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May 5, 2011

Mr. Willie Abrams
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K. Street NW
Washington DC 20007

Re: Draft Report from the Program Quality Visit of SLLS

Dear Willie:

Once again, I want to tell you how much we enjoyed the visit by you and your team. We appreciate the time they devoted to reviewing our efforts and their thoughtful ideas as to what we can be doing better.

Thanks for the opportunity to review the draft report and correct factual errors. Mark and I reviewed the report and we found the following factual errors.

1. Page 4 Last paragraph, second sentence "It (SLLS) is headquartered in Hammond." SLLS does not designate a "headquarters."
2. Page 6, first paragraph--The draft report says that "a significant *majority* of the program's closed cases are in the family law area." This is incorrect. Our closed family cases for 2009 only represented 35.5% of our total cases and 34.1% in 2010. Housing has represented 24% to 25% of our closed cases in recent years, followed by income maintenance and then consumer. (Maybe, report meant to say significant *minority* of closed cases?)
3. Page 6, second paragraph: The report states that we have an in-house pro bono project in Hammond. We do not. We have one in Covington.
4. Page 7, second paragraph—referring to the oil spill funding proposal, to be fully accurate, Report should add "which was successfully funded with SLLS as the lead agency in Louisiana."
5. Page 11 - outreach offices - Fails to mention that Marrero office staffs weekly intake at an outreach office in St. Charles Parish.

6. Page 13, first paragraph—The report says “SLLS’s grant for the New Orleans office covers three parishes.” The grant is for 3 parishes and one city court in a fourth parish, and it is not a grant for the New Orleans office. It is an SLLS grant.

7. Page 13, "LCJC". "LCJC also screens applicants for the SLLS pro se divorce clinics." - LCJC screens applicants for the Covington (and now New Orleans) pro se divorce clinics because they do family law intake for Covington and New Orleans. LCJC does not screen applicants for the Hammond pro se divorce clinics because they do not do family law intake for the Hammond office.

8. Same paragraph - "instead adverse parties and other information are e-mailed to the Hammond office..." This is true only for Covington, not New Orleans.

9. Page 14 - Covington office intake - The report fails to note that with the exception of bankruptcies all intake is done by phone.

10. . Page 15 - Hammond intake - "All completed intakes are given to the Hammond office's managing attorney for general litigation." Domestic intake goes to the managing attorney for domestic work.

11. Page 16—first paragraph, last sentence—the Report says that Language Line is used in a non-intake context if Spanish speaking staff are not available. We use Language Line for languages that our staff members do not speak. We have not had to use Language Line for Spanish speaking clients because we have many Spanish speaking staff, and they are always available.

12. Page 16, Finding 8, paragraph 2—The report says outreach is conducted in some parishes where a staffed office is not maintained. To be accurate, we conduct regular outreach in St. Bernard, St. Charles and Plaquemines Parishes. We have staffed offices or regular outreach (weekly or biweekly) in 7 of our 10 parishes.

13. Page 22 - Hammond and Covington office - On Page 21 the last line referring to Covington is "all closed cases are reviewed by the executive director for program operations." The same is true in the Hammond office but that sentence does not appear under Hammond office supervision.

14. Page 22 - Footnote 22, there is no mention of the file review done by the two executive directors and litigation director of 25 files from each of the supervising attorneys, and more if there was a substantial number of files more than a year old.

15. Page 23, second paragraph—Report says three branch offices. The word, “branch” is not correct since it implies that there is a main office.

16. Page 23, Finding #13 "SLLS has a litigation director who works 60% time." The LD works 80%.

17. Page 27, fourth paragraph—Report says New Orleans office relies "exclusively on the pro bono model." In fact, New Orleans also uses judicare model and its attorneys co-counsel with private attorney volunteers.

18. Page 29 last paragraph. SLLS is governed by a 15 member board composed of ten attorneys and five client members. - You report a 16 member board which includes a community member. The tenth attorney is not a McCollum attorney and the position does not require an attorney, but the person is an attorney.

19. Page 31 - First full paragraph. "Monthly budget reports are provided to both the Treasurer and to the board as a whole." In fact monthly reports go to the Treasurer and quarterly reports go to the board as a whole.

Please note that these comments include the ones identified by Mark Moreau, so there will not be an additional letter from him reviewing the factual accuracy of your report.

Sincerely,



Brian D. Lenard
Executive Director, Program Operations