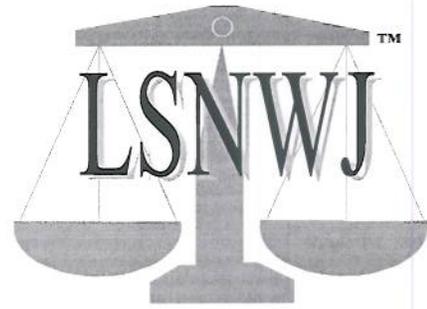


# Memorandum



**To:** John Eidleman  
**From:** Diane K. Smith  
**Date:** June 17, 2011  
**Re:** Program Quality Report

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The draft has been reviewed by the Program Directors, Office Managers, Team Leaders and Board President, and discussed at our June Board meeting last night. The following are our comments. Some might be more appropriate as a response, but I thought I would let you see our thoughts.

Page 2: We do not refer to Somerville as our main office. It is merely a service office, like our others, that happens to hold our administrative functions.

Page 2: The first session of the Visioning and Strategic Directions process was held on May 3. We expect the process to be completed by September.

Page 3: Although Irene Corcoran is new to her role as supervisor, she has more than 35 years of experience in handling intake.

Page 3: LSNWJ employs a Language Access Coordinator, who provides interpretation and translation in English-Spanish and coordinates interpretation and translation in other languages. LSNWJ not only uses Language Line, but also contracts with interpreters and translators who provide in-person as well as telephone services.

Page 3: The substantive law teams first developed Work Plans in 2010.

Page 4: LSNWJ has a formal periodic system for evaluating staff.

Page 4: Less than 30 of the 296 PAI cases opened in 2010 were conflict cases. The PAI Coordinator appointed in October 2010 had served as PAI Coordinator for Sussex County for many years.

Page 5: I am not sure what Northwest New Jersey Homeless Action is.

Page 6, Finding 4: We have engaged the consultant, but he is not being paid.

Page 7, Finding 5: The larger offices (Morristown, Somerville) are open from 8:30 am to 5 pm. The computers for all the people who perform intake are equipped to do intake. There are 3 computers in Morristown equipped to do intake.

Page 8, Finding 6: The call-back from the attorney is for a consultation to determine if the case will be handled as advice only or extended service. If the case will be handled as advice only, the advice is provided during the call-back. Applicants calling with emergencies are referred immediately to a member of the substantive team, sometimes the Team Leader, for a consultation to determine the extent of service.

Page 9, Finding 6: Walk-ins are handled face-to-face by LSNWJ. The only time they would be put on the telephone would be to contact the NJ Legal Services Hotline.

Page 9, Finding 7: As Ms. Corcoran had just been appointed intake supervisor, it appears a bit unfair to conclude that the intake team doesn't meet to address concerns or discuss best practices as there had not yet been an opportunity to do so during the visit. The team has now met and plans on meeting on a regular basis by video link.

Page 10, Finding 8: LSNWJ's survey mechanism not only measures satisfaction, but also measures achievement of client outcomes.

Page 10, Finding 9: There is no bilingual staff who is housed regularly in the Flemington office. LSNWJ uses contract interpreters and translators, as well as Language Line to provide language access services.

Page 11, Finding 9: LSNWJ has hired a bilingual law graduate, who started in April 2011.

Page 12, Finding 11: LSNWJ has a formal periodic system for evaluating staff.

Page 15, Finding 16: The private attorneys on the volunteer list handle non-conflict as well as conflict cases. The Merck volunteer attorneys handle cases referred by the intake supervisor for the Somerset Tenancy Project. All the County Bar Associations, not only that in Sussex, allow LSNWJ personnel and others (including the Vicinage 13 Assignment Judge) on our behalf, to solicit assistance and financial contributions from its members.

Page 16, Finding 17: Family pro se clinics have actually become more frequent, not less, in 2010 and 2011.

Page 17, Finding 18: The Board meetings continue to be held at locations where members and others may participate in person or by telephone.

Page 19, Finding 19: The Program Directors approve training requests, which are then submitted to the ED and Finance Team for processing. The Program Directors approve litigation expenses up to \$500.

Page 20, Finding 20: The Program Director in Morristown is an attorney. The Managing Attorney in Belvidere is an attorney. Only Newton has a non-attorney Program Director. The CFO's input into programmatic decisions is to analyze the financial and cost consequences of proposals. Programmatic decision-making is made in concert with the expanded management group. Not only that group, but the entire staff, conferred and met to discuss different options that were available to meet the financial crisis. Program directors, office managers, managing attorneys and substantive team leaders all had input into the reduction in force decisions before they were made. The performance appraisal reconciliations are attended by all who evaluate others.

Program directors, senior/managing attorneys, office managers, CFO and team leaders all attended management training in 2009 on the issue of performance appraisals. Grace Kelly attended the Managers in the Middle training some years ago. Two of the people with supervisory responsibilities have participated in management coaching by our EAP.

The finding that the director makes major decisions with little input from supervisors is unfounded. The Team Leaders develop their annual Work Plans, including priorities and case acceptance, with input from their teams. Thus the major decision of what we will do and how we will do it is made almost entirely by the Team Leaders. Personnel policies, as set forth in the Employee Handbook, are developed by a committee consisting of staff and board members. Reduction in force decisions were made in close consultation with the supervisors. Recommendations regarding benefit providers and plans are made by a board committee that includes staff representation.

Page 21, Finding 22: LSNWJ outsources certain HR tasks. There is only 1 annual audit that goes to the Board. The grant reports are prepared using time activity data and case data as well as the P&L. There are 145 reports prepared each year for 38 funders. They are prepared monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually as required by the individual funder. The reports are prepared by the grants administrator, CFO and Executive Director. The

*June 17, 2011*

auditor has not prepared a management letter as there has been nothing to report in such a document. The auditor does prepare a SAS Report. The ED and CFO both participated in the webinar, "Financial Oversight & Internal Controls in 2011 & Beyond," and engage in individual education as well.

Page 22, Finding 23: The HR function is managed by LSNWJ's HR manager, Jen Stoy, not the ED. As of 2010, LSNWJ suspended its contributions to the 401K plan. Six staff members were laid off in September 2010. The evaluator for support staff may be an Office Manager,

Page 22, Finding 24: LSNWJ has at least two program staff meetings each year, one in April and one in December. In some years, including 2011, there are additional all-staff training events and video conferences.