

**Guidance for Applicants Responding to the  
LSC Request for Proposals  
for FY 1999**

This is the latest in a series of guidances for applicants for LSC funds. An updated version of this guidance is posted at [www.algodonesassociates.com](http://www.algodonesassociates.com) each year shortly after the LSC releases its Request for Proposals.

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This document provides suggestions for preparing the program narrative that must be submitted to the LSC in response to the LSC's Request for Proposals (RfP) for FY 1999. It consists of five parts:

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Overview of Changes in the LSC RfP for FY1999

Applicants who have responded to earlier RfP's should note that the FY 1999 RfP is **not** the same as previous RfP's. There are several major changes:

1. The document titled *Evaluation Guidelines* has been made available to applicants for the first time. This document was originally written for the panel of outside reviewers that is convened when there is more than one applicant for a service area. It can be reasonably assumed that LSC staff also use *Evaluation Guidelines* to review applications when there is only one applicant for a service area.

Because *Evaluation Guidelines* contains the standards that will be used to evaluate applications, **all applicants should read *Evaluation Guidelines* carefully**—once before writing the application to get a sense of the specificity and detail required, once as each section is being written to determine what should be

covered, and once after the first draft of the narrative is completed to check that all required information has been included.

2. In general, the RfP is much more specific. For example, last year's RfP, in section A1(a), asked applicants to "Identify when the appraisal of client needs was (or will be) conducted." This year, applicants are told to "Identify when the appraisal of client needs was (or will be) conducted, when the priorities were (will be) periodically reviewed and what the periodic review consists of."

This change brings the RfP in line with *Evaluation Guidelines*, which, at least in last year's version, called for much more detail and specificity than an applicant would have surmised from reading the RfP alone.

3. Applicants may state priorities as either "general statements of work to be undertaken" or as "substantive law subject matter areas".

Examples of a priority stated as a general statement of work to be undertaken are : "protecting the family" or "preserving the home". Examples of a priority stated as a substantive law subject matter area are: "housing", or "domestic relations".

The RfP for FY 1997 implied that all applicants should use general statements of work to be undertaken. Last year's RfP specifically stated that applicants could express priorities in either of the forms discussed above.

We recommend that applicants state priorities as general statements of work to be undertaken. For a discussion of this issue, see page 10 of this document.

4. Section C on program management has been rewritten. It could serve as an example of how this year's RfP has been made more specific.
5. Section D, on coordination within the delivery system, has been substantially changed, and has been given greater importance (weight at 23% vs. 15% in last year's RfP). In general, **Section D should be seen as the link between the LSC's competitive bidding and state planning processes**. Applicants should use Section D to describe their contribution to the creation of an integrated, coordinated system for the delivery of legal services in their state.
6. Section E, on experience and reputation, has been given less weight (13% vs. 20% in last year's application). This may reflect two facts: few new organizations have participated in the competitive bidding process, and the LSC's now gives greater importance to coordination within the delivery system. Assuming that the pattern of few new applicants continues, programs can expect that the LSC will give even greater emphasis to coordination and state planning in the future.
7. **Section E has been very substantially changed**. This section used to be relatively unimportant for existing LSC recipients. This year, new Sections E1 and

E2 have been added. Section E1 requires a current recipient to describe its *general* accomplishments, using the LSC case categories (consumer, education, etc.). Section E2 asks a current recipient to describe accomplishments in *three specific cases*. If the applicant is a current LSC recipient, these two sections carry a weight of 13%, and therefore are an important part of the application.

### Specific Changes in the LSC RfP for FY1999

#### Section A:

1. The weight given to part A (identifying and establishing the most critical legal needs) is very slightly less (19% vs. 20% last year).
2. Section A1b: Applicants are asked to provide a brief summary of the results of the needs assessment. Note that the summary of needs identified will almost certainly be different than the program's list of "most critical legal needs", since the needs assessment will show needs that the program will later conclude are not critical.
3. Section A1c: Applicants are asked not merely for the names of client eligible organizations participating in the needs assessment, but also about "the nature of their participation".
4. Section A1e: This is an entirely new section. Applicants are asked to describe the analytical processes used to determine the most critical legal needs and the priorities to address those needs.
5. Section A3: As discussed above, applicants may now state priorities as either "general statements of work to be undertaken" or as "substantive law subject matter areas".

Applicants are also specifically permitted to use a table to show priorities, cases, matters, goals, and measurable outcomes.

The definition of "objectives/measurable outcomes" has been slightly rewritten, but there has been no change in the substance of the section.

#### Section B:

The first question, regarding the delivery system to be used (e.g., staff attorney, contracts, judicare, etc.) has been eliminated. Question 2 in last year's RfP has become question 1, and question 3 has become question 2. Comparing question 3 in last year's RfP to question 2 in this year's RfP shows that the sub-parts of the question have been reorganized and condensed.

#### Section C:

1. Section C1: This question on strategic planning was added last year. Applicants are now asked to describe not only the major strategic issues facing the program and its plans for dealing with those issues, but also the “nature and extent of participation of board, staff and others”, and “major steps or initiatives” that are planned for the future. For a discussion of strategic planning, see “LSC’s Procedure for Determining What Programs Will Do”, below.
2. Sections C2,3,4,5 and 6 have been made more specific.
3. Section C7: This question, on the program’s use of e-mail and the Internet, appears for the first time in this RfP.

#### Section D:

1. Section D1 has been made more specific, and responses have been limited to 5 pages. Sub-sections a-g closely parallel the categories in Program Letter 98-1 (on state planning). In general, applicants should use sub-sections a-g to describe their contribution to the creation of an integrated, coordinated system for the delivery of legal services in their state.
2. Section D2, on coordination with organizations in the service area that are not legal services providers, is new.
3. Section D3b has been made more specific. Applicants must now describe efforts to both recruit and retain private attorneys.
4. Section D3c has been reorganized, but there are no substantive changes.
5. Section D3d has been slightly rewritten, but there are no substantive changes.
6. Section D4 has been slightly rewritten, but there are no substantive changes.

#### Section E:

Section E has been substantially changed. See “Overview of changes”, above. Note that existing LSC recipients are no longer required to provide basic information about firm management (section E3).

## Understanding to the RfP

### LSC's Perception of Its Recipients

This RfP clearly signals that the LSC's perception of its recipients has changed. This section describes those changes.

The LSC's long standing view of its basic field recipients was that they were worlds unto themselves. Each basic field program was to provide a full range of services (individual representation, group representation, advice and brief service, policy advocacy, community legal education, and, maybe, community economic development). At least some service was to be provided to every important group in the community. Geographical coverage, and numbers served, were less important than maintaining a full range of services, and covering all of the important groups in the community.

The view that the individual basic field program was the essence of the delivery system was reinforced by the LSC's approach to its other recipients: state and national support, regional training centers, and migrant programs. (In this context, Native American programs were a variation of basic field programs). The choice of the word "support" to describe most of this network revealed the basic-field-program-centeredness of the LSC's thinking: what was supported was each basic field program. While coordination of services across state boundaries was a value, coordination was something that others—especially, state support—did.

More recently, the LSC enunciated a very different view of its basic field recipients in Program Letter 98-1. The letter implies that responsibility for creating and maintaining a comprehensive system (that is, a system able to provide all the services listed in the second paragraph of this section) has shifted from the individual basic field program to a "system" consisting of many providers that coordinate so well that they function as a single "integrated" program. Further, the system should aim to provide an appropriate service to a substantial number of people throughout the geographical area served. The emphasis on geographical coverage and serving substantial numbers of people gives greater emphasis (though not primacy) to such strategies as advice and brief service, assisting pro se litigants, and making effective use of resources in the private bar, and to such technologies as telephones, computer networks, and the Internet.

The RfP takes something of a middle position between these two nearly opposing views. The emphasis is on what each applicant proposes to do in coordination with other programs, rather than on what the entire system is doing. But the greater weight given to section D ("Coordination within the Delivery System") clearly signals that the LSC is serious about its commitment to legal services as a multi-provider, coordinated, state system. The title of Section D should be seen as a clear message: the delivery system is *not* the individual program. Recipients that continue to try to be "worlds unto themselves" will find it increasingly difficult to fit their activities into the categories and questions in the RfP.

## LSC's Procedure for Determining What Programs Will Do

The LSC also has an implied procedure that recipients should use to determine what they will do in coordination with others. This procedure consists of eight parts that are to be carried out in the order shown below:

- Strategic planning
- Needs Assessment
- Identification of “critical legal needs”
- Setting priorities
- Choosing strategies (or services)
- Coordinating with other legal providers in the state
- Coordinating with other non-legal providers in the area served
- Producing effective outcomes

The RfP requires each applicant to describe how it has (or will) address each part of the above procedure. But the questions about the procedure are scattered throughout the RfP, which makes it difficult to see the procedure as a whole. **My suggestion is that applicants first write, for their own use, a coherent, sequential description of how the program has carried out each of the eight parts of the LSC's procedure.** Then, those notes can be used to write much of the narrative. Use of notes will ensure that information about the applicant's plans and operations is all there and makes sense. It will also ensure that information is not needlessly repeated.

The LSC's procedure might be described as follows:

**Strategic Planning.** As used in *Evaluation Guidelines*, “strategic planning” is “the applicant's ability to manage change”, with emphasis on two areas: significant change occurring in the client community, and “significant changes in funding, [and] rules and regulations affecting LSC recipients” (page 11 in the version published at the LSC website).

The easiest way to address these issues is to think of strategic planning as the process that programs use to make the most basic decisions about a) who will be served, b) who will be used to provide services, c) what the program actually does on a day-to-day basis, and d) what outcomes—changes in the lives of poor people—will be produced.

*Who will be served?* Many programs are finding that they are serving more people who are working, or will soon be working. Further, the emphasis may have shifted from the individual to the family, as actions taken by a former AFDC recipients and the welfare department have effects on the entire family unit's access to health care, child care, and other services. The central issue to be addressed in the RfP is: is the nature of the group served changing, and if so, how?

*Who will be used to provide services?* Program staffs are changing. There are now more fellows, more part-time attorneys, more staff stationed in courthouses, and

more “in House” volunteers. In some states, teams of staff from several programs are addressing key issues.

Further, many programs are making more use of resources outside the program, such as pro bono attorneys, and attorneys in other legal providers. Some programs are “outplacing” some key functions, such as intake.

*What does the program actually do on a day-to-day basis?* There may be much more use of telephone advice and of pro-se clinics. Staff may spend more time supporting pro bono attorneys, meeting with other legal and non-legal providers or educating agency staff or community groups.

*What outcomes—changes in the lives of poor people—are produced?* Depending on the answers given to the first three questions, the outcomes produced may be quite different than those produced when the applicant used most of its resources for face-to-face representation.

Note that the emphasis in the last four paragraphs is on what the program is *actually doing*. While a few programs have planned their strategic changes, most programs have changed in less deliberate ways. You don’t need a “strategic planning process” to be able to manage change. What you need is effective change. All programs have changed over the past three years. This is an opportunity to step back from day-to-day activities and think about, and describe, those changes.

**Needs Assessment.** Needs appraisal is a process that ought to be relatively independent from the program’s basic decisions about the four key questions. As a practical matter, however, the two are related. For example, how often did we ask about the number of poor households with telephones before we started making heavy use of telephone advice and brief service?

The LSC is mostly concerned about who participated in the needs assessment, and how that assessment was conducted (page 3 in the version of *Evaluation Guidelines* published at the LSC website). To keep the thread of essential program decisions clear, however, applicants should briefly describe the results of the needs assessment, making sure that some of the needs that were ultimately determined not to be “critical” are identified.

**Identification of “critical legal needs”.** Here, the LSC is interested in knowing which needs, of all those found by the needs assessment, are regarded by the applicant as “critical”, as well as what process was used to give “critical” status to one need but not to another. (Page 4, *Evaluation Guidelines*).

In general, criticality is determined in three ways:

1. “Valuing”, in which needs (or the effect of needs on the lives of clients) are compared to values such as “justice for all” or “no destitution”, and the needs that emerge as particularly compelling are called “most important” or “critical”.
2. “Counting”, in which the need that affects the most people is regarded as most important.
3. “Timing”, in which the most immediate need is judged to be the most critical.

In real life, criticality is often determined using all three methods. I’d avoid this kind of abstract language in the application, however. Instead, I’d use such reasons as “greatest impact on families”, or “client will suffer irreversible harm if case is not taken immediately”.

The LSC asks that each critical need be associated with a particular client group, except in situations where the need is critical for all poor people. This will require the program to categorize its clients in some way. You could use geographical area (rural, suburban, urban) or traditional groups such as children, the elderly, welfare recipients, tenants in government supported housing, people with disabilities, etc.. Or you could look at who the program is currently serving, and discover that the groups served are two parent families with children, one parent families with children, single adults (especially for SSI), children in school, etc..

**Setting priorities.** If the program has chosen to state priorities as substantive law subject matter areas, then critical legal needs and priorities are probably the same thing. If the program has chosen to use general statements of work to be undertaken, then the application should show which critical needs are covered by each general statement.

Applicants may find that its priorities no longer match what the program is actually doing. This is more likely to occur if priorities are stated as substantive law subject matter areas. (General statements of work to be undertaken are usually so broad that virtually any activity or client group will fit under one of the statements). If priorities are out of line with actual work, say so in the application, and describe what the program will do to re-set its priorities.

**Choosing strategies (or services).** Once the program has set its priorities, it determines what strategies it will use to address those priorities. This involves a seven step process:

1. Identifying what other legal services providers in the state are doing.
2. Identifying what non-legal services providers in the same service area are doing.
3. Determining the approach the program will take to other providers. These might be generally classified as augmenting (doing the same thing as other providers in order to serve more people), complementing (doing something other provid-



ers are not doing, in order to increase the range of services available), or gap-filling (a combination of augmenting and complementing, but targeted at specific groups or geographical areas).

4. Developing strategies or services that a) are consistent with the approach taken to other providers, and b) make effective and efficient use of the applicant's resources.
5. Selecting an office structure, based on the strategies or services to be delivered.
6. Creating a staff structure.
7. Developing an intake system.

Note that there is a question in the RfP about each step in the "choosing strategies" process.

**Coordinating with other legal providers and coordinating with other non-legal providers.** The final step in the part of the LSC procedure that might be called "planning" is to describe how the program plans to coordinate its activities with legal services providers in the same state, and non-legal providers in the area served.

**Producing effective outcomes.** The last step in the LSC procedure is to produce effective results for clients. Here, the RfP requires each program to describe what it has actually accomplished, rather than what it proposes to do..

Once you complete your notes on how your program has addressed the LSC procedure outlined in this section, you are read to write the narrative. The next sections provide step-by-step instructions for writing the narrative.

## Writing the Narrative

### A: Identifying and Establishing the Most Critical Legal Needs

**This section, and each of the following sections, assumes you have read all of the earlier parts of this document and have prepared the notes discussed in "LSC's Procedure for Determining What Programs Will Do"**

**Background.** The final priority-setting rule (Part 1620) became effective on May 21, 1997. While the regulation provides guidance on the purpose, procedures, adoption, and reporting of priorities, it gives no clue to what a priority might look like. That guidance is in Program Letter 96-2 (RfP Appendix ) which contains the "Suggested List of Priorities for Programs" adopted by the LSC Board on May 20, 1996. The priorities are the form of general statements of work to be undertaken.

A number of programs have adopted the LSC Board's suggested priorities exactly as written. Other programs have adopted priorities similar to those suggested by the LSC, or have adopted the LSC priorities but then supplemented them with a subset of priorities called "emphases" or "work to be done".

#### A1: Process to identify the most critical legal needs.

- a. Write a brief overview of the needs assessment process to give the reviewer a sense of the entire process. Describe when the appraisal was held; what instruments (in general) were used; who provided information about needs; what needs were identified; how the “most critical needs” were determined; how the annual review is conducted; and who participates in the annual review. Use your notes as a guide. Include only information about needs assessment and determining critical legal needs.
- b. Give detailed, specific answers to the questions in sub-paragraphs a-e in Section A1. Use *Evaluation Guidelines* to ensure you have answered all the questions.

#### A2. Most critical needs.

This is a two part question. The first asks for your program’s list of critical needs. The second asks you differentiate needs by major sub-groups of the client population. Use your notes. List needs, not priorities. For example, “increased number of illegal evictions due to exceptionally high demand for low cost rentals” is a need; “housing”, or “securing shelter for all” are priorities. Make sure that there is at least one, and preferably two or three, critical needs for each of the priorities you will list in A3. Use your notes to write a brief explanation of how the program determined its most critical needs; as part of the explanation, describe the role of staff, board and client representatives.

To differentiate needs by client group, use the client groups you identified in your notes. I would use a two column chart, with the groups in the left column, and the needs of each group in the right column. I would list more than one need for each group. Needs that affect all eligible persons in the service area can be grouped together.

#### A3. Priorities, cases, matters, goals and measurable outcomes

Use your notes. Study the definitions on page 18 of the RfP and the example on page 19. Note that the example is clear and detailed (especially the sub-section on Objectives/Measurable Outcomes). Note also how long the example is: four priorities could easily consume four of your precious 45 pages. I’d recommend using a chart instead; for a sample chart, see page 12 of this document. Note that the first priority in the sample chart (shaded area) is the same as the example in the RfP. If you have never written an application before, see the Appendix (beginning on page 15 of this document) for specific instructions for converting priorities into cases, matters, goals, and measurable objectives.

The case for writing priorities in the form of “general statements of work to be undertaken” and for adopting the LSC suggested priorities:

1. More compelling. Work to be done priorities give a much better sense of what your program actually does. A priority such as “housing” tells your board, staff, clients and funders nothing; “preserving the home” is much evocative.
2. Fewer emergencies. Taking a compelling consumer case if “consumer” is not one of your subject matter priorities means you will have to report an emergency. Virtually all cases and matters can be accommodated under one of the LSC’s suggested priorities, and many cases and matters can be placed under several of the LSC priorities.
3. Why not take the LSC’s suggestion? After all, you are asking them to pay for part of your program for the next three years.

As a final check, make sure that the priorities, goals, cases and matters, and objectives/measurable outcomes are consistent with a) the list of critical needs (A2, above) and b) Form G: Client Service Forms.

A4: Other legal resources (hard to see; on page 19, at the end of the example).

Use your notes to a) identify other legal resources in the area served and b) the way priorities and program strategies reflect consideration of these resources. Again, I’d use a two column chart, with the resource on the left, and the ways priorities and strategies reflect those resources on the right.

## Sample Chart

Priority	Goal	Cases and matters	Objective/ Outcome
Maintaining the stock of decent, affordable housing	<p>A. Maintain the stock of rental housing</p> <p>B. Improve the condition of rental housing</p> <p>C. Ensure that laws protecting tenancies for low income persons are exercised and enforced</p>	<p>Cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eviction cases (other than non-payment of rent)</li> <li>Conditions cases that affect habitability</li> <li>Other meritorious cases to extent resources allow</li> </ul> <p>Matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce and distribute pamphlets on landlord/tenant law, public housing tenants rights and security deposit law</li> <li>Do community education on landlord/tenant rights</li> <li>Work with Sheriffs on handling of "self help" evictions</li> <li>Work with FmHA to improve enforcement in FmHA rental property<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>	<p>50 private tenants and 10 public housing tenant families are successful in retaining their residences</p> <p>Conditions in 25 rental apartments/houses are improved</p> <p>Sheriffs' departments enforce laws prohibiting self-help evictions by landlords</p> <p>FmHA ensures that landlords follow proper steps before going to court in evictions</p> <p>The brochures listed are produced and distributed</p> <p>The community education session is given in each of the service area's counties with sufficient publicity to ensure that eligible persons are aware of the sessions</p>
Maintaining, enhancing and protecting income and economic security	<p>A. Enable low income families and individuals to protect income and household assets</p> <p>B. Protect low income consumers from illegal or unfair trade practices</p>	<p>Cases: represent working poor families facing garnishment or attachment</p> <p>Matter: conduct community legal education on consumers rights</p>	<p>To create and operate panel of private attorneys to provide representation to 50 families facing garnishment or attachment</p> <p>6 community education sessions attended by at least 20 persons each</p>
Safety, Stability and Well Being	End the cycle of violence within domestic relationships	<p>Matter: train clients to obtain TRO's, with the assistance of lay volunteers, if needed</p> <p>Cases: obtain divorces for battered women seeking to dissolve a union</p>	<p>To train at least 10 volunteers willing to spend 4 hours per week assisting clients. Conduct 12 community ed training sessions attended by at least 20 persons each; 80% obtain TRO's after training</p> <p>To provide representation in divorces only for women who are living in a battered women's shelter and who, after counseling, are willing to proceed with a divorce</p>
Improved outcomes for children	<p>A. Assure that all children have access to appropriate educational programs</p> <p>B. Assure the lowest income children with disabilities have some income to permit them to receive essential services not available from Medicaid or the schools</p>	<p>Cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Represent children with disabilities who have been denied access to education and/or ancillary services</li> <li>Create and manage a program in which private attorneys represent individual disabled children dropped from SSI because an IFA was used to determine eligibility</li> </ul>	<p>10 children represented, appropriate services obtained in 100% of cases</p> <p>To file appeals for at least 30% of children in service area dropped from SSI; obtain a new determination of eligibility for SSI, or comparable benefits from another program, for at least 75% of children for whom an appeal was filed</p>

## B: Components of the Delivery Approach

### B1. Office and staffing structure.

Use your notes to describe the office and staffing structure. In addition to the questions in the RfP (page 20), read *Evaluation Guidelines*, pages 6-7, for additional issues that must be discussed.

### B2. Intake, advice and brief service

Use your notes to describe your intake system. Because of the number of questions about the intake system, and the detail requested, it might be wise to start your response with a one or two paragraph overview of your intake, advice and brief service system. In addition to the questions in the RfP (page 20), read *Evaluation Guidelines*, pages 7-11, for additional issues that must be discussed. The number of pages devoted to intake in *Evaluation Guidelines* should give you a sense of the importance LSC assigns to intake, advice and brief service.

## C: Management and Legal Work Resources

### C1: Strategic planning.

Use your notes to describe how your program has responded to changes in a) the laws and policies governing welfare programs (TANF, SSI, general assistance, etc.), job training and placement, child support, housing, day care, domestic violence, health, nutrition support and other programs that have significant impact on poor people's lives; and b) resources for, and restrictions on, LSC funded legal services. Also, describe what the program will do in the future changes in the laws affecting clients, and in funding. Note that the requirements in *Evaluation Guidelines* (pages 11-12) are more specific and detailed than the RfP.

### C2-7 Management policies and procedures

Answer each question in the RfP (pages 21-23). Then use *Evaluation Guidelines* (pages 12-24) to check your answers. Again, note how much more detailed and specific the *Guidelines* are. **In the past, applicants' responses to questions in these sections have been very important in determining whether an applicant receives three year funding.**

## D. Coordination Within the Delivery System

### D1. Cooperative efforts with other community organizations and legal providers.

This paragraph asks for *specific* information about activities you are conducting (or will conduct) with other legal services organizations within the applicant's *state* around the issues in sub-paragraphs a-g. In this instance, the RfP is more detailed and specific than *Evaluation Guidelines*.

## D2. Cooperative efforts with organizations that are not legal providers.

Here, the applicant should discuss coordination with organizations that are not legal providers *within the area served*. Use section D1 as a guide to the issues that might be discussed.

## D3. Use of private attorneys

This section assumes that the applicant is using staff to manage the PAI component. It might be useful, therefore, to first provide an overview of the entire PAI effort, especially if the applicant is using a sub-grant to a bar association, or some other approach to PAI. Then, answer each of the questions. Note that the indicators in *Evaluation Guidelines* (pages 25-29) are often extremely specific.

## D4. Developing additional resources.

Begin by briefly describing what the program has already done to develop additional resources. Then, describe the plan for raising additional resources, by answering the questions in the RfP. Note how specific the requirements for the plan are in *Evaluation Guidelines*.

## E: Experience and Reputation

### E1, E2. Program accomplishments

This is a two part question. Section E1 requires a current recipient to describe its *general* accomplishments, using the LSC case categories (consumer, education, etc.). Section E2 asks a current recipient to describe accomplishments in *three specific cases*.

The sections of *Evaluation Guidelines* dealing with Part E were apparently not rewritten to conform to the new questions in the RfP. **For current recipients, the material in *Evaluation Guidelines* on Section E should not be used to guide the writing of the application.**

E3. This question is only for applicants who are not current recipients.

John B. Arango  
June, 1998

## Appendix

### Priorities, Goals, Cases and Matters, and Objectives/Outcomes

This part of the paper describes a procedure for producing the information required for the chart on page 12.

Priorities are the most general statement of what a program intends to do. By themselves, priorities convey program aims, but give little or no hint of the kinds of cases or matters that the program will undertake. To learn more about what your program intends to do, the LSC, and your board, staff and others will turn to your application, where they will find, in increasing order of specificity, your program's proposed goals, list of cases and matters, and objectives/measurable outcomes.

The chart below shows the relationship between these ways of describing your program's work:

Framework for all activities		Specific work that will be done	
Priorities	Goals	List of Cases & Matters	Objectives/Measurable Outcomes
Very General-----		Specific-----	Very Specific

### A Step by Step Approach

1. *Assemble the documents produced during your last priority-setting.* Specifically: the lists of cases and matters that are being accepted by the program and the priorities adopted by your board.
2. *Decide whether to state priorities as subject matter areas or as general statements of work to be done.* This paper recommends that you use general statements of work to be done (see page 11). The final choice, however, belongs to you and your board.
3. *Copy each priority onto a sheet of paper. Copy each type of case, and each type of matter onto a "Post-It".* One priority, one sheet of paper. One case, one "Post-It". One matter, one "Post-It". (See the chart on page 12 for examples of "cases" and "matters").
4. *Match cases and matters, and priorities.* Now, read each Post-It. Find the priority that best conveys the aim of your work in that case or matter. Gently stick the Post-It on that page. Repeat until you have placed all Post-Its. You should be able to place all the Post-Its on one of the pages; if you cannot, you need an additional priority (and you should be reporting many "emergencies").
5. *Make a big chart.* Logistics could interfere with thought in the next step, so give yourself lots of room. Tape two sheets of flip chart paper side-by-side to a wall

(newspaper will do in a pinch). Divide the sheets into 4 columns, labeled Priorities, Goals, Cases and Matters, and Objectives/Measurable Outcomes, as follows:

Priorities	Goals	Cases and Matters	Objective/ Outcome

5. *Paste up your priorities.* Write each of your priorities (which you are now sure include all of your cases and matters) on a Post-It. Put one Post-it with a priority in the left hand column. Skip the goals column, and put each of the cases and matters for that priority in a vertical row down the cases and matters column. (You'll do this for each of your priorities and associated cases and matters. From now on I'll describe the process as if you had only one priority, just to keep things simple—or simpler).
6. *Write goals (where necessary).* Now read the priority, and then one of the cases or matters: 1) Will the LSC, members of your board, and other funders understand how the priority and case or matter are linked? And, 2) is the case or matter really a *case* or a *matter*? If the answer to either question is no, then you need a "goal".

For example, the priority is "Populations with special vulnerabilities", and the case is "to represent legal immigrants and refugees". Many bar leaders will not necessarily think that legal immigrants and refugees have "special vulnerabilities". And "to represent legal immigrants, etc." should be moved out of the cases and matters column, because it is neither a case nor a matter. The solution is to write two goals: "To represent legal immigrants" and "To represent legal refugees". These goals explain who your program regards as having "special vulnerabilities" and creates a way to track the activities that will be performed for these groups through the rest of the chart. So write those goals on two new Post-its and put them in the goals column. Once you have done that, you'll have a hole in the cases and matters column. Now write one or more new Post-its that describe the specific cases and/or matters that you will do for legal immigrants and/or legal refugees. For example, "Self petitions for immigrant victims of domestic violence".

Working back and forth between the three columns, you will end up with a) a framework for all your activities in the priorities and goals column, and b) a much more specific list of cases and matters in the cases and matters column.

As you work back and forth between priorities, goals, and cases and matters, you'll discover that goals and their associated cases and matters can be placed under several priorities. The final placement will depend on the emphasis you want to give to a particular activity. Placing a housing goal under "Preserving the



home” puts the stress on shelter. Placing the same goal under “Support for families” stresses the importance of a stable physical location on many aspects of a family’s life: getting a job, keeping kids in the same class year round, developing a neighborhood support system, etc. Give thought to where goals belong. Getting the stress right will have a major influence on program activities over the next grant cycle, and, on a more mundane level, will make it easier for you to write objectives and outcomes.

The best approach for this activity is: Just do it. Too much tinkering at this stage produces frustration when you decide later to move goals and all their associated cases and matters to another priority, or sets a standard for thoroughness that exhausts you halfway through the list of priorities. If you get stuck or bored, ask a colleague to give you a hand.

7. *Read through your now revised list of cases and matters.* This is the list of what your program is going to do. Is your list of cases and matters specific enough? If not, make your cases and matters more specific now, and then read backwards to your priorities. Does it still all make sense? If not, work on your goals, which are the link between your priorities and your cases and matters.
8. *Write at least one objective OR measurable outcome for each case and matter.*

In theory, objectives are sentences that begin with “to”, contain an action verb, and describe something that can be measured. In theory, objectives and measurable outcomes are the same thing.

In legal services, some programs have written objectives that are in fact measurable. Others have written objectives that will help staff decide which applicants to take as clients, and which to help in some other way.

An example of the first kind of objective is “To obtain court determinations establishing parental rights and responsibilities for children for 70% of the 260 program clients represented in custody, visitation or guardianship cases.”

An example of the second would be “To represent persons in divorce proceedings only when there is a) evidence of abuse or b) a child custody issue.”

The first objective is extraordinarily specific. It is based on several years of records that enabled the program to project both the number of clients to be served and the expected success rate. If you have those kinds of records and feel comfortable putting numbers in a proposal (many of you already do this for United Way or IOLTA), then write something like the first objective.

Others may find that you lack the information needed to write the first kind of objective, or have doubts about committing the program in advance to such specific results. You should write the second kind of objective.

9. *Review all your work.* Starting in the left column, read each row straight across to the right column: priority, goal, case or matter, objective or outcome. Does what you have just read make sense? Can you tell what the program will do? Do you know what the program will look for as evidence that it is effective? If the answer for each row is “yes”, the real work is done. If the answer for some rows is “no”, then revise your goals, cases or matters, objectives or outcomes until you are satisfied.
10. *Look at the whole chart before you.* Except for “emergencies” this will be your program for the next grant cycle. Do you like what you see? If the answer is “no”, you should consider conducting a thorough review of your program’s activities—what we now call “planning”, as opposed to “priority-setting”, which is the process you use to come into compliance with the LSC’s regulation 1620.
11. *Condense the information on your large chart so that you describe all of your program’s work in as few pages as possible.* See the chart on page 12. Note that, for the LSC, you do not have to link goals to particular cases, matters or objective/outcomes. Simply write all of your goals for one priority in the “Goals” box; all of your cases and matters for the same priority in the “Cases and matters” box; and all of your objectives/outcomes for that priority in the “Objectives/Outcome” box.

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