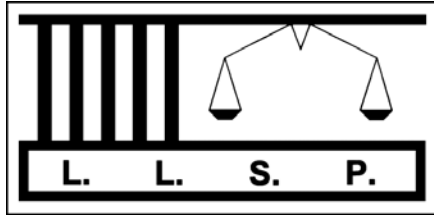


LAW LIBRARY SERVICE TO PRISONERS

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



State Law Library, Minnesota Judicial Center, Room G25
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2015 Index

9947	DOC inmates (as of 01/01/2015)
94	MCF prison visits
8950	Estimated miles travelled
1374	Inmate interviews
2814	Individual inmates assisted
46,109	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, the prison visits to Moose Lake and Rush City are combined, with one librarian visiting both correctional facilities in one extended trip.

Overview of 2015. 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 2015, the staff of LLSP continued working closely with DOC staff to implement this goal. LLSP librarians and State Law Librarian Liz Reppe met collectively with DOC librarians and program administrators during their spring meeting at the Department of Corrections main office in St. Paul.

In 2014, we provided 42,683 requested items to 2627 inmates; in 2015, however, LLSP provided 46,109 requested items to 2814 inmates, an increase of 8.0% for requested items and 7.1% for individuals assisted. The number of on-site meetings with inmates also increased by 25.3%, going from 1097 in 2014 to 1374 in 2015.

In 2015, LLSP celebrated the 30th anniversary of its first full year of service to inmates in 1985. To commemorate this milestone, several articles were written and published. Debby Hackerson, a staff member at the Minnesota State Law Library, wrote an article that was published in the December 2015 online version of *Bench & Bar of Minnesota*; another version of the article will be published in the upcoming March/April issue of *AALL Spectrum*, the bi-monthly journal of the American

Association of Law Libraries. A short article about the program and its 30 years of service was published in the October issue of *Branching Out*, the Minnesota State Court Administrator's newsletter. The LLSP librarians and program manager were interviewed by an inmate at the Shakopee Correctional Facility, and an article about the program was published in the Spring 2015 issue of *The Reflector*, the inmate newsletter.

Staff and Volunteers During 2015.

Joan O, an LLSP volunteer for more than twenty years, provided many hours of 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 2015 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.

Jean Anderson was selected as one of *Minnesota Lawyer's* Unsung Legal Hero award recipients for 2015. She was chosen by *Minnesota Lawyer* for her talent and dedication in the legal support profession. Jean was profiled in the *Unsung Legal Heroes* magazine and honored at a luncheon event on September 10th, 2015.

In order to keep abreast of important information and resources, the LLSP librarians attended and participated in continuing education courses, as well as other informational sessions, including the following:

- 2015 Court Rules Changes You Need to Know
- 2015 Legislative Laws with Impact on the Judicial Branch
- CHIPS and DHS
- Consequences of Criminal Records
- Criminal Expungement CLE
- Criminal History Calculation
- Federal Sentencing Commission, Drug Penalty Reforms
- Federalism and the U.S. Judicial Branch
- Government Information Basics
- Harassment Restraining Orders in Minnesota
- Personal Safety / De-Escalation / Threat Training
- Sentencing Guidelines CLE
- SharePoint Training
- Understanding Court Customers with Mental Illness
- University of Minnesota Robina Institute - Probation Conference

Statistical Highlights for 2015. 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 2014 to 2015.

- Stillwater and Oak Park Heights received the largest numbers of items delivered to inmates (8834 and 6737 respectively).

- Rush City and Oak Park Heights inmates account for the largest percentage increases in requests from the primary correctional facilities (35.1% and 29.0% respectively).
- Stillwater and St. Cloud had the largest number of individuals assisted (572 and 457 respectively).
- St. Cloud and Lino Lakes had the largest percentage increases for individuals assisted in the primary correctional facilities (21.2% and 19.7% respectively).
- Oak Park Heights and Rush City had the largest number of on-site meetings with inmates (243 and 225 respectively).
- Rush City, St. Cloud and Moose Lake/Willow River saw significant percentage increases in on-site meetings with inmates (90.7%, 66.7%, and 65.3% respectively).

Conclusion. Over the course of 30 years, 22 employees have worked for Law Library Service to Prisoners, including the five individuals currently involved in LLSP work. During this time, it has always been an 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.

LLSP BY THE NUMBERS

THREE YEAR COMPARISON 2013 - 2015

LLSP ACTIVITIES	2013	2014	2015	2014-2015 Change Percentage
Requests Processed	41366	42683	46109	+ 8.0 %
On-site Meetings With Inmates	1056	1097	1374	+25.3 %
Individuals Assisted	2465	2627	2814	+ 7.1 %

Requests Processed quantifies the activities involved in providing law library service to prisoners.

On-site Meetings with Inmates is the number of inmate reference interviews conducted in-person.

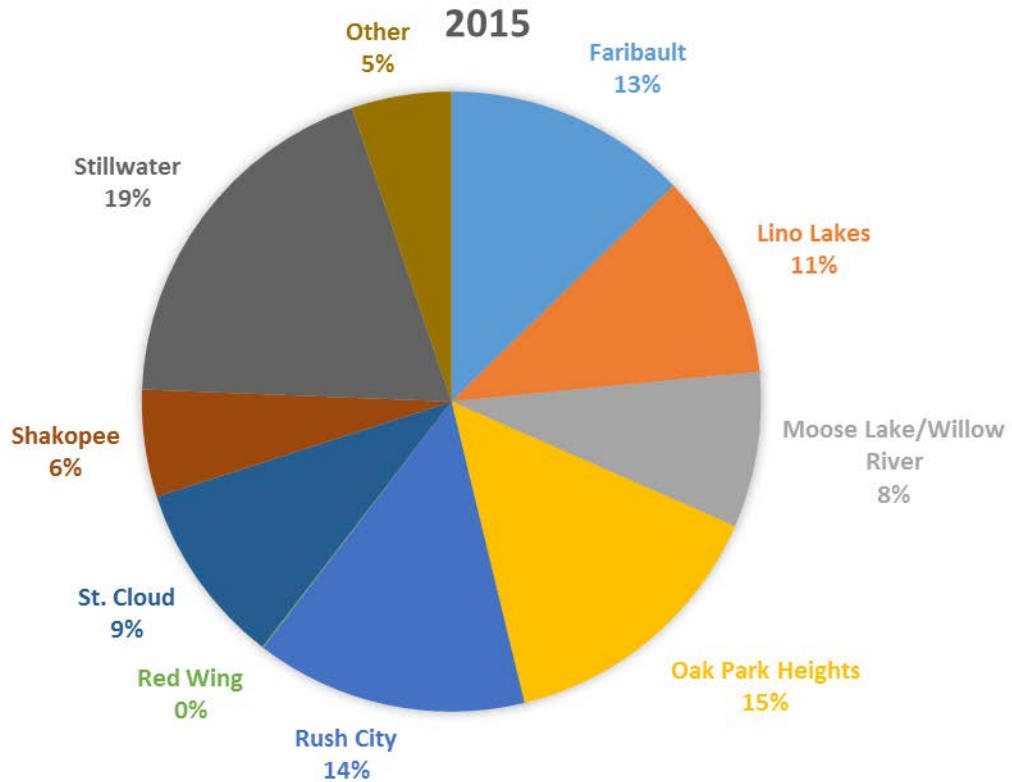
Individuals Assisted is the total number of people we provide information to whether in-person, by telephone, or through the mail.

FIFTEEN YEAR COMPARISON 2000 – 2015

LLSP ACTIVITIES	2000	2015	2000-2015 Change Percentage
Inmate Requests Processed	24171	46109	+90.8%
On-Site Meetings with Inmates	1859*	1374	-26.1%
Individuals Assisted	1476	2814	+90.7%

* In 2000, LLSP visited Oak Park Heights and Stillwater Correctional Facilities twice each month, rather than once.

DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL INMATE REQUESTS BY FACILITY



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

Requests Processed by Facility in 2015

