

Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project



Helping nonprofit legal aid programs improve client services through innovative use of technology.

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Webinar: Recent Trends in Statewide Collaboration and Cooperation

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Collaboration can often have a significant impact on the growth and success of technology initiatives. Over the past few years, the legal aid community has seen the development of several statewide collaboration efforts focusing on technology and innovation. Some states are centralizing their IT management, while other are creating technology task forces and hosting statewide technology conferences to facilitate knowledge and resource sharing among the community. This is a very content dense webinar, some amount of pausing to check out the projects is expected.

It can be very hard for rural areas to fill sysadmin and tech jobs as there aren't as many available people with those skills in smaller areas. Rural programs do have great people working with them but it can be hard to fill these positions. We have worked as a state to try and overcome some of those barriers.

NYSTech

We have a small group of facilitators, usually around two or three people. Those people have changed over time, but the people involved in the beginning are still involved.

The group offers comments and support on certain issues, and over the polices. We do individual updates on programs. One year we alternated between webinars and meetings with set agendas. We were also involved in coordinating the statewide technology conferences.

Permanents Commision on Access to Justice: Technology Working Group

This was initially a taskforce to address the technology issues in the justice gap. This working group publishes a report annually that makes a series of recommendations to the permanent commission on access to justice.

One of the best things to come out of the collaboration between NYTSTech and the Technology Working Group was our statewide technology conference. The inaugural one was in 2015 and we just had our 4th one this year. These conferences are geared towards leadership and management as well as the technologists (or tech responsible people) We found it important to get all these people in a room because often tech people go to conferences, get good ideas and then later when they present those ideas to their boss their boss has no idea what they are talking about.

CIO Workgroup

This came out of the technology workgroup and we brought in CIOs from the private law firm communities who were willing to do some pro-bono work for legal aid law firms. These CIOs really had a lot to learn as far as how legal aid works and how different it is from the big multinational firms that they were used to. We decided to some probono assessments, the CIOs come in and do pro-bono assessments for organizations all around the state and reported back. These types of assessments are as follows:

- Program Assessments
- Self Assessments
- Procurement Negotiation

Overview of Technology Resources in Michigan

- Michigan Poverty Law Program - State Support Center (including technology)
- 12 providers (5 LSC funded, 7 other)

- Legal Services Association of Michigan (LSAM)
- State Planning Body (No ATJ Committee)
- Michigan State Bar Foundation (MSBF) - State IOLTA funder
- Counsel and Advocacy Law Line (CALL) - nearly statewide hotline
- Integrated Tech and Innovations committee

Statewide Technology Resources:

- Pike CMS, hosted and maintained by MPLP
- Michigan Legal Help: statewide website for self-represented litigants
- Statewide Triage(direct to or away from legal aid) and online intake (built and maintained by MLH/MPLP, customized for each program)
- MPLP IT staff maintain websites for statewide programs
- MPLP IT staff provide consultation services, but not helpdesk-style support

MPLP Staff Rolls:

- System Administrator
- Website Coordinator
- IT Grants and Project Manager

Sample MPLP Initiatives

- Statewide CMS services
- Electronic Data Storage and Destruction
- Technology Trainings

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