

## **Project Background**

In 2004 Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA), Iowa Legal Aid (ILA), and Pro Bono Net (PBN) received an LSC Technology Initiative Grant (LSC TIG) to develop LiveHelp, which allows statewide website visitors to ask remotely-located Web Site Specialists for help finding online legal information and resources. Through an online chat, the Specialists are able to immediately direct the Web site visitors to appropriate legal information. LiveHelp pilot projects were launched in June 2006 on MontanaLawHelp.org and IowaLegalAid.org. Based on the promising results, LiveHelp has been expanded in several areas.

## **Current Status**

Implemented with LivePerson Pro software (<http://www.liveperson.com>), LiveHelp allows Web site visitors to click a button, connect with a Specialist, and ask for information about a legal problem. The Specialist then provides the visitor with a link to the appropriate information or escorts the visitor to relevant resources on the site. (If a Specialist is unavailable, the visitor can choose to leave a message and receive the information in an e-mail.) LiveHelp projects are staffed by VISTA volunteers, paralegals, interns, staff attorneys, other willing staff members, law students and volunteer attorneys.

With replication support from PBN, LiveHelp has launched on eight other statewide websites:

- LawHelp.org/LA
- GeorgiaAdvocates.org
- ArkansasLegalServices.org
- LawHelpMN.org
- TexasLawHelp.org
- LawHelpOntario.org
- IllinoisLegalAid.org
- LawHelp.org/NY

In 2009, LiveHelp assisted more than 3,500 website visitors. The Georgia project is the first LiveHelp initiative to serve advocate site users; the Arkansas project is the first cross-platform LiveHelp initiative; and the Texas project is the first deployment of LiveHelp in a disaster response context (Hurricane Ike) using volunteer attorneys as navigators. Two states, Minnesota and New York, now offer LiveHelp service in Spanish via their Spanish LawHelp mirror sites, [www.LawHelpMN.org/espanol](http://www.LawHelpMN.org/espanol) and [www.ayudalegalny.org](http://www.ayudalegalny.org).

## **Support for Additional Replication Projects**

With support of TIG funding, Pro Bono Net has developed resources and capacity to assist additional LiveHelp replication projects. LiveHelp initiatives are planned for 2010 in Kentucky, Colorado and Utah. In addition, Montana will expand LiveHelp to remote self-help centers in partnership with the courts.

## **Want to know more?**

If you'd like to learn more about this project or see a demonstration, contact:

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