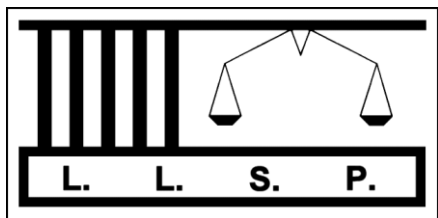


LAW LIBRARY SERVICE TO PRISONERS

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



State Law Library, Minnesota Judicial Center, Room G25
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-6102 (651) 297-4969

2014 Index

9,768	DOC inmates (as of 1/1/2014)
87	prison visits
8433	estimated miles travelled
1097	inmate interviews
2627	individual inmates assisted
42,683	inmate requests processed
750	estimated hours worked by 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 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 offer 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. After the librarian researches the inmate's question at the State Law Library, pertinent legal research material is provided 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, yet cost-effective, primary legal research materials in each prison library.

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,

Lexis, and HeinOnline. 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 results in 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 2014. The Department of Corrections strives to make inmate legal research services and materials as consistent and uniform as possible in all Minnesota correctional facilities. Throughout 2014, the staff of LLSP continued working closely with DOC staff to implement this goal. LLSP librarians met collectively with DOC librarians and program administrators during their spring meeting at the Department of Corrections main office in St. Paul.

In 2013, we provided 41,366 requested items to 2465 inmates; in 2014, however, LLSP provided 42,683 requested items to 2627 inmates, an increase of 3.2% for requested items and 6.6% for individuals assisted. The number of on-site meetings with inmates also increased by 3.9%, going from 1056 in 2013 to 1097 in 2014.

The staff of LLSP revised and updated its annual publication *Reference Guide: Occupations Impacted by Felony Convictions*, an important resource for inmates. The LLSP librarians also created two other documents for inmates: *How to Request Custody/ Parenting Time Forms through LLSP*, a checklist which simplifies the process for the prisoner and helps LLSP librarians fill inmate requests, and *Two Thirds Law*, a handout of information

concerning conditional release and inmate sentences.

LLSP also arranged for five court videos to be included on the statewide DOC intranet for inmates; the videos concern the following topics:

- Child Support Modification
- Conciliation Court
- Expungement
- How to File a Motion in Family Court
- How to Initiate a Divorce in Minnesota

Staff and Volunteers During 2014. Joan SO, a LLSP volunteer for more than nineteen years, provided many hours of quality service, retrieving and copying legal materials for inmates and DOC staff. Our volunteer worked an estimated 750 hours, and her assistance was invaluable to the work of the program. One of the reasons we were able to accomplish so much in 2014 was due to the quality of her work. 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 order to keep abreast of important information and resources, the LLSP librarians attended and participated in Continuing Legal Education courses, as well as other informational sessions, including the following:

- Criminal Law: Hot Topics in Criminal Appeals (CLE)
- WestlawNext Training (various sessions)
- Practice Before the MN Supreme Court (CLE)
- Sexual Violence MNCASA (CLE)

- Sentencing Guidelines Training
- Administrative Appeals (CLE)
- Practice Before the Court of Appeals (CLE)
- Cultural Perspectives: Understanding the Culture of Poverty
- Echoes of War: The Combat Veteran in Criminal Court (CLE)

Statistical Highlights for 2014. LLSP compiles many statistics, some of which are shown in the tables, graph and pie chart included at the end of this report. A few observations concerning service to inmates in the primary correctional facilities, as well as other housing locations, follow. All percentages reflect changes from 2013 to 2014.

- Stillwater and Faribault continued to receive the largest numbers of items delivered to inmates (9391 and 5868 respectively).
- Lino Lakes and St. Cloud inmates account for the largest percentage of increases in requests from the primary correctional facilities (30.2% and 29.6% respectively).
- Stillwater and Faribault had the largest number of individuals assisted (602 and 408 respectively).
- Lino Lakes and St. Cloud had the largest percentage increases for

individuals assisted in the primary correctional facilities (18.4% and 16.0% respectively).

- Stillwater and Lino Lakes had the largest number of on-site meetings with inmates (205 and 178 respectively).
- Oak Park Heights and Moose Lake/Willow River saw significant percentage increases in on-site meetings with inmates (47.8% and 39.7% respectively).
- For DOC inmates housed in other facilities (such as county jails, state hospitals, and other states), the number of requests processed and number of individuals assisted saw dramatic increases (30.3% and 30.7% respectively).

Conclusion. Over the course of the past thirty 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.

BY THE NUMBERS – LLSP IN 2014

TEN-YEAR STATISTICAL COMPARISON 2004 - 2014				
LLSP ACTIVITIES	2004	2009	2014	PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2004 - 2014
Inmate Requests Processed	29,037	30,191	42,683	+47.0%
On-Site Meetings with Inmates	1598*	1085	1097	-31.4%
Individuals Assisted	1766	1764	2627	+48.8%

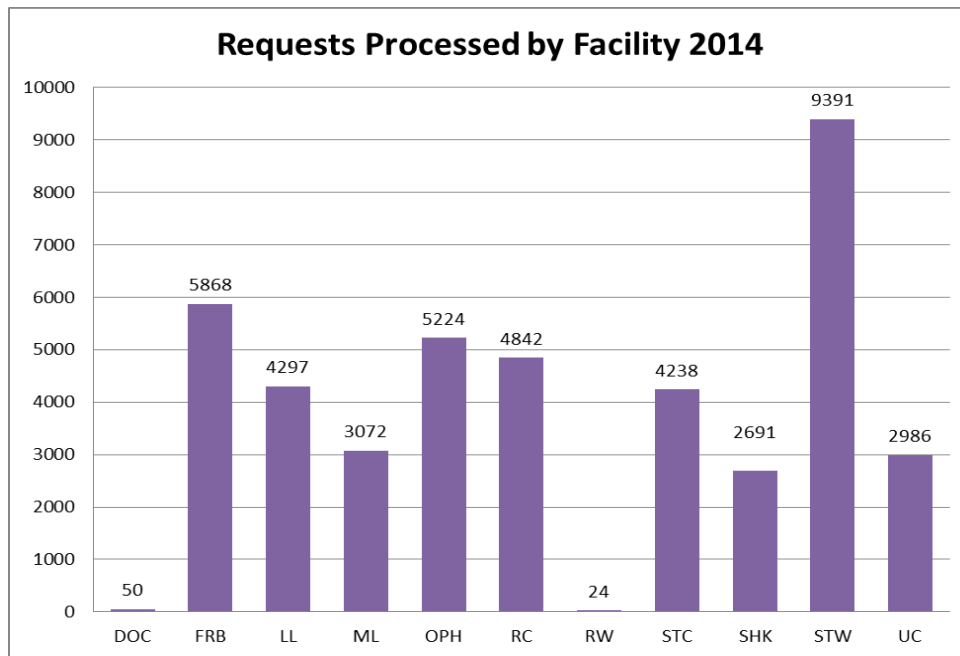
* In 2004, LLSP visited Oak Park Heights and Stillwater Correctional Facilities twice each month, rather than once.

Inmate 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.

TWO-YEAR STATISTICAL COMPARISON 2013 - 2014			
LLSP ACTIVITIES	2013	2014	PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2013 -2014
Inmate Requests Processed	41,366	42,683	+3.2 %
On-Site Meetings with Inmates	1056	1097	+3.9 %
Individuals Assisted	2465	2627	+6.6 %



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

