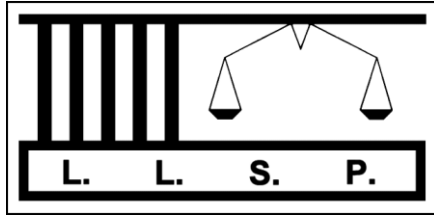


LAW LIBRARY SERVICE TO PRISONERS

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



State Law Library, Minnesota Judicial Center, Room G25
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-6102 (651) 297-4969

2011 Index

9429 DOC prisoners (as of 1/1/2011)
80 prison visits
7532 estimated miles travelled
1002 inmate interviews
1904 individual inmates assisted
35,086 inmate requests processed
1280 hours worked by interns and volunteer

Introduction: Law Library Service to Prisoners (LLSP). The mission of LLSP is to provide law library service to inmates incarcerated in Minnesota. We do this by providing access to legal materials, both at the correctional facilities and the Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL). Circuit-riding prison law librarians, based at MSLL, conduct monthly visits at eight adult correctional facilities to meet with inmates. Questions that cannot be answered on-site using the prison collections of core legal materials are researched at MSLL. Inmates also write or call LLSP for assistance with their legal research. We also provide law library services to Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) inmates housed in other facilities, such as county jails, state hospitals, and other states. In addition, we provide law library service to DOC staff.

History of LLSP. LLSP, funded by an inter-agency agreement between the State Law Library and the Department of Corrections, began as a pilot project in 1984, with one librarian visiting five correctional

facilities and a part-time clerk providing photocopying support. Today, the staff includes two full-time and one half-time librarians, as well as one part-time clerk.

Providing Information and Service to Inmates. LLSP provides access to legal research materials for prisoners in several ways: by interview, kite (an internal DOC request form), letter and/or phone. During the monthly prison visit, any inmate can request an interview with the librarian at the prison library, or a librarian will visit an inmate in a housing unit if the inmate is unable to come to the library. In the course of the interview, the inmate explains what he or she needs, and the librarian responds by providing pertinent legal research material to the prisoner.

A small core collection of legal materials is available at each of the prison libraries. Each title in the core collection is reviewed annually, as is the collection as a whole, to assure that inmates have access to essential primary legal information at each prison library. By reviewing the core collection, we also determine if it is still the best and most cost-effective way to provide basic legal materials and information to inmates.

The LLSP librarians also provide access to the materials found at the State Law Library, where most of the research is done for prisoners. MSLL is the second largest collection of legal materials in Minnesota; it

not only has a large print collection, but also many online resources, such as Westlaw and Lexis. By using these resources, we are able to provide inmates with information on any legal topic. Having our office space and collection provided by the State Law Library is of great savings to the program. Also, in a continuing effort to control costs due to high gas prices, the prison visits to Moose Lake and Rush City are combined, with one librarian visiting both correctional facilities in one extended trip.

Overview of 2011. The Department of Corrections strives to make inmate legal research services and materials as consistent and uniform as possible in all Minnesota correctional facilities, and throughout 2011, the staff of LLSP continued working closely with DOC staff to implement this goal. The Head of Outreach Services at the State Law Library, Daniel Lunde, visited each prison once during 2011 and discussed issues and concerns with the institution librarians. During the shutdown of Minnesota state government in the summer, LLSP staff filled all inmate requests. Usually, the facility librarians provide some of the materials requested by inmates by using the core collection in each library. However, the facility librarians did not work during that time period, and LLSP was unable to schedule on-site meetings with inmates.

In 2010, LLSP provided 30,302 requested items to 1,831 different inmates. In 2011, we provided 35,086 requested items (an increase of 15.8%) to 1,904 different inmates (an increase of 3.9%). Never before has the Law Library Service to Prisoners program provided so many items to so many inmates!

Staff, Interns, and Volunteers During 2011. Joan O, a LLSP volunteer for more than sixteen years, provided many hours of quality service, retrieving and copying legal materials for inmates and DOC staff. Two Library Science graduate students interned with LLSP this year, Ruth P. and Talia E. Each intern processed and researched inmate requests, using the skills and concepts learned in the classroom and applying them to actual inmate questions. Our LLSP interns and volunteer worked a total of 1280 hours, and their assistance was invaluable to the work of the program. One of the reasons we were able to accomplish so much in 2011 was due to the quality of our interns and volunteer. The primary reason for our success, however, is due to the hard work of the program staff: Jean Anderson, Stephanie Thorson, Susan Trombley, and Deb Kitzmann. Because of their dedication and commitment to the program, LLSP accomplished its goals and mission. In fact, Ms. Thorson was recognized by the legal publication, *Minnesota Lawyer*, as an “Unsung Legal Hero” of 2011. This award is reserved for Minnesota’s most talented and dedicated legal support professionals.

Statistical Highlights for 2011. LLSP compiles many statistics, some of which are shown in the table, graph and pie chart that follows. A few observations concerning 2011 correctional facility statistics:

- Oak Park Heights, Minnesota’s maximum-security institution with a current inmate population of 439 and Stillwater, with a current population of 1616, received the largest numbers of items delivered to inmates (8374 and 7638 respectively).
- St. Cloud and Lino Lakes correctional facility inmates account for the largest

percentage of increases in requests (83.4% and 33.2% respectively).

- Stillwater and Faribault had the largest number of individuals assisted (443 and 342 respectively).
- St. Cloud and Lino Lakes had the largest percentage increases for individuals assisted (75.2% and 10.9% respectively).
- Stillwater and Oak Park Heights had the largest number of on-site meetings with inmates (208 and 195 respectively).
- Lino Lakes and Stillwater saw significant percentage increases in on-

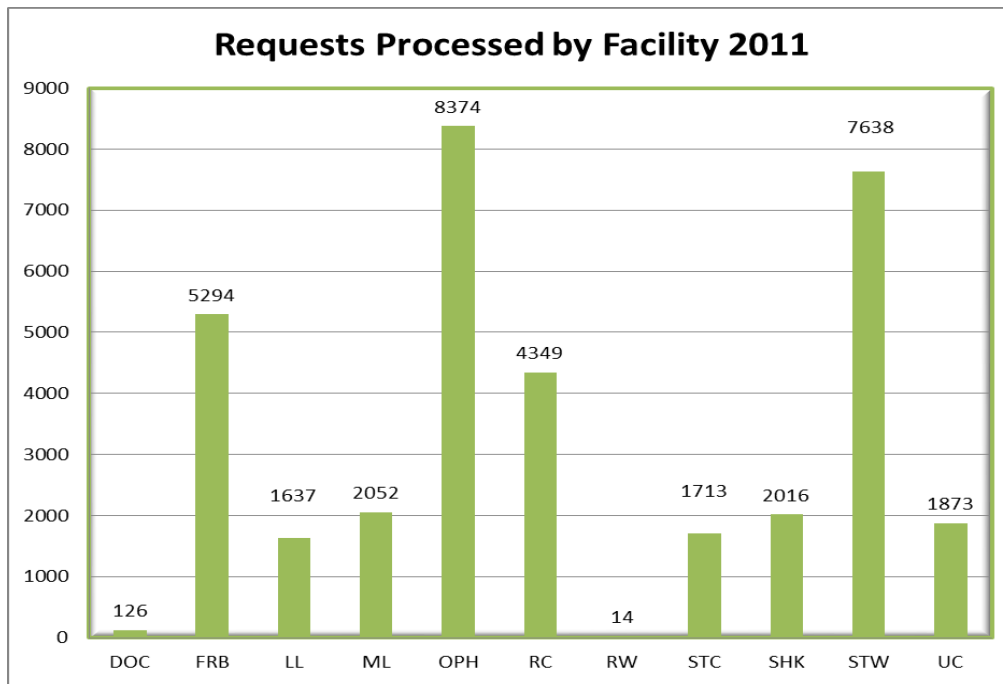
site meetings with inmates (68.8% and 12.4% respectively).

Conclusion. Over the course of the past twenty-eight years, it has been a LLSP priority to provide the best possible service at the least possible cost. We constantly work to keep the program's expenses to a minimum and maximize the resources that are available for the program. We have come to believe that by educating inmates about the resources available to them and providing access to the legal information they request, the work of LLSP diminishes the number of lawsuits filed by Minnesota prisoners.

STATISTICAL COMPARISON				
LLSP ACTIVITIES	2009	2010	2011	Percentage Change 2010 - 2011
Inmate Requests Processed	30,191	30,302	35,086	+ 15.8%
On-Site Meetings with Inmates	1,085	1,111	1,002	- 9.8%
Individuals Assisted	1,764	1,831	1,904	+ 3.9%

- **Requests Processed** is the total number of items provided to prisoners.
- **On-Site Meetings with Inmates** is the total number of inmate reference interviews conducted in-person.
- **Individuals Assisted** is the total number of inmates information was provided to, whether in person, by telephone, or through the mail.

BY THE NUMBERS – LLSP IN 2011



ABBREVIATIONS FOR CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES USED ABOVE AND BELOW:

FRB - Faribault, LL – Lino Lakes, ML –Moose Lake/Willow River, OPH – Oak Park Heights,
 RC – Rush City, RW – Red Wing, STC - St. Cloud, SHK – Shakopee, STW – Stillwater,
 UC/DOC – Minnesota Under Contract and Department of Corrections Staff

