



The Justice Alliance of Central New York

Legal Aid Society of Mid-NY, Inc. (LASMNY)

Legal Services of Central NY, Inc. (LSCNY)

Special points of interest:

- HelpLine Equipment Installation Completed
- Introducing the HelpLine Team
- Current list of counties and legal problems served
- Client stories from the HelpLine front lines
- HelpLine phone numbers

Inside this issue:

Now Serving... 2

Client Stories 2

Our New Phone Numbers 2



Communication Lines



A publication of the Central New York Legal HelpLine

Serving Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego and Otsego counties

Vol. II, Issue 2

November 30, 2007

HelpLine Equipment Installation Completed



Testing, Testing: Telecommunications Consultant Steve Green (right) and IT Coordinator Terry Terenzetti (left) work together on final testing of the HelpLine equipment.

The HelpLine has leapt ahead in terms of technology over the last few months. Currently, all offices have been converted to the new phone system. Steve Green, our telecommunications consultant, is currently in Utica overseeing final cutover and approval of the system.

All offices are now on a unified, networked version of Kemp's Prime, our client case management system. All staff has received training. Monthly technology trainings, using a WebEx format, began in October 2007 to increase technology skills throughout LASMNY and LSCNY.

IT staff finalized a transfer button on Kemp's Prime, allowing staff to quickly and easily transfer cases between LASMNY and LSCNY. IT staff also finalized form letters on Kemp's Prime, which allow HelpLine staff to create advice letters for clients with a click of the mouse. IT staff created a mechanism for linking scanned HelpLine documents directly to the electronic client file. All 615 cases closed so far are in electronic format.

Introducing the HelpLine Team



The HelpLine team, from left to right: IT Coordinator Terry Terenzetti, Staff Attorney Esther Weingarten, Staff Attorney Christina Reilly, Staff Attorney Mary Traynor, Managing Attorney Cindy Domingue-Hendrickson and Staff Attorney Gregory Dziwis.

The HelpLine achieved full staffing as of November 1, 2007. The HelpLine team consists of two LASMNY Utica office attorneys (Gregory Dziwis and Christina Reilly), as well as two LSCNY Syracuse office attorneys (Mary Traynor and Esther Weingarten). This highly experienced team has assisted 615 callers throughout our 13-county service area to date. In 2008, with the HelpLine fully staffed, the team is expected to serve at least 1,300 callers. Clients responding to our surveys have been 100% highly satisfied or satisfied with services.

HelpLine Funders

The Central New York Legal HelpLine was made possible by grants and donations from the following funders:

The Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties

The Northern New York Community Foundation

The Central New York Community Foundation

The Community Foundation for South Central New York

The New York Bar Foundation

The Utica National Group Foundation

Senator John DeFrancisco

Partner's Trust Bank

The Legal Services Corporation

Private Bar Pledge Drive

Now Serving...

The Central New York Legal HelpLine is now serving:

Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego and Otsego Counties.

How do clients contact the HelpLine?

Clients can call any of our offices to access HelpLine services. All previous LASMNY and LSCNY phone numbers continue to be operational, so clients can easily contact us even if they do not have the new phone number for an office.

What legal problems can clients call about?

- Housing Problems (some examples are: evictions, lockouts, security deposits, repair problems, subsidized housing, foreclosures and other housing problems)
- Consumer Problems (some examples are: frozen bank accounts, debt problems, student loans, ID theft, car problems, utility shutoffs and other consumer problems)
- All Civil Legal Problems in Cayuga, Lewis and Madison Counties

HelpLine Stories

A woman with a severely autistic child contacted the HelpLine in a panic after coming home on a Friday afternoon, only to find a court order of eviction on her door giving her 72 hours to move. The woman's husband had gone to court, but because of his limited English, he had misunderstood the outcome of the proceedings. The client wanted to move, but needed more time so that her son could adjust to his new surroundings. In the past, moving had always triggered a severe deterioration of his condition. Within several hours, a HelpLine attorney had negotiated a settlement. The family got the extra time they needed, after paying rent to the landlord to cover the additional time.

A woman living in subsidized housing owed \$50 in rent, which she paid. There was an eviction case pending, but the building manager told her not to worry, that she didn't need to show up in court. The building manager then proceeded to get a warrant of eviction, giving her only 72 hours to move. A HelpLine staff attorney guided the woman step-by-step through the process of filing a pro se order to show cause. The court case was reopened, and after learning the facts of the situation, the opposing attorney agreed to dismiss the eviction petition. The woman was able to keep her decent, safe, affordable apartment.

Our New Telephone Numbers

Installation of the new HelpLine telephone equipment in LASMNY/LSCNY offices is now complete. The new system is already increasing communication among staff in remote offices, who can reach one another simply by dialing a 4-digit extension.

Binghamton Office: (607) 231-5900	Oswego Office: (315) 532-6900
Cortland Office: (607) 428-8400	Syracuse Office: (315) 703-6600 (LASMNY) or 703-6500 (LSCNY)
Norwich Office: (607) 336-8256	Utica Office: (315) 793-7000
Oneonta Office: (607) 433-2600	Watertown Office: (315) 955-6700



THE JUSTICE ALLIANCE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK:

The Legal Aid Society of Mid-NY, Inc.

255 Genesee St., 2nd Floor, Utica, NY 13501 • (315) 793-7000 • www.lasmny.org

Legal Services of Central NY, Inc.

472 S. Salina St., Suite 300, Syracuse, NY 13202 • (315) 703-6500 • www.lscny.org



Funded in part by the Legal Services Corporation