

Law Library Service to Incarcerated People (LLSP) Annual Report for 2024

General Information

Under an Inter-Agency Agreement between the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) and the Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL), the Law Library Service to Incarcerated People (LLSP) program provides law library service to people incarcerated in a MNDOC facility or otherwise under MNDOC jurisdiction.

Legal information requests are accepted by "kite," a request form available to Incarcerated Persons (IPs) at their facility. In addition, IPs may call or write to LLSP. While there is no cost to the IP, LLSP limits responses to 80 pages, or 8 items, per 2-week period. IPs with pending court actions are given priority and their requests are answered weekly until their pending action is resolved.

LLSP librarians also work with library staff at each facility to ensure that a core collection of legal research materials is available at the facility.

Our Staff

In 2024, for the first time since 2021, we can report that there was no turnover in the LLSP staff. Consistency in staffing has allowed LLSP to provide quality service to IPs, while also allowing time for projects. Below are their takes for 2024.

"2024 was a year of relative stability for LLSP. All of our staff remained the same, our work remained consistent, and we settled into the new software program we use to track requests. We were able to use that stability to update our resource collection, create new resources, and continue learning as a staff." -Ally

"2024 marked my first full year of working with LLSP and it's been wonderful working with everyone here! Besides working to update our SharePoint resources, my biggest project this year was definitely the LLSP logo contest. I originally suggested this after the three of us had looked through a history of the first ten years of LLSP and found they had done the same in 1987. It seemed like a great way to garner engagement, and after sending out the initial letters, we received an abundance of beautiful artwork and heartfelt messages thanking us for our work and the opportunity to give back to LLSP. I spoke with several IPs about the contest during phone calls and virtual visits throughout the process, many of whom were eager to hear any updates regarding the winner. Although we were only able to pick one in the end, it was amazing to see how excited our patrons were to take part. I am hoping we can find something similar for 2025!" -Gabby

"This year was full of new opportunities for me. I was able to attend the American Association for Law Libraries (AALL) Annual Conference thanks to the Kathy Garner Grant, AALL's annual conference grant, and Minnesota Association of Law Libraries' grant. At the conference, I learned about different

resources that other law libraries use and was able to meet other law librarians that were also interested in librarianship for incarcerated people. From attending this conference, I published, "Navigating AALL's Annual Conference: A New Law Librarian's Guide to Networking and Professional Growth," in the Legal Information Services to the Public (LISP) SIS Blog.

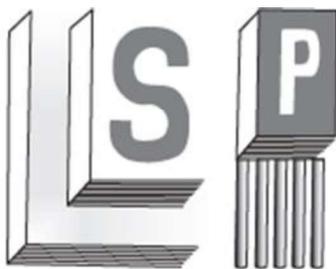
Like Gabby and Ally, I was also working on updating our SharePoint resources to keep all our legal materials up to date. I also worked closely with Oak Park Heights and Moose Lake staff members and librarians to start doing virtual visits in those two facilities. We can now proudly say that we are doing virtual visits in all MNDoc prison facilities." -Valerie

Digital Legal Resources Update Project

For 2024, LLSP librarians worked together to update our digital files of legal resources that are commonly distributed to IPs. LLSP librarians divided the 122 legal topics among themselves, and each resource was checked for currency and quality. Updates and replacements were made as needed. In addition, a plethora of new legal resources were added to the collection in response to new and amended legislation. While much work was done in 2024, the LLSP librarians note that updating digital legal resources is an ongoing process which will receive more focused attention as a project every other year.

Logo Update

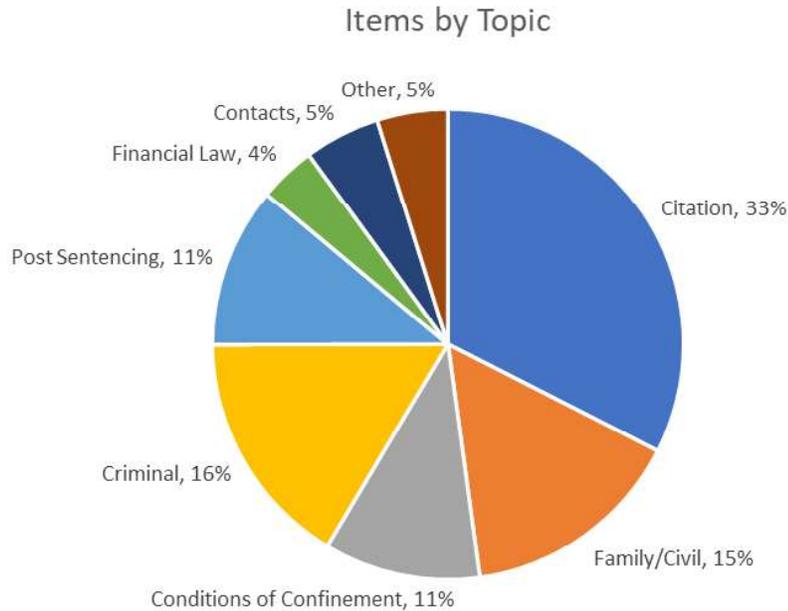
Earlier in 2024, LLSP held a logo contest. Gabby researched where LLSP's original logo came from and found that the previous logo came from a contest that was held in 1987 and was drawn by an incarcerated person. To keep this tradition, LLSP invited IPs to submit designs for a new logo. From 15 submissions, a winner was chosen. The winner was announced and given a certificate. Below is LLSP's new logo.



Requests by the Numbers

- As of July 2024, total prison population: 8,306
- Incarcerated people assisted: 2,439 (nearly 30% of the incarcerated population)
- Items sent: 31,013 (20.6% increase from 2023)
- Number of questions: 20,221 (15.5% increase from 2023)
- Phone calls: 991 (28.2% increase from 2023)
- Virtual Visits: 425 (16.1% increase from 2023)

For 2024, there was a spike in virtual visits. At the end of 2023, LLSP was doing virtual visits in Faribault, Lino Lakes, Rush City, Saint Cloud, Shakopee, and the Stillwater prison facilities. LLSP was able to add Moose Lake and Oak Park Heights to that list during 2024.



Category Breakdown

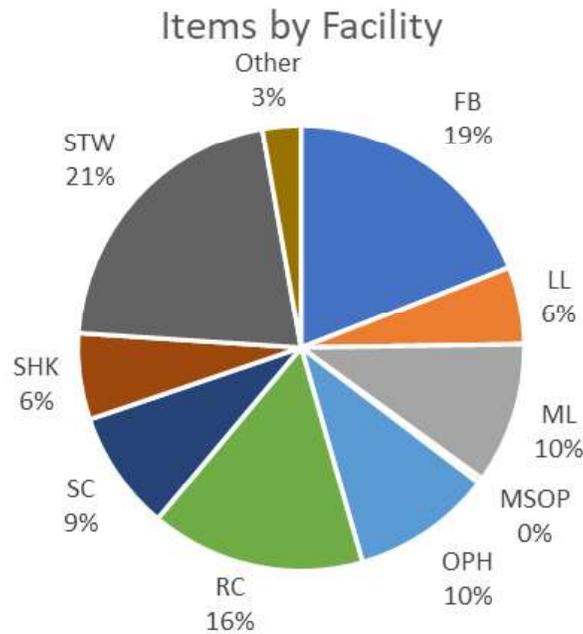
Above is a chart that divides the requests into 8 topic areas. LLSP decided to add “financial law,” “contacts,” and combine the “family/civil” categories for this year’s statistics. The reason behind this change was to provide more useful information about the large number of requests that previously appeared as “other.”

This paragraph explains each category and what resources it includes. Requests that were recorded in the “citation” category are cases, statutes, law, or other items that were specifically asked for by citation or name. Items in the “family/civil” category include forms and information dealing with family and civil litigation. For example, if an IP asks for divorce forms or information about filing a civil suit, the items sent to them are recorded in the “family/civil” category. The “conditions of confinement” category includes legal resources that are about procedures that facilities must follow. For example, if someone asks about what their medical rights are in prison, the items sent for this would be considered “conditions of confinement.” The “criminal” category is meant for legal information dealing with the criminal case process. This can include legal information on evidence, searches, criminal court forms, and sentencing. The “post sentencing” category is meant for legal information dealing with the aftermath of being sentenced. This can include legal information on appeals, habeas corpus, and sentence corrections. The “financial law” category is meant for legal information dealing with finances or property. This can include legal information about wills, estates, taxes, and social security. The “contact” category includes items that were sent that include any contact information from attorneys, courts, or pro bono organizations. Lastly, the “other” category is meant for items that do not fall into any of the categories above. For example, data practices legal information requests.

A large portion of items that were sent fell into the “citation” category. The second most sent items fell under “criminal.” This is expected since a lot of IPs use LLSP’s services to find legal information to help with their open cases.

Facility Breakdown

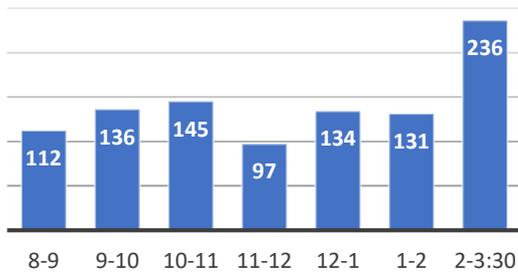
Below is a chart that divides items by the facilities to which they were sent. The facilities that received most of the items were Stillwater, Rush City, and Faribault. This closely correlates with last year’s statistics. Items sent to Moose Lake did increase from last year, now making them 10% of the items LLSP sent for 2024, whereas in 2023 they were only 5%. As for the rest of the facilities, the percentage of items sent to each facility stayed relatively the same as last year.



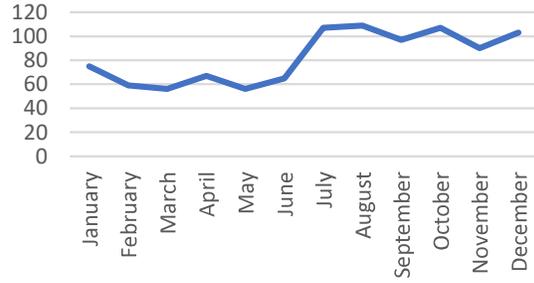
Phone Calls Statistics

LLSP had a total of 991 phone calls this year (28.2% increase from 2023). Below are charts that demonstrate what time of day and what time of year they receive the most call requests. The first bar graph shows that most of the phone call requests come in the afternoon. The second graph demonstrates an increase of phone call requests that were received in the last six months of the year. The third graph show how many calls came from each prison facility. The fourth graph show that Faribault, Moose Lake, Rush City, and Stillwater make up the majority of phone calls.

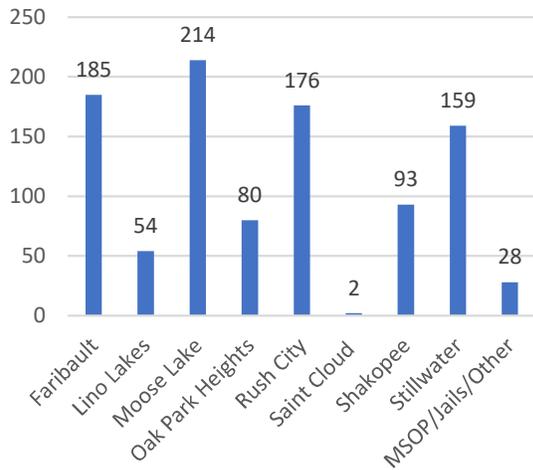
Call Time



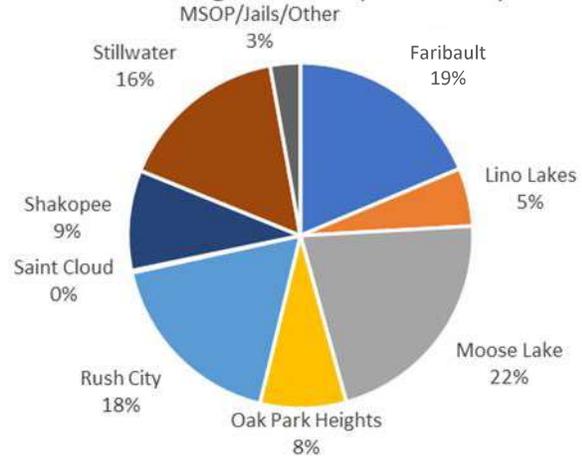
Calls per Month



Total Calls per Facility



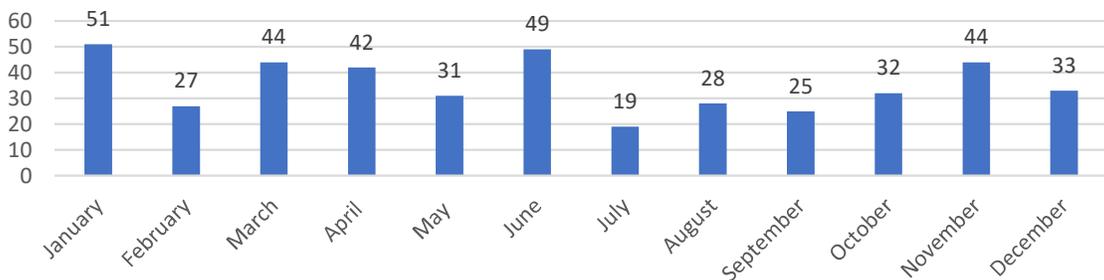
Percentage of Calls per Facility



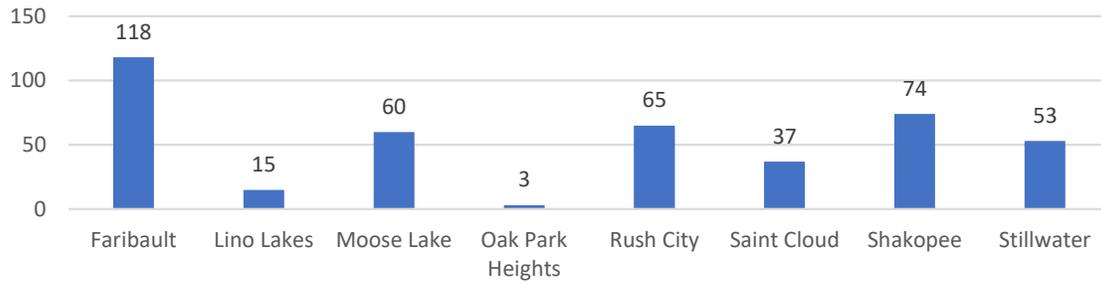
Virtual Visits

This year LLSP was finally able to get all the prison facilities onboard for virtual visits. This included Faribault, Lino Lakes, Moose Lake, Oak Park Heights, Rush City, Saint Cloud, Shakopee, and Stillwater. Oak Park Heights started virtual visits in December. And Moose Lake started virtual visits in March. In total, LLSP had 425 virtual visits this year (16.12% increase from 2023). The graphs show that Faribault IPs utilize virtual visits the most compared to other facilities, followed by the IPs in Shakopee, Rush City, and then Moose Lake.

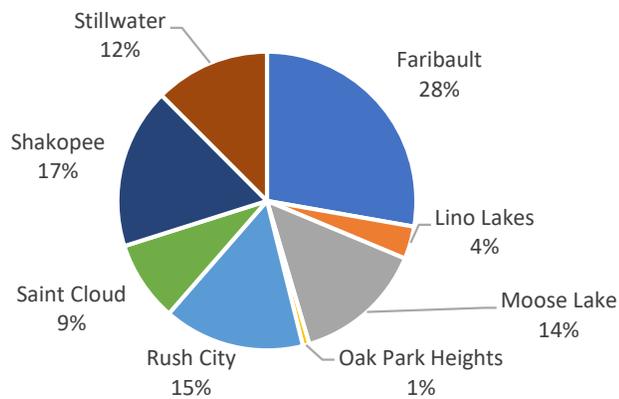
Virtual Visits per Month



Virtual Visits per Facility



Virtual Visits per Facility Percentage



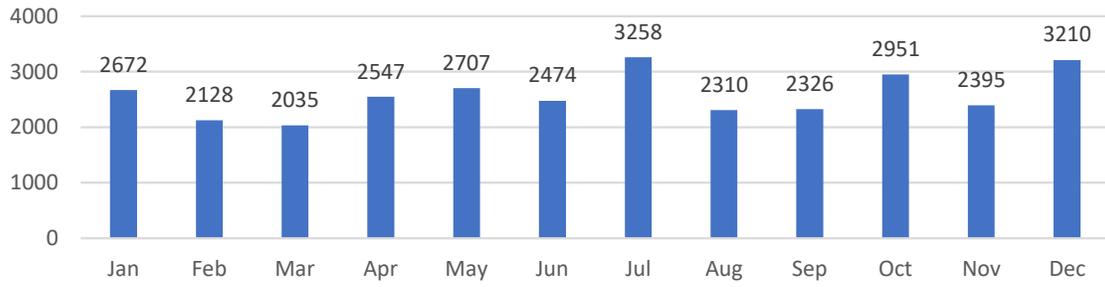
Items by Month

Last year, LLSP began to use Microsoft Lists to collect statistics. 2024 marked the second year of collecting data this way. Below is a comparison of the items that were sent by month in both 2023 and 2024.

Items Sent by Month in 2023



Items Sent by Month in 2024



Looking Ahead

For the year 2025, LLSP is looking forward to doing virtual visits with all the previously mentioned facilities. The hope is that with next year's data, there will be a good estimate of how many virtual visits LLSP should expect per facility and which months are the busiest.