

TIG FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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I. Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of our project was to increase access to justice for people with low income by making the self-help information and triage systems on our statewide website, CTLawHelp.org, more functional and accessible to our ever-increasing population of mobile-dependent users.

To achieve that goal, we had three objectives:

- Objective 1: Conduct research and planning for improvements to statewide website.
- Objective 2: Design and develop mobile-first statewide web interface.
- Objective 3: Test and launch new website.

There were no changes made to our goal or objectives.

II. Evaluation Data and Methodologies

We used a variety of methods to assess the project accomplishments. Our assessment was both quantitative and qualitative, and it addresses the factors in the approved Evaluation Plan. Discussion about them is included in the following sections and in the Attachments of this Final Evaluation Report.

Objective 1: Conduct research and planning for improvements to statewide website.

- Description of Ford Foundation study (LSC Statewide Website Assessment) findings that we plan to implement.
- Summary of findings from legal aid community research.
- Summary of stakeholder meetings.
- List of resources used in and findings from mobile web app research.
- Description of key findings from taking inventory of current website.
- Analytics reports and summary of user feedback.
- Summary of preliminary features of the basic website template and admin interface.

Objective 2: Design and develop mobile-first statewide web interface.

- Description and screenshots of basic website template.
- Description and screenshots of key features of triage, online classroom, and search functionalities.

- Description and screenshots of the admin interface.
- Description of Ford Foundation study best practices implemented.
- Report on design sessions with stakeholders.
- Screenshots of preliminary wireframes and mockups.

Objective 3: Test and launch new website.

- Description of findings from beta testing and revisions implemented.
- Description of testing findings from stakeholders and revisions implemented.
- Date of website launch.
- Description of outreach and promotion activities.
- Documentation created to replicate the basic template.
- Report on analytics, user feedback, and revisions made because of post-launch evaluation.

LSC Program Counsel, David Bonebrake, approved our Evaluation Plan on April 17, 2017.

III. Summary of Major Accomplishments, Recommendations and Future Steps

Legal aid websites were originally designed for a desktop environment, with the mobile version added as a secondary feature. As recently as 2011 and 2012, 80% of our website visitors were still coming to the site from a desktop computer. But technology is changing rapidly and people are using handheld devices more and more, often as their only source of internet access. Now, approximately 65% of the visitors to CTLawHelp.org access the site on a handheld device.

It was evident that we needed to update our statewide website to make it more functional and accessible to our ever-increasing population of mobile-dependent users. To address this challenge, our major accomplishments for this project include:

- Providing users an efficient path to self-help resources and triage on mobile devices, while working to lighten the load on their data plans.
- Helping users, who often cannot define their legal problems in legal terminology, to connect with appropriate information and relevant referrals written in plain language.
- Creating an innovative website interface that feels more like a traditional mobile app and less like a collection of static web pages.
- Analyzing the Ford Foundation-funded website study conducted by LSC, along with other work done within the legal aid community, to identify relevant recommendations and resources.
- Updating Connecticut's statewide website, CTLawHelp.org, to a mobile-first design. (*See attached: MobileScreenshots.pdf*)
- Conducting extensive outreach to promote the new site to the client-eligible population, social service agencies, and legal aid staff in Connecticut.
- Designing a basic template that can easily be replicated in whole or in part by others in the legal aid community so they can save time and money tackling similar projects.
- Providing a template with a set of core features built in. Those include Drupal themes, a triage module, enhanced search, and a module for Guides (formerly called Online Classrooms). All of that functionality is already in place, tested, and working. <https://github.com/CTLawHelp-org>
- Building a modern, intuitive, and efficient administrative interface to make it easier for website managers to create and maintain content.

Our recommendations for further development of this work and how it can be best used and adapted by others include:

- Addressing the needs of the growing number of users seeking legal information on our websites from a mobile device is a common concern for all statewide websites. We built this site and

template with the intent that others could replicate all or part of it. Feedback from other users will inform future modifications and updates.

- For websites built on the Drupal platform, this template offers website managers a path to move their site to the latest version of the software, Drupal 8, using both modules that we have developed and proven community modules that have been used and tested together.
- This project illustrates a new model for legal aid websites: built with separate front and back ends. This model allows for more efficient management and maintenance and we encourage others to review it to inform their own site development.
- Our efforts will contribute to the growing body of information in the community on working with a mobile-first design.

IV. In-Depth Analysis of Accomplishments

Project Objective One: Conduct research and planning for improvements to statewide website.

Project Objective Two: Design and develop mobile-first statewide web interface.

Much of the work on the first two objectives overlapped and was done concurrently. A significant amount of research and planning was done during the first several months and has continued throughout the project. The design and development process was iterative, with portions of the site being built, tested, and then modified, sometimes several times, as we moved forward.

Resources: Many helpful resources and data are available. These have been particularly noteworthy:

- The LSC Statewide Website Assessment Project report (<http://webassessment.lsc.gov/>) has been a valuable resource. One of the nine focus areas of the evaluation is “Mobile Friendly,” which considers the extent to which the site supports varying screen sizes, particularly smaller mobile screens. It suggests opportunities and resources to help statewide websites improve. We also received a Connecticut-specific website assessment. As part of the project, a comprehensive toolkit was developed and is available to the legal aid community. The Opportunities section of the Assessment (<http://webassessment.lsc.gov/report/4-opportunities/>) has served as a useful checklist.

- The PEW Research Center published a study in 2016 that took a deep look at the state of smartphone ownership and use in America today. The report states: “For a number of Americans, smartphones serve as an essential connection to the broader world of online information. Today nearly two-thirds of Americans own a smartphone, and 19% of Americans rely to some degree on a smartphone for accessing online services and information and for staying connected to the world around them — either because they lack broadband at home, or because they have few options for online access other than their cell phone.” The full report reinforces the importance of making websites fully functional for mobile phone users. It can be found here: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/04/01/us-smartphone-use-in-2015/>.

- In 2016, Billy Huang, a New Haven Legal Assistance Association (NHLAA) volunteer with a strong background in statistical analysis, conducted a study of the mobile accessibility and usage of CTLawHelp.org based on Google Analytics data. About 65% of website visitors accessed the site on a mobile device. In his study, he hypothesized the number of visitors accessing CTLawHelp.org on a mobile device has increased, but many of these users are being underserved because of suboptimal user interfaces and mobile page load speeds. To quantify these deficiencies, he analyzed many parameters in our desktop, mobile, and tablet user groups for the 2015 calendar year. He identified a significant difference in the time it took to load web pages, the number of pages being viewed, and the behaviors of users across these three device groups. (*See attached: NHLAA Mobile Summary Excerpts.pdf*)

- Google's Material Design Guidelines (<https://material.io/guidelines>) are an important resource. Their goal is to "Develop a single underlying system that allows for a unified experience across platforms and device sizes." The site also has many examples and recommendations.

- The framework that we are using has a site that is very useful: <https://material.angularjs.org/latest/>. Instead of giving recommendations for aspects of a website, this site is more of a reference for the framework, and it has examples of the components and features available.

- A List Apart (<https://alistapart.com/>) explores the design, development, and meaning of web content, with a special focus on web standards and best practices.

- We have found a number of additional website-specific resources suggested in the LSC Statewide Website Assessment and Toolkit helpful. They include

- A mobile design pattern library: <https://pptrns.com/>
- Google PageSpeed Insights: <https://developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights/>
- Google Mobile-Friendly Test: <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>
- The Noun Project for icons: <https://thenounproject.com/>

Basic Website Template and Administrative Interfaces: Working collaboratively with Kate Frank, CTLawHelp.org Web and Publications Manager, and Kathy Daniels, Statewide Legal Services of CT IT Administrator, Scott Friday Designs formulated a strategy for building the new mobile website template and administrative interface. This work was done over several months during the project planning stages. Our strategy: One of the main goals for this project is to provide users with an optimal website experience, no matter what type of device they are using. The current preferred solution for this is to create a site that uses responsive design, where the site detects and then adapts to the screen size of the user's device, providing the best experience possible. An optimal user experience can encompass many different aspects including performance, design, ease of use, and security/privacy. While a typical Drupal website can satisfy all of these requirements, a newer approach called Headless Drupal has become available in Drupal 8. In this setup, Drupal is strictly used as the backend content management system, and the content is sent to the frontend interface through a web framework.

The biggest benefit to this setup is the ability to optimize the backend and frontend independently from each other. For the backend, Drupal has almost all of the features it needs built-in, so only a few modules are needed. This helps keep performance high and reduces the effort and time needed for maintenance. Security is vastly improved in this setup as well.

Along with web frameworks, design frameworks have become an efficient way to develop a website that follows best practices. These frameworks are based on industry standards for modern responsive websites, and provide default styling settings for the various web components of a site. We found many commonalities between the recommendations in the LSC Statewide Website Assessment and the default settings of the current popular design frameworks. Using a design framework, we can ensure these recommendations are properly incorporated into the new site. Google's Material Design (<https://material.angularjs.org/>) was chosen as the design framework for its simple and clean looks, which can be modified based on stakeholder recommendations.

In addition to the above functionality and features for the new website, we will incorporate and update our existing Triage module, Guides, and create a more robust site Search.

Study Findings and Implementation: The LSC Statewide Website Assessment and our Connecticut-specific assessment served as a very helpful checklist of website features and functions. It helped us to

focus on characteristics that are important to retain in the new site and on areas where we could look at improvements.

We wanted to ensure the new website continues to meet the key criteria we are currently achieving. These include:

- **Plain Language:** We know that providing plain language content is essential. Kate Frank has plain language expertise, and the locally produced content on CTLawHelp.org has been written to an approximate 8th grade reading level. While some legal terminology is necessary, we try to help users understand the necessary terminology, concepts, and processes.
- **Language Access:** The site uses human translation rather than machine translation.
- **Content Presentation:** The site provides content for all major topic areas. We try to use media (video, animation, audio, and graphics) in a meaningful and relevant way. Our content is written in an inverted pyramid style, where the most important content is at the top, except when chronology would better serve the user (for example, explaining complicated, multi-step procedures). Content is cross-linked to related content within the site.
- **Ease of Navigation:** Navigation is consistent throughout the site. The information architecture is as visible and understandable as possible. Secondary and tertiary navigation is readily apparent to users. We use breadcrumbs so the user can identify where they are on the site. All of the major substantive categories are available from the homepage. The site orders lists and tasks to maximize user performance and workflow. While we fully meet the assessment for ease of navigation, we used the format for our online Guides (formerly identified as Classrooms) for our longer articles to make them easier to navigate.
- **Accessibility:** Captions and/or transcripts are available for media. The site has tab order and skip link functionality.
- **Visual Design and Iconography:** The site tries to visually distinguish important items that require user attention. Design elements are consistent.
- **Community Engagement:** The site solicits feedback from users.

We wanted to be cognizant of opportunities for improvement. These included:

- **Plain Language:** We added a feature to optionally add custom introductory text to our legal articles.
- **Language Access:** Since we use human translators for our content, translation remains a financial and often logistical challenge, but we remain aware of its importance.
- **Ease of Navigation:** We reviewed our substantive category names to make sure that they are clear to our users. We looked closely at modules and resources to optimize searching. These include accounting for spelling errors. Our Triage feature guides users to relevant content using a series of questions, and it now allows them to retain the results of multiple searches.
- **User Support:** One of our main goals was to make sure that the pages load efficiently on any type of device. We added a feature to provide curated summaries on substantive landing pages and on triage and search results pages.
- **Accessibility:** Where appropriate, we added descriptive text to images that contribute to content. We made sure that the site works properly with screen readers and were aware of focus state and AA contrast standards on the new site.
- **Visual Design and Iconography:** Another primary goal was to build the new site with a fresh, modern look to enhance the user experience.
- **Mobile Friendly:** Building a site that is fully responsive was integral to our main goal.
- **Community Engagement:** Throughout the project, we looked closely at search engine optimization (SEO). SEO is an important and ongoing effort for all website managers.

Site Inventory: In the fall of 2016, we used Google Analytics to make note of pages that get very little traffic. This review is something we continue to do on an ongoing basis.

- We removed all content from the Court Forms section because we already link to court forms as appropriate in our legal guides and articles. Separate links seemed redundant and were not being viewed.
- We continued to review our legal information articles to make sure none are outdated. Any that are receiving low traffic are reviewed and either promoted more or removed, depending on what we think best serves our users. We removed approximately 50 pages of legal information articles during the initial review.
- In a previous iteration of the site, we had a link library where each page linked to one website or resource. We felt that these individual link pages added clutter to the website. We have started to consolidate these links into pages of useful resources, or remove them altogether if they were not getting many page views over a reasonable span of time.

(See attached: ContentTypes.pdf, SiteStructure.pdf, Analytics Inventory Excerpts.pdf)

Stakeholders and Feedback: Our stakeholder group consists of 14 individuals from legal aid and partner organizations. We held our initial stakeholder group meeting on December 12, 2016 to introduce the project, discuss the LSC Statewide Website Assessment Project, and provide them with a timeline for the project and for their involvement. We produced a PowerPoint for the meeting and recorded the webinar. The stakeholders review instructions document includes a link to the webinar recording.

As part of the planning process, in December, 2016, and January, 2017, our stakeholders conducted a review of our existing site along with other legal aid websites. We asked them to describe their first impression of each site that they viewed, along with notable functionality and characteristics. We built an online survey on Survey Monkey where they could record their answers to the questions.

Our next meetings with the stakeholders group were on June 1 and June 2, 2017, in New Haven and Wethersfield, CT, after some initial site construction during the spring for design sessions to review color palette, category names, and icon options. Our presentation also focused again on the resources and recommendations from the LSC Statewide Website Assessment as they could apply to our work.

We used the Noun Project as a resource for modern, high quality icons. We selected a number of choices for icons that we thought best represented the legal topics and concepts on our website. We created a document where we could poll our stakeholders and SLS staff members (who work directly with our clients at our statewide hotline), to see which icons they thought would best speak to our website users. SLS staff members were polled in late May, 2017.

We also solicited various input from our 18-member Website Advisory Board at their quarterly meetings held on 1/23/17, 5/2/17, 12/13/17, 3/6/18, and 6/5/18.

After compiling the results from their reviews, we spent the next several months starting to build the site's core features and functionality. Scott Friday began working on the administrative interface.

(See attached: Stakeholders group.pdf, Stakeholders presentation.pdf, Stakeholders review instructions.pdf, Stakeholders Website Update Project Timeline.pdf, Stakeholder Testing Survey.pdf, Stakeholder Testing of CTLawHelp.pdf, Stakeholder Testing of Various Other Sites.pdf)

Triage, Guides and Search: As a result of the planning and testing sessions, we identified the Triage, Guides, and Search as core functionality for the new site and template.

- **Triage:** The Triage module (TIG #13018) was a collaboration of Connecticut and Maine, with Vermont. Site visitors are guided by the triage module to relevant online resources and self-help tools.

The triage tool can immediately direct users to legal help agencies or resources that can serve them most effectively. Unlike traditional intake, the self-guided triage tool offers this information 24/7, an added convenience for website visitors who are unable to call the hotline during its hours of operation. We incorporated the triage module into the new template, updating the format to be compatible with the new site and adding deeper integration with site search.

- **Guides:** The Guides, which is also a stand-alone tool originally built by Scott Friday for TIG #14048, were also integrated into the core template. The tool was originally built as a replicable template for the community to take complex, multi-step processes and provide step-by-step support and guidance to self-represented parties, thereby reducing frustration and enabling them to see the legal process through to the end. The availability of online instruction also enables self-represented parties to call our hotline at critical stages of the process and ask well-informed questions of our advocates. Notable improvements include:
 - They now integrate seamlessly with our collections of legal content.
 - All components of each guide now exist within one page rather than as a collection of many pages, which helps to improve content management and search engine optimization.
 - They were updated to be mobile first.
- **Search:** Search provides users with spellchecking, Triage integration, detailed Excerpts, and multiple Search Tabs. These features are combined on the Results page and presented to the user with the most relevant / highest quality information at the top. It uses the Search API module with Apache Solr integration to provide the main search functionality to the site, but Search API was missing a few key elements that we wanted. Our solution was to build the Search in a modular fashion to allow us to add features and combine them with the information Search API provides. The workflow looks like:
 - User enters search phrase into site.
 - Phrase is sent to Spellchecking - A custom module provides the API connection that runs the search phrase through the Hunspell spellchecker library (<http://hunspell.github.io/>). Results are sent back to the site and provided as suggested spelling corrections.
 - Phrase is sent to Triage Search – Search API and Apache Solr are used to index the entire Triage tree. When high enough quality results are found, the user is given a link directly to the category in the Legal Help Finder. The Relevancy score provided by Apache Solr is used to help keep low quality results out.
 - Phrase is sent to Main Search - Search API and Apache Solr index all of the content on the site. Our main Nodes can have modular pieces of content attached to them (called Segments). Segments are used to provide detailed information about a subject that can be referenced by themselves or shown in a full Node. If a Segment Node has a high enough Relevancy score, it will appear at the top of the search as an Excerpt.
 - User is sent to the Results page with the multiple sources of results combined into one interface. If a feature (such as an Excerpt or a triage entry point) does not have results or the results are not high enough quality, the feature is hidden.

Administrative Interface: Another core piece of the project was to build a user-friendly interface for website administrators. While the standard Drupal Administration interface does an admirable job, it can be complex to use and the options to customize the interface are limited. Our solution is to build a new custom administration interface in the Angular frontend, which uses the REST API feature to authorize users and securely communicate to Drupal. This method allows us to ignore the complexity of customizing the Drupal administration interface and concentrate on creating user-friendly interfaces.

When creating new features in a standard Drupal site we found that a large majority of the work was spent setting up the Drupal admin interface either with new contributed modules or making custom changes. With

a large enough feature set Drupal sites can start to run into module incompatibilities and other issues, which adds even more time to a project. We have found that with our current method we are able to avoid a lot of these headaches.

(See attached: *Mockup1.pdf*, *TriageGuidesScreenshots.pdf*, *SearchResults.pdf*, *AdministrativeInterfaces.pdf*, *AdminInstructions.pdf*)

Project Objective Three: Test and launch new website.

Testing and Feedback: Scott Friday provided us with several versions of the site for testing at different phases of the project. A development site at <http://dev.ctlawhelp.org> launched in the spring of 2017 and was used for mockups and feature buildouts. The beta version of the site, <http://new.ctlawhelp.org>, launched in July, 2017.

Testing was done extensively throughout the milestone period by Scott Friday, Kate Frank, and Kathy Daniels. Periodic testing was done with the stakeholder group and Website Advisory Committee, legal aid staff, and members of our client-eligible community. There were two beta testers for the Spanish language version of the site.

For legal aid staff and client-eligible testers, we used Observational and Click Testing, modeled after examples in the Illinois Legal Aid Online User Testing Manual. Observational Testing evaluates both the usability and the user experience of completing a task and/or utilizing a feature of the site. Click Testing evaluates how easily a user can find information and/or features on specific webpages.

For the stakeholders and Website Advisory Committee, we created an online survey on Survey Monkey (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTStakeholders2>) for them to complete as they tested the site. We asked them to test the site on their mobile phones and answer a range of questions related to functionality. We also solicited their impression of the site and the navigation.

Scott, Kate, and Kathy tested all aspects of the site repeatedly as updates and revisions were made. Their testing included functionality testing on mobile devices and desktop computers, feature testing, layout, design, content placement and organization, search, workflow, navigation, and usability.

Examples of user comments and tester observations from testing:

- User expressed that they like the self-help and thought the “layout was nice.”
- User had issues finding information about bed bugs. And user had problems with Spanish language-side word choices. Made navigation moderately difficult at times.
- At the very end she said – “Oh, there’s a search button at the bottom, I didn’t see it. I would expect it to be at the top.”
- I like that it reiterates your choices. (triage)
- Searched for “find a lawyer” – need to get that search working to send people to Legal Help Finder.
- Didn’t notice modal windows. But liked the feature. Needs to be more obvious that it does something.
- She didn’t qualify for any of the status questions so didn’t realize she should proceed in Legal Help Finder.
- She didn’t see “EN” and “ES” as language options. Thinks it should say English and Spanish.
- She was very stuck on not having a home button. She searched for most things. Really liked the guide format. She didn’t seem to see the Self Help link at all.
- My first thought is that there’s no longer a link to the senior portion right on the front page – you have to hover over the self-help tab. It’s probably fine for those raised on the internet, but I can imagine older folks who don’t often go online getting frustrated.

- Most, if not all seniors are not even able to figure out what self-help they need. This is the problem with websites and mobile apps that cater to self-help. There is an assumption the person using it knows what the problem is and how it fits into the big picture.

Revisions: We used BitBucket to record and track updates and fixes based on testing. There are over 185 items in the BitBucket list. Examples of changes made to the site based on user testing:

- We made the search button in the mobile format more obvious. People were not noticing it.
- Added “None of the above” to Legal Help Finder status questions.
- Changed the language options to display the full words “English” and “Spanish.”
- We added the list of legal topics back to the homepage so users could find them more easily.
- We modified some icons we had originally selected based on additional feedback from testers.
- We changed the fonts because the italics were not as obvious in our original text font.
- We had originally removed a direct link to the Elder Law section from the header, but subsequently added it back.
- In the Elder Law section, we changed the name to “Age 60+ Help” and added a header with sub-topics for each category.
- Added the word “For” to the button for “Legal Professionals” to make it clearer.
- The Search feature was updated a number of times. (See below for more information.)
- We created short summaries for self-help content in both English and Spanish.
- To add visual interest and a more human touch to the site, we changed the home page display and navigation from a slider and buttons for the main topic areas to photographs with brief text that describes that section of the site.
- We added a new main topic area for “Contact Us.”

We also conducted testing using online tools identified in the LSC Website Assessment Toolkit and on the Better Legal Internet website (www.betterlegalinternet.com). These tools included:

- Readability test with readable.io and the Hemingway Editor.
- Accessibility testing with WebAim’s Wave Tool.
- Google Mobile-Friendly Testing and Site-Wide Mobility Test.
- Browserstack for web-based browser testing on different devices.
- Focus states (ability to tab through a page).
- Website Grader analyzes a site for performance, mobility, SEO, and security.

We made several changes because of testing that we would like to highlight:

- **Search improvements:**
 - Based on tester observations and comments, we tweaked the Search feature to display curated excerpts at the top of the search results windows if applicable.
 - Additional searches open up a new website tab so previous searches can be found again.
 - If a search has results that might be relevant in the Legal Help Finder, it offers a box at the top of the window to take the user directly to relevant sections.
- **Administrative improvements:** As a result of testing and rebuilding the administrative interface, there are a number of updates that significantly improved the tasks associated with site maintenance.
 - **Triage management:** Triage management is vastly improved now that we have had time to manage triage for several years and figure out what our needs are. Scott used D3.js to create an interactive data visualization that gives us a bird’s eye view of every Triage entry. The end points in this view link us into each end point’s management area. The end points are color-coded so we can tell what kinds of content are being given to users. (*See attachment: Triage Overview*)

- **Segments:** The new admin interface allows us to break up content into separate nodes and aggregate them into one parent node, which is displayed as a complete article or guide. We refer to these nodes as segments. Segments can then be used to stand alone in Triage, Guides and Search results. This allows us to highlight content for users independently from their article of origin. For example, a user who searches “my landlord locked me out” will be given a link to the Evictions and Lockouts article in search, but also shown the appropriate segment containing the information about lockouts. This feature is modeled after the “reusable text” feature we had created for Triage under TIG #13018.

(See attached: *StakeholderTestingPreLaunch.pdf*, *ObservationalFormAndQuestions.pdf*, *TestingSites.pdf*)

Content: As part of this project, Kate Frank updated the existing content on the website as needed. Having the Guides functionality now built into the site makes it much easier to offer user content in the appropriate format for a mobile device – some content presents better as a longer scrolling article, while other content communicates better in a Guide format. The functionality to easily switch the same content between the two formats was added to the template. We also use links pages, video, animation, audio, graphics, and imagery.

Description of Basic Website: The site launched on February 15, 2018. In addition to being mobile-first, we particularly wanted the site to be visually appealing and easy to navigate, offering users with different skill levels multiple ways to locate relevant content. The home page has four main areas:

- **Self Help:** This area has a clickable button at the top of the home page. Users can browse for content by substantive area. They can also access this section from the mobile menu or top navigation bar and from category listings on the home page.
- **Legal Help Finder:** Our triage section is accessible from a clickable button at the top of the home page and from the mobile menu or top navigation bar. It can also be found in search when appropriate.
- **Contact:** This page offers phone numbers and hours so users can find out if they qualify for legal aid. It has a link to our A2J Online Intake.
- **For Legal Professionals:** This page links to our Staff Page and Pro Bono resources.

The Search box is a button in the lower right portion of the screen on the mobile version and on the top navigation bar in the desktop version. There is a section for “What’s New” to highlight specific information or features. (See attached: *BasicWebsiteScreenshots.pdf*)

Outreach: While outreach is ongoing, activities since the site launch include:

- Kate Frank sent several emails to all Legal Aid staff, interns, and volunteers (280 people) announcing the launch on February 15, 2018. In addition, the Staff Page (<https://ctlawhelp.org/en/advocates>) is the homepage for our users’ internet browsing.
- Members of our staff actively use the site and promote it to their clients.
- The new site was featured in SLS’s annual report, which was distributed by Ashleigh Backman, Pro Bono Attorney Manager, to SLS Board members and to the Pro Bono Attorney pool of approximately 1,000 people via Constant Contact.
- Kathy Daniels emailed the TIG Stakeholders group.
- Kate Frank previewed the new site with the Judicial Branch Web Committee at their meeting in March, 2018. There were 15 people there from the Court Service Centers, Law Libraries, and Judicial administration.
- Kate Frank and Alexis Smith, New Haven Legal Assistance Executive Director, presented the new site to the NHLAA Board of Directors at their March 8, 2018, meeting.
- Kate Frank provided outreach cards to Annie Harper of Yale School of Medicine/Psychiatry for her clients and other providers.

- SLS staff presented the website as part of outreach presentations to a number of community providers around the state who work with our client-eligible population, including: American Job Center (New Haven), Centro Latino de Danbury Outreach, Middlesex County Head Start (Middletown), Hartford Public Library, Bloomfield Social Services, Boys and Girls Club of Waterbury, Cheshire Community Food Pantry, City of Middletown, Community Action Agency Danbury, Hands on Hartford, Meriden-Wallingford Chrysalis Center, Our Lady of Angels Church, Canton Social/Senior Services, Torrington Catholic Family Services, Burlington Social/Senior Services, Salvation Army Danbury, Women's Center Danbury, Amazing Grace Food Pantry (Middletown), UCONN Public Interest Law Group, American Job Center New Haven, American Job Center Meriden, Stamford Mini College Fair, Connecticut Bar Association's Domestic Violence Project Training, East Hartford Senior Center. Materials were dropped off at the East Hartford Parks and Recreation Department and Middletown Department of Social Services. A total of 459 people attended the presentations.
- Kate Frank showed the site at Website Advisory Board meetings on 3/6/18 and 6/5/2018.
- Legal Aid staff were encouraged to add the website to their email signatures and business cards to help promote the new site.
- Kathy Daniels presented the new site to the SLS Board of Directors during a board training session held on March 22, 2018.
- Kate Frank presented the site to homeless shelter directors in New Haven County at the Columbus House on June 21, 2018.
- Kathy Daniels sent a poster promoting the new site to 514 people on SLS's Constant Contact list. The list included staff at social service agencies, libraries, community-based organizations, and other legal aid organizations.
- In June, Kathy Daniels sent out an outreach flyer for posting at all of the Connecticut Judicial Department Court Service Centers (14) and Law Libraries (12), and to 254 libraries.

Prior to the launch, we promoted the project work and upcoming new site to other legal aid programs at a session during the Legal Services Corporation Innovations in Technology Conference in January, 2018, in New Orleans. The conference was well attended, with over 400 participants from throughout the legal aid community, along with developers and partner organizations. Our presentation was called "Building a Mobile-first Website: Challenges and Rewards" and the presenters were David Bonebrake, Scott Friday, Kate Frank and Kathy Daniels. Kate Frank was also a presenter in the conference session titled "Access for whom? What does it mean for a website to be accessible?" on Thursday, January 11, 2018. She talked about the new site as part of her discussion.

In addition to the presentation at the Innovations in Tech Conference in January, 2018, we have since done one-on-one demonstrations and had discussions with programmer Brian Stewart (Maine) and with Mary Kaczorek and Jenny Singleton (Minnesota) to talk about the project. A significant portion of the template is being replicated by Northwest Justice Project as they rebuild their website.

Kate and Kathy are participants in a New England Website Chat group that meets to talk about website projects and work in each state. Our partners in that group, Caroline Robinson and Rochelle Hahn at Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Jack Haycock at Pine Tree Legal Assistance in Maine, Sam Abel-Parker at Law Line of Vermont, and Audrey Logan, who works on the website for the Legal Advice and Referral Center in New Hampshire, have toured the site and shared their ideas and assessments as CTLawHelp.org has been built. That group met by webinar on October 6, 2017, December 15, 2017, and March 16, 2018, and in person at the Innovations in Technology Conference.

(See attached: SLSOutreachPresentation.pdf, EmailAnncStaff.pdf, ConfPresentation1.pdf, OutreachFlyer.pdf)

Post Launch Revisions: Since the launch, we have made primarily small changes, tweaking the layout and display:

- Improved the footer on guides pages.
- Made spacing between page elements more consistent. Added more white space and padding.
- Improved size of fonts in certain areas (smaller or larger or more hierarchical).
- Added modal windows to triage.
- Expanded clickable area on self-help landing page so users can click anywhere to proceed.
- Added blocks to the staff page. Added graphics for visual interest.
- Tweaked the language on homepage buttons to be more concise and intuitive.
- Added “read more” in excerpts and shortened the amount of text shown to be more mobile friendly and make better use of prime screen real estate.
- Made major revisions to elder law section and content per elder law unit.
- Fixed sideways scrolling on some mobile phones.

In April, we made a significant change to the website based on user feedback. We had built the site with a “slider” at the top of the Home page rotating pictures that promoted features on the site. We had modeled that feature after other successful sites using a similar model. We discovered that people didn’t really notice ours and never clicked on it. With screen real estate at a premium on mobile devices, we decided that we could make better use of that space on our site by creating more obviously clickable buttons. We changed the space used by the sliders to 4 buttons, one each for Self-Help Guides, Legal Help Finder, Contact Us, and For Legal Professionals. But our user testing told us that people still didn’t click on the buttons. Finally, we made the buttons change slightly when a user hovers over them and added an arrow to better communicate that they are clickable.

Post Launch Feedback: After the launch and update to the home page, we again conducted testing with client-eligible people. Kathy Daniels and Ben Martin, the IT Administrator at NHLAA, tested a total of 15 people using Observational Testing. We asked testers about the different formats for the content. Key points in the observations:

- Testers really liked the site on mobile devices. They felt that it worked smoothly and was easy to navigate.
- On PCs, they tended to look at the content in the middle of the page and not notice the side sections. That didn’t matter with the mobile view.
- Testers didn’t realize that the large pictures at the top were clickable.

Post Launch Analytics: Since a major goal of this project was to improve the experience of mobile users, we are closely looking at their behavior on the site. We find it helpful to segment out Connecticut visitors when analyzing behavior, since visitors from other jurisdictions tend to come to the site and leave quickly.

CT Mobile Users	2/15/2017 – 7/17/2017	2/15/2018 – 7/17/2018
Sessions:	41,225	35,396
Avg time on page:	00:03:04	00:01:53
Pages/visit:	1.60	1.76
Page previews:		1,478

Mobile users spent less time on the homepage during this time period in 2018 (01:05 in 2017 vs 00:45 in 2018) but they viewed an average of one more page per visit in 2018.

There are various things that are affecting our website statistics:

1. The layout of our new site has changed the way we look at statistics.

- a. Our new self-help landing pages allow users to browse through all of the content in a substantive area before committing to loading a new page. This will naturally lead to reduction in the number of pages a user views in one session.
 - b. When a user is on a self-help page and previews an article using the modal window preview button, that preview is not registered as a page view. And the time spent previewing the page is counted toward the time spent on the self-help landing page, not the page they are previewing. This has led to an increase in time spent on substantive landing pages.
2. In 2017, under our old Triage system, each action in Triage was counted as a page view. With the new site, the user advances through Triage without having to reload pages each time, so Google only registers one page view.
3. Time spent on our homepage has declined, but users that go to the homepage look at an average of 5 pages in 2018, versus 4 pages in 2017. This behavior leads us to believe that users are getting where they need to go in less time.
4. Google Adwords for Non-Profits brought in a significant amount of traffic, but a change in their rules in spring, 2018, required us to disable many of our underperforming ads. This cumulatively caused a reduction in website traffic.

Basic Template: Scott Friday built the basic template with the intention that others could replicate it in whole or part. The template is a copy of the CTLawHelp.org site with the Connecticut-specific information either present as a placeholder or removed. Another state would replace the content and graphics with their own materials.

- All of the functionality is already in place, tested, and working.
- Another state could just update the included triage logic tree for their own state and site resources, saving them a significant amount of time.
- The template for the Guides is built in and ready to use.
- The Search functionality is already built and tested.
- The Administrative Interface is part of the template and ready to use.

The template and instructions are located on a GitHub site: <https://github.com/CTLawHelp-org>

IV.a. Information for Multiyear or Multiple Projects Not applicable.

V. Factors affecting project accomplishments

Our core project team, Scott Friday, Kate Frank, and Kathy Daniels work well together and that significantly enhances the project's accomplishments.

We encountered two significant challenges:

1. This project included a new approach to site management and we found that building the Administrative Interface took longer than we had originally estimated. We determined that we would be unable to complete our second milestone on time by December 31, 2017.
2. As is true when any website is completely rebuilt and large amounts of content are migrated to a new site, there is often a drop in web traffic and it can take time for pageviews and sessions to get back to normal. In addition, there was a glitch in the migration of our old working page aliases so that when Google robots indexed our site, those pages were not found. This meant that page rank and views dropped noticeably for many of our pages soon after the site launched and are just now recovering

VI. Strategies to address major challenges

To address the major challenges:

1. We needed to ask for an extension of the second milestone period to allow us the time to complete the work on the Administrative Interface. We did not need to alter any of the other milestone periods or any of the evaluation criteria.
2. We have been carefully watching our web traffic as we have rolled out the site.

What had changed was more the out-of-state search traffic, but that still impacts how Google and other search providers handle and present our information. We know that it is important to carefully nurture our web traffic from all sources. As we knew when we were planning this project, our move to mobile-first was in sync with Google's big change to how they handle searches and mobile devices. They are now looking first to the mobile versions of site content.

<https://webmasters.googleblog.com/2018/03/rolling-out-mobile-first-indexing.html> The major changes and updates to our site are now complete and we expect our traffic to increase further as our site continues to be searched and indexed. We have proactively uploaded a new site index to Google and added schema.org coding to the site.

We will continue to monitor the site and best practices, paying close attention to performance and monitoring and tweaking the site to maintain the best possible SEO. We have been brushing up on recent changes to search engine algorithms so we can remain on the cutting edge of SEO techniques. In July, 2018, Google will begin using page speed in their mobile search ranking and we are factoring that in as well.

<https://webmasters.googleblog.com/2018/01/using-page-speed-in-mobile-search.html>

Fixing the unforeseen problem of losing our old aliases and re-evaluating our SEO techniques has resulted in an upswing in our web traffic, which we expect to continue.

VI. Major lessons and recommendations

Delivering quality, useful content to our website users is essential. Legal Aid programs cannot provide one-on-one assistance to everyone seeking our help and that means that our statewide websites can play an important role in filling that gap. They need to be easy to use and to offer quality content that is accessible to a vast range of users. Our client-eligible population can face challenges because of economic, social, educational, and other factors, and we need to be cognizant of that throughout the process.

Our recommendations are more to those who are new to a project like this, rather than to those who have done it previously. Those who have already done something like this know the effort and tasks involved and are likely to be a source of information, and possibly guidance. To tackle a similar project there are many pieces, but in our opinion, there are several key areas to keep in mind: planning, testing and time commitment.

Planning: The good news is that there are many well-produced resources, both within the legal aid community and elsewhere, to assist. Planning is essential and should involve a broad group of stakeholders. While it might be tempting to work with a small tight group, remember that each stakeholder will enhance the project as they bring their own skills and perspectives into the mix. A careful assessment of where you are and where you are going will be the foundation of your plan.

We like using checklists and the LSC Website Assessment was very helpful as a checklist, particularly the "Opportunities" section. The breakdown of tasks by role (template providers and website managers) and required effort (easy, medium and hard) makes it straightforward to work with.

We found the original state-specific assessment a bit overwhelming, but as the toolkit developed it evolved into a clear and useful tool that we would strongly recommend to staff at any other statewide website reviewing or updating their site. We reviewed the strengths and areas for improvement in our state-specific assessment and were able to tie them into specific suggestions and tasks. The assessment contains a wealth of useful information and links to resources compiled by website design and evaluation experts.

Testing: We found the information gleaned from testing very useful. It is important to test often with the people who will be using the website. We found live testing the most helpful; being able to observe how someone interacts with the site shows you what does and doesn't work. There are many good resources that talk about User Experience Design vs. Design Thinking.

We would like to mention several other legal aid community resources:

- Ohio Legal Help's State-Wide Website User Testing, Findings and Analysis. Released April 2, 2018
- Illinois Legal Aid Online – Developing Website Search Systems: 2018 Research. Completed June 22, 2018.
- LSNTAP has an extensive library of resources and trainings.
- A Better Legal Internet project at Stanford. This site has tools to help you Review, Redesign and Markup your website.

Time commitment: This is a very time-intensive project and we urge anyone tackling it to dedicate adequate staffing and time to work on it. Because we were doing this from scratch and building a new template as part of the project, we ran into many places where we wanted to adequately vet various options. Since we built a template and are making it available to others, there are some aspects of the project that could be less time-intensive for others.

Further development: As we have discussed previously, this project was undertaken with the intent that it could be replicated in part or fully. We have provided the template and instructions to help others dig in to this work.

The legal aid community has a knowledgeable and active Drupal community. We will continue to share our work with others and where portions are replicated and tested, we will continue to share information and updates. This work would be ongoing and collaborative.