement that is audited annually. From this report the executive director and CFO prepare 145 other reports for 38 funders. While these reports are similar each has differences and separate reports must be prepared. The executive director and CFO prepare grant reports as required by individual funders. There does not appear to be a way to streamline the multiple grant reports. LSNWJ uses a software package selected by LSNJ for all organizations in the state. There has been no management letter prepared in years. However, the auditor was to submit a management letter in April when the profit and loss statement was presented to the Finance Committee and the Board

The executive director and the CFO along with the relevant board members reviewed LSC's Program Letter 10-2, *Embezzlement, Fraud and the Importance of Internal Control*, and made several changes to its practices including the policy for use of the program's corporate debit card.

In New Jersey, the CFOs from the legal services programs do not meet to discuss their challenges and how their work can be improved or streamlined.

Recommendation IV.4.22.1: The program should encourage its CFO and the fiscal officers of other New Jersey legal services programs to meet periodically and discuss the challenges faced in accomplishing their duties.

Recommendation IV.4.22.2*: The program should update its accounting guide to ensure that it is in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Accounting Guide for LSC Recipients, published in August 2010.

Criterion 5. Human resources administration

Finding 23. The program does not have a Human Resources Director.

The program's human resources function is managed by the executive director and the CFO; a member of the finance team helps administer benefits. The program had good benefits along with a retirement plan to which the employer contributes. Unfortunately, the program has been unable to continue many of its benefits due to the funding crisis. LSNWJ has access to an Employee Assistance Plan which it has utilized to deal with personnel issues.

Even though LSNWJ had to conduct a reduction in force in September of 2010, morale on the whole was good. The program does not experience high staff turnover.

LSNWJ has an employee evaluation process that is applicable to all staff. Performance evaluations are to be conducted annually. The program does not always achieve this goal but the evaluations are customarily made within a 12 to 18 month period. LSNWJ management circulate evaluation forms enabling staff to conduct a self evaluation and the leaders of the substantive law team and the individual's manager (this may be a program director or senior/managing attorney) to evaluate the individual with input from other staff in the person's team and office.

The managers and the person evaluated meet to discuss the evaluation to arrive at the final assessment and design plans for future improvement.

Criterion 6. Internal communication

Finding 24. LSNWJ uses a range of technologies to improve its internal communication.

The executive director effectively communicates with staff using email. LSNWJ maintains an L drive (intranet) that contains regularly updated policies and procedures. The executive director does not travel to the branch offices with any regularity but will visit an office if she has an appointment in the area or there is a specific reason for her to be at the office.

Regular program communication among staff takes place through email. Beginning in 2011, LSNWJ began to utilize its video conferencing capabilities. Program advocates regularly use email to ask questions and share information. Staff members informed us that they feel part of a larger program as opposed to just their individual office or region and generally felt informed on what was going on within the program.

Even though LSNWJ does not have regular program-wide staff meetings, the entire staff meets twice a year. There are quarterly substantive law team meetings, either in-person or by conference call, that include team representatives from each office. Some offices could benefit from periodic staff meetings.

Recommendation IV.6.24.1: LSNWJ may want to expand communication between the executive director and staff in all of the offices with more frequent visits, video conferences, emails or perhaps a regular blog highlighting significant programmatic issues and occurrences.

Criterion 7. General resource development and maintenance

Finding 25. LSNWJ is very successful in obtaining additional funding for the program.

LSNWJ has not adopted a formal resource development plan. Under the strategic plan developed after the merger, LSNWJ planned to hire a resource developer but the plan was not executed due to funding reductions.

LSNWJ has been successful in expanding its resources. It has many funding sources including federal and state grants, United Way grants, county bar foundation revenue, special project funding, and corporations.³ LSNWJ is working with members of local bar associations to expand resource development. The program's on-going relationship with Merck & Co. has not only resulted in an enhanced volunteer presence but the Merck Foundation has been a significant and generous contributor to LSNWJ.

Recommendation IV.7.25.1: Since three of the five counties in LSNWJ's service area are in the top ten wealthiest counties in the country and contain a number of Fortune 500 businesses, the board and management should consider how those resources can be developed to generate additional funding to help the low-income citizens in the service area deal with their legal problems.

Criteria 8 and 9. Coherent and comprehensive delivery structure/Participation in an integrated legal services delivery system

Finding 26. LSNWJ is engaged in comprehensive and integrated service delivery.

LSNWJ is part of a statewide system, including other regional legal services providers and LSNJ, through which a full range of civil legal assistance is provided. Statewide coordination efforts by LSNJ ensure that all of the legal services programs are actively involved in an integrated service delivery system. LSNWJ collaborates with other legal services programs in New Jersey on substantive legal issues and coordinated

³ For example, the 2011 budget includes local funding of \$126,210 from County Freeholders, \$7,645 from the Campaign for Justice, \$4,000 from the Morris County Bar Foundation, \$80,000 from the New Jersey Division on AIDS, \$136,524 from Merck, and three United Way grants totaling \$150,480 in addition to other state funding.

task forces and working groups. LSNWJ collaborates with court personnel, government agencies, service providers, nonprofit organizations, and bar associations to expand access and provide better services to clients.