



The *Alberta Legal Services Mapping Project* (ALSMP) is a province wide project aimed providing an understanding of the public’s legal needs and the current state of legal service provision. <http://cfcj-fcj.org/research/mapping-en.php>

St. Paul Judicial District – SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The goals of the ALSMP are to:

- Collect and share information about existing legal services in Alberta.
- Gain a better understanding about the characteristics of people and communities across Alberta and their legal needs.
- Identify strengths and gaps in current legal service delivery and resources.
- Strengthen relationships between legal service providers through the sharing of knowledge and expertise.

The St. Paul Judicial District

- The St. Paul District contains a relatively sparse population that is widely dispersed among a large number of towns and smaller communities.
- The town of St. Paul is home to the majority of the legal and related services’ main offices but is not one of the largest communities.
- Cold Lake and Lloydminster are the only communities with over 10,000 residents.
- This District contains four reserves and five Métis settlements.
- There is a large urban Aboriginal population in the larger communities but very few New Canadians.
- There are differences in patterns of educational attainment and employment between communities, with the town of St. Paul having higher poverty rates and lower general educational attainment than others, such as Cold Lake.

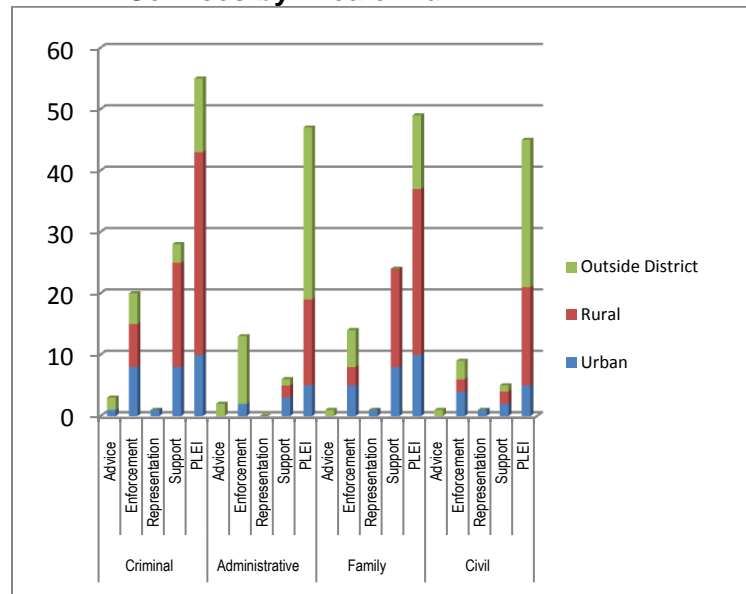
Existing Legal Services

Of the 173 services that were mapped:

- 63 were sole purpose legal services.
- 43 offered legal as well as social or health components.
- 67 were related social and health services.

All legal services were classified by the types of service available (advice, enforcement, representation, support and PLEI) and area of law (criminal, administrative, family and civil). Although this District has a satisfactory range of services (Figure 1), there is a need to further develop their capacity and enhance networking among them.

Figure 1 – Services by Area of Law



Understanding Legal Needs in the St. Paul Judicial District

There are three social barriers which are overarching the vast majority of legal and related problems and need to be addressed in order to provide effective specialized legal and related services for particularly vulnerable groups in this District:



Gaps and Priorities in Meeting Legal Needs

There are two main gaps in legal service provision in the St. Paul Judicial District:

- Inadequate Access to Legal Services in All Areas of Law
 - Limited LAA Capacity
 - Lack of Services for Family Law Related Needs
 - Lack of Legal Assistance for People Charged with Summary Offences
- Absence of Specialized Services, Resources and Training
 - Mental Health, Addictions, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 - Absence of Services for New Canadians
 - Inadequate Victim's Services

Challenges to Filling Legal Gaps

The most significant challenges that legal service providers face are:

- lack of staff with appropriate education and training, and
- fragmentation of services.

Improving Legal Service Delivery

Good Practices to Build On

- Service Provider Relationships.
- Networking.

Creative Approaches

- Collaboration to Serve Victims of Violence.
- Prevention Initiative for Children and Youth.
- Supporting People with Needs Related to Mental Illness and Abuse.

Recommendations

Based on research findings we make 17 recommendations aimed at:

- supporting good practices,
- removing barriers, and
- filling gaps in legal services.

These are presented in Section 8 of the Report.

Where to Begin: Suggestions for Funders

Suggestions for legal services funders to focus on in order to have the greatest impact in removing barriers and filling gaps are:

- The organization of District wide information sessions for legal and related service providers.
- The creation of broad-based, one-stop entry point (such as a LInC and/or community clinic).
- Increased education and prevention efforts related to FASD.

Addressing any of these as well as any of the additional 14 recommendations will have a significant positive impact on legal service delivery in the District.