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Attachment A

The Resource

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for Great Programs, Inc.

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Highlights of Research on Telephone-Based Intake and Legal Assistance Systems

Updated 10-11-2011

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1) **Best Practices**
    a. **Recommendations of the Center for Policy Research's Hotline Outcomes Assessment Study—November 2002:**
        i. **Hotlines should recognize that certain demographic groups are particularly less likely to obtain favorable outcomes.** Non-English speakers, individuals at the lowest education levels, and those who report no income perform significantly worse than other demographic sub-groups, chiefly because they appear not to understand the advice they are given. Hotlines should develop special protocols for dealing with these clients, possibly including increased support or more extended services.
        ii. **Policymakers should take further steps to evaluate whether Hotlines are an appropriate method of delivering service to non-English speakers.** The non-English speaking clients in this study were Spanish speakers who were provided services by the Hotline in Spanish. They had a particularly high rate of failure to act due to inability to understand the Hotline advice.
        This suggests that the lower level of favorable outcomes they obtained may have had to do with factors other than language per se. Policymakers should conduct more in-depth evaluations of outcomes obtained by non-English speaking Hotline clients to determine whether this method of delivering services is suited to this demographic group.
        iii. **Hotlines should screen callers for certain barriers that are associated with unfavorable outcomes.** Clients who, when asked a specific question, report having a less than eighth-grade education or problems with transportation, reading, or comprehending English, scheduling (work, daycare, or other), stress, fear of an ex-partner or other personal factors affecting their ability to resolve their problems are less likely to obtain a successful outcome. Hotlines should routinely screen for these barriers, which is likely to require special attention during intake, since the PFEJ lawyers noted that most of these

barriers could not be discerned from existing case files. Hotlines should develop protocols for dealing with these clients, possibly including increased support or more extended services.

iv. **Hotlines should institute or improve follow-up procedures.** Hotlines would do well to institute tickler systems flagging cases for a callback to check on the client's progress. Cases that should be flagged are those in which the problem is particularly likely to have serious consequences for the client. Especially important are those in which one of the following factors is present:

1. The recommended action is one where clients are less likely to obtain a favorable outcome:

   a. representing self in court; dealing with a government agency; obtaining legal assistance from another provider or help from a social services agency.

   b. The client falls into one of the demographic categories identified above that are less likely to obtain a favorable outcome.

   c. The client reports one of the barriers described above as associated with a reduced likelihood of obtaining a favorable outcome.

v. **Hotlines should develop or increase their capacity to provide brief services or institute a brief services unit.** Brief services are more likely to result in successful outcomes than advice or referral services. In cases where it may be possible to resolve the client's problem with a letter, telephone call, completion of a form, or completion of a referral, it is likely to be a more effective use of resources for the Hotline or a related unit to perform the action than for the Hotline to advise the client how to do so. The Hotline will already have invested time in developing the facts and legal issues in response to the client's call; investment of the additional time required for the brief service will substantially increase the likelihood of a successful outcome for the client's problem. Cases in which clients are less likely to obtain a favorable outcome on their own, as discussed above, should be given priority for brief services.

vi. **Hotlines that do not routinely provide written information to clients should do so.** The provision of written information, whether a generic pamphlet on an issue or a letter detailing the advice provided, increases the likelihood of a successful outcome.

vii. **Hotlines should recognize that telling a caller that they should obtain a private attorney is unlikely to result in a successful outcome.** When Hotline workers advise callers to retain a private attorney, particularly in divorce cases that do not fall within program priorities for extended representation, they should know that most of these clients will not be able to

afford to hire an attorney or will not be able to find one willing to take their case.

Hotlines should explore alternative services that are more likely to result in successful outcomes. Local policymakers should explore the implications of this problem, such as devoting more resources to developing panels of attorneys willing to take cases for reduced fees.

viii. **Hotlines should be aware of the limitations of client satisfaction data and analyze the data they get in ways that maximize their utility.** While user satisfaction is a legitimate and an important indicator, it is not a perfect measure of Hotline effectiveness. Clients are frequently more generous in their evaluations of Hotlines than their personal situations would suggest. Half of the clients who experienced unfavorable outcomes described the Hotline as "very" (19%) or "somewhat" helpful (32%). To some extent, this may reflect the fact that some clients who do not get what they want feel empowered by the information they receive.

In conducting client satisfaction surveys, "very helpful" and "somewhat helpful" response categories should not be merged in the analysis, because only the "very helpful" category is strongly associated with case outcomes.

ix. **Hotlines should conduct random follow-up telephone interviews with clients.** In order to more accurately assess performance, Hotlines would do well to institute random follow-up interviews to gauge the effectiveness of their services and to identify ways to improve them.

b. **Recommendations of the Legal Hotline Client Outcome Study 2006, conducted by the AARP Foundation Technical Support for Legal Hotlines Project:**

i. **Identifying clients who are likely eligible for a benefit they are not receiving is an extremely successful use of hotline resources resulting in an increase in monthly payments to or on behalf of the client in a substantial number of cases.** Hotline efforts to train staff to screen, identify, and counsel clients through the application process for benefits would likely lead to more clients receiving benefits at little additional cost to the hotline for providing this adjunct to the legal consultation.

ii. **Providing advice regarding the performance of a discreet act to solve a legal problem also showed mostly positive results both in the number of clients who took action and the number whose situation changed for the better.** Hotlines could increase the chances for performance of the follow up action and rate of success even further by expanding the number of mailed or emailed materials they deliver to clients with detailed instructions on as many situations as possible; a library of form letters that can be quickly personalized for the client by hotline staff during or after the call should be developed and expanded to situations as they arise; protocols should be developed and resources allocated for providing brief services to those clients who seem unlikely to be able to take the follow up action on their own. In cases where

follow up is important to the client's well being, the hotline should flag the case and contact the client later to determine the status.

      iii. **Training staff to identify clients who may not follow up would strengthen hotline services.** The demographic analysis noted some differences in gender, age, and income related to the rate at which clients performed the follow up tasks and the success they achieved. However, the differences are not of a type that can be addressed through change in services to a whole demographic group. Rather, the differences point out the need for the hotline advocate to try to determine whether the particular client is likely to follow up, with membership in one of these groups being a factor to consider in the likelihood for success. For example, is the caller a younger individual whose time is consumed by work and/or child care and who will therefore be less likely to have time to complete the follow up action? Does the client sound too frail or timid to make a phone call on his own? Does the client's educational level seem too limited to successfully write a letter? Hotlines could be more effective by training advocates to identify those clients not likely to follow up and providing additional means of assistance for them through in-house brief services, volunteers, law and paralegal student participation, and other means.

  c. **Legal Hotlines: A How To Manual 2nd edition 2001 – AARP Foundation**
http://www.legalhotlines.org/standards/howto/index.htm

2) Implications for Survey of Helpline Programs

  a. **We need a survey that generates a profile of each of the PLAN program hotlines.**

    i. See AARP 2006 p. 82 for an example.

    ii. Elements gleaned from various hotline studies:

      1. When instituted?

      2. Formal name of hotline

      3. Staffing – number of employees, title/credentials: screeners or not, paralegal, attorney, managing attny, other…

        a. Attny – generalist or specialist?

      4. Hours

      5. How is hotline advertised/made known to potential clients?

      6. Technology

        a. Call system, email, etc.

        b. Materials by mail, email, web, etc.

      7. Language translation

      8. Income guidelines

      9. Volume of

        a. Calls/week or month

        b. Open cases/week or month

10. Referral only (other agency, pro bono, clinic, etc.), advice, brief services, intake, immediate help and/or call back, appt for representation, pro se materials sent, etc.
11. Client satisfaction and/or outcome survey routinely applied? When?
12. Always or sometimes sent written material, such as: In every case, Hotline staff mails clients a letter summarizing the advice they provided with standardized materials pursuant to their case type for further reference.

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Attachment B:

Narrative Portion
of Program Questionnaire

NARRATIVE SELF ASSESSMENT
of Phone-Based Intake and Legal Assistance Systems
in Pennsylvania
February 24, 2012

Program:	
Completed by:	
E-Mail Address:	
Phone:	

Your program is being asked to fill out this questionnaire in connection with the 2012 study of phone-based legal assistance systems in Pennsylvania being conducted by *The Resource for Great Programs* under contract with Pennsylvania IOLTA.[1] This questionnaire is the first of two parts:

- **Part One - *Narrative Portion*** (this document); and

- **Part Two: *Quantitative Portion*** (a Survey Monkey instrument – a link will be e-mailed to your program).

Taken together, these two instruments comprise a self-assessment of the extent to which Pennsylvania phone-based intake and legal assistance systems are aligned with "best practices" evolving out of more than 20 years' experience with phone-based legal intake and assistance in Pennsylvania and across the country. The best practices on which this questionnaire seeks information are found in three sources:

- ***ABA Standards*** *For The Operation Of A Telephone Hotline Providing Legal Advice And Information* – http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/migrated/legalservices/downloads/delivery/hotlinestandards.authcheckdam.pdf

- ***LSC Guidelines*** *for Phone-Based Intake and Legal Assistance Programs* – http://grants.lsc.gov/sites/default/files/Grants/Prgltr2002_4.htm .

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[1] For details, see "*Summary of Pennsylvania IOLTA's Project to Produce a Helpline Survey and Report on the Results and Accomplishments of AJA-Funded Legal Aid Programs in Pennsylvania, October 19, 2011,*" working paper available from The Resource for Great Programs.

- **The results of past evaluations** of phone-based legal assistance systems, such as the 2002 study performed by Robert Echols and Julia Gordon for the Project for the Future of Equal Justice at NLADA. The Appendix at the end of this questionnaire summarizes some of the findings of these studies; further information and copies of relevant studies are posted on: http://www.legalhotlines.org/outcomesurveys.php .

We have organized this questionnaire around five broad themes and associated principles outlined in the *LSC Guidelines*[2]. We have used LSC's framework for this questionnaire

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[2] Our use of the LSC Guidelines as the organizing structure for this questionnaire is for convenience only and is not intended to have any regulatory implications. The underlying premise of our study is that all Pennsylvania programs are committed to the goal of maximizing their impact on the communities they serve and vitally interested in learning how well they are doing when assessed against the high standards established by their peers in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. The LSC Guidelines provide a concise and practical articulation of those standards. For the two legal services organizations in the study that are NOT LSC recipients, the LSC Guidelines have no formal regulatory force. Even for the eight programs in this study that ARE LSC recipients, the LSC Guidelines are aspirational; conformance with them is not a condition of federal funding.

because:

- *It articulates practices and principles that are widely accepted within the civil justice community.* The *LSC Guidelines* themselves incorporate by reference the *ABA Standards*, which were created in the early 2000s with broad participation from civil legal aid leaders to ensure that phone-based systems being adopted by legal services organizations conformed to the ethical and professional standards of the legal profession.

- *The LSC Guidelines are practical and concrete.* They translate the broad aspirational goals of the *ABA Standards* into a relatively short document that captures the best practices developed by legal assistance organizations seeking to deploy new technology as a means of providing as many people as possible with access to the civil justice system while honoring basic tenets such as respect for the basic interests and dignity of clients, service quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

This questionnaire provides an opportunity for program leaders to describe and showcase their best efforts at aligning their efforts with these best practices, offered in the spirit of fostering institutional learning and continuous self-improvement throughout the Pennsylvania legal services community as a whole. The questionnaire is organized into five sections corresponding to the themes in the LSC Guidelines:

F.   **Client Access:** *Applicants should have prompt access to a person who can initiate the intake process in a courteous and professional manner.*
G.   **Staffing the Telephone Intake and Delivery System:** *While staffing may vary as to professional background and employment status, all staff on the telephone intake and delivery system are well trained, experienced and closely supervised.*
H.   **Decisions on Assistance:** *Applicants for service should receive prompt determination as to the type of services that they will receive from the program.*
I.   **Technology:** *The applicant's journey from initial application to appropriate advice, brief service or referral should be expedited.*
J.   **High Quality Legal Services:** *The quality control system ensures that the service provided to clients is accurate, informative, prompt, professional and conflict-free.*

Under each theme, the questionnaire requests brief narrative responses that address the following issues:

- How your program seeks to achieve the principles outlined in the theme.

- The concrete benefits that these efforts are providing, such as quicker, more convenient access to legal assistance for clients and greater reach by your program into hard-to-serve portions of the service area.

- Changes or additions that could enable your program to further improve its performance on the principles outlined under the theme.

A final question in the Questionnaire solicits your suggestions for assistance by Pennsylvania IOLTA, PLAN and/or other entities that could potentially help your phone-based legal assistance program align better with the principles expressed within the theme.

The remainder of this questionnaire presents the five themes and associated questions, concluded with a general question that spans the five performance areas.

Performance Area A:
Program Achievements in Support of
Client Access

Applicants should have prompt access to a person
who can initiate the intake process in a courteous and professional manner.

1. ***A primary goal is that client access to services be increased.*** *Centralized telephone intake can be one tool in accomplishing this goal. Regardless of the intake system used, most clients served by Pennsylvania programs receive advice, counseling, brief service or a referral. Potential clients should not have to travel to a legal services office to receive this service unless necessary.*

2. ***A program has the discretion to determine if an applicant needs to be seen in person and will determine the best means of providing for an interview (telephonic or in person).*** *It may be by outreach or having the applicant come to the program. The applicant's best interest should be paramount.*

   a. *The program has screening procedures in place to assess the applicant's capacity (considering educational level, language barriers and other factors) to comprehend and take action on legal advice provided solely by telephone. Research has indicated the following factors as especially constraining to the ability of clients to obtain favorable outcomes through telephone-based legal assistance: non-English speakers, individuals at the lowest educational levels, and those who report no income.*

   b. *The program considers other factors affecting the choice of telephonic or face-to-face service delivery – such as age, physical disability or access to transportation.*

3. ***The telephone intake system should be designed to attempt to have all callers talk to a staff person who can provide some help in the form of advice, brief service or a referral at the time of the first call.***

   This is difficult in areas of high call volume. A program must engage in excellent planning to devise a system that deals with call volume. The system may put callers into a queue for a reasonable period of time and if necessary allow for a call-back from the program after that time has passed and if the applicant wants to be called back. A telephone intake system should not be designed to have callers hear a recorded message or have only eligibility established on the first call and then be made to call back later or receive a call back from the program to get into the reason for the call. The telephone intake, advice and referral system should be client centered and it should initially give specific information about services provided and time the applicant will wait to receive help.

4. ***Programs that have more than one office should strive to have one telephone portal through which all initial calls are received.*** *Those calls may then be distributed to local offices for screening, advice, brief service or referral. Referral could be to another agency or to the same program for extended service.*

Self Assessment Questions For Performance Area A:

1. **Examples that illustrate SUCCESS at promoting increased access for clients in your program's service area.**

    Please provide below one or more brief examples (200 words each, as a guideline) that represent your program's success at achieving the broad goal of providing clients in your service area with "prompt access to a person who can initiate the intake process in a courteous and professional manner."

    - *Types of examples --The example(s) outlined in your response might focus on increased access provided to residents of a specific community within your geographic service area, to people needing assistance in a specific legal specialty area (for example, consumer law), or to people in need of a specific type of legal services (for example, assistance in self-representation) in which the values in this performance area have been achieved through effective planning and implementation of phone-based intake and legal assistance.*

    - *Key results -- Please highlight the most significant benefits achieved for clients, communities, courts, partner agencies and/or other stakeholders as a result of the program's achievements at expanding access through phone-based intake and legal assistance.*

    Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)*:

2. **Changes or additions that could IMPROVE your program's performance on this goal.**

   Please list below the most significant changes or additions that, if accomplished, would substantially improve your program's achievement of the goal of providing clients with "prompt access to a person who can initiate the intake process in a courteous and professional manner." Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

   - *Building on successful program design features or practices – expanding best practices, such as those indicated in your response to question "1" above, into additional areas of your program.*

   - *Providing additional training to staff or volunteers of the phone-based intake and service system to improve their capacity to effectively serve clients.*

   - *Upgrading technology – acquiring phone equipment, computer hardware, and/or software that will enhance access for clients.*

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)***:**

Performance Area B: Program Achievements at
Staffing the Telephone Intake and Delivery System

While staffing may vary as to professional background and employment status, all staff on the telephone intake and delivery system are well trained, experienced and closely supervised.

1. **A legal services program engages in many important functions to serve clients.** The process of ensuring that an applicant is directed on the appropriate path to receiving the needed help in an efficient and effective manner is crucial to all programs.

2. **The staff engaged in this process must have distinctive abilities to gather information in an empathetic way, analyze the facts, and apply sound substantive knowledge.**

3. **The staff must be well trained and knowledgeable of alternatives and resources available to the applicant.**

   a. The staff should have as high a level of skill and training as any person in the program and have excellent resource materials available to aid them.

   b. The training they receive should familiarize them with best practices that have been proven by research to enhance outcomes for clients – for example, how to identify clients who may not follow up on telephonic advice they are given, such as a younger individual whose time is consumed by work and/or child care and who will therefore be less likely to have time to complete the follow-up action. Protocols for handling such situations should be provided.

4. **The staffing structure recognizes the importance of intake as a key to successful delivery of services.** For example, it relies on staff who have experience and expertise in the area of intake.

Self Assessment Questions For Performance Area B

1. **Examples that illustrate SUCCESS at achieving the goals reflected in the statement above.**

   Please provide below one or more brief examples that represent your program's success at achieving the broad goals reflected in the above statement.

   - *Types of examples --The example(s) outlined in your response might focus on any or all of the following: how your program recruits and retains qualified and experienced staff for the phone-based legal assistance system; how it orients and trains those staff; how it supervises them; what incentives and arrangements it provides to foster high staff morale and performance in operation of the phone-based intake and legal assistance system.*

   - *Key results -- Please include in your example(s) concrete evidence that indicates the specific benefits of your program's success in achieving these goals, such as: low*

turnover of staff assigned to the phone intake and legal assistance system; above-average experience levels of these staff; evidence of high client satisfaction with the intake process; good client outcomes; high service efficiency; and/or short client wait times.

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline):*

2. **Changes or additions that could IMPROVE your program's performance on this goal.**

    Please list below the most significant changes or additions that, if accomplished, would substantially improve your program's achievement of the goal of staffing the telephone intake and delivery system with people who are "well trained, experienced and closely supervised." Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

    - *Building on successful program design features or practices – expanding best practices, such as those indicated in your response to question "1," above, throughout your phone-based legal assistance system.*

    - *Identifying and deploying best practices and good ideas used in other programs to address specific staffing problems faced by your program, such as high turnover or difficulties in attracting highly qualified people to work in the phone-based legal assistance system.*

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)*:

Performance Area C:
Program Achievements Aimed at Promoting
Prompt Decisions on Assistance

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*Applicants for service should receive prompt determination
as to the type of services that they will receive from the program.*

1. **An applicant for legal services should be told as soon as possible what type of service she will receive.** *That decision should be based on uniform written program policies and should be promptly reviewed by a supervisor.*

2. **Applicants and clients are better served if the oral information disseminated is memorialized in writing.**

   - *This may include an individualized letter where appropriate or preprinted documents like a pamphlet or brochure are included.*

   - *Programs have the discretion to determine that written confirmation is not necessary in particular cases or circumstances. Examples include domestic violence victims, homeless applicants or applicants who are about to be evicted.*

   - *Programs must make these decisions based on the best interest of clients.*

   - *Some programs with extremely high call volume may determine that sending letters in every case is prohibitively expensive and therefore send letters in only particular circumstances.*

3. **An applicant who is referred to another program or to another unit of the same program should be contacted by the referring organization in a few days so she knows what will be done for her.**

Self Assessment Questions For Performance Area C

1. **Examples that illustrate SUCCESS at achieving the goals reflected in the statement above.**

   Please provide below one or more brief examples that represent your program's success at achieving the broad goals reflected in the above statement.

   - *Types of examples --The example(s) outlined in your response might focus on any or all of the following: how and by whom decisions about assistance are made by your phone-based intake and legal assistance system; the criteria that determine the levels and types of assistance that will be provided to a particular client; the planning that went into your program's establishment of these procedures and criteria; and/or measures you have in place for assessing how well these procedures and criteria are working for clients from their perspective.*

- ***Key results --*** *Please include in your example(s) concrete evidence that indicates the specific benefits of your program's success in achieving these goals, such as evidence of positive feedback from callers; good client outcomes; high service efficiency; and/or quick turnaround in making decisions and informing clients about what assistance they will receive.*

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)****:***

2. Changes or additions that could IMPROVE your program's performance on this goal.

Please list below the most significant changes or additions that, if accomplished, would substantially improve your program's achievement of the goal of "prompt determination as to the type of services that they will receive from the program." Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

- *Identifying and deploying best practices and good ideas used in other programs to address specific roadblocks faced by your program that cause delays in making decisions about assistance and/or communicating with clients about these decisions.*

- *Deploying new technology – for example, web-based information systems – that could speed up decisions and/or enhance sharing of information needed to make good decisions about assistance to be provided to clients.*

- *Expanding the library of legal information materials that can be provided to callers so as to speed up service and/or improve communication with them regarding steps they can take to resolve their legal situation.*

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)***:**

Performance Area D:
Program Achievements Aimed at
Expediting the Applicant's Journey from Initial Application to Appropriate Advice, Brief Service or Referral.

> ***A telephone intake, advice and referral system must use up-to-date telephone and computer technology to ensure the system works efficiently.***
>
> ***All programs should acquire the most sophisticated technology reasonably possible without reducing the quality of work in other areas, including extended service.***

1. **Phone System**

   a. The program provides a toll free number (either local or 800 number) for the applicant to call to get into the intake system.

   b. The initial intake options are provided by the telephone system. Options may include a language choice, recorded substantive information or the types of services provided by the program.

   c. The instructions are multi-lingual in locations that require it.

   d. The telephone system provides information on the program, intake procedure, and basic legal problem areas.

   e. It provides methods for an applicant to reach a live attendant if needed.

   f. It is capable of routing calls to multiple intake locations if required by the intake system.

   g. It can advise an applicant on the expected hold time and give an option to leave callback information.

   h. If the initial intake worker transfers the applicant to a case handler, the system will have the ability to route the call to the case handler without the applicant having to call back or call a different number.

   i. The system is either designed so that the intake worker can see who is available for calls and route the applicant to that person, or the system does it automatically after the intake worker puts the applicant into the queue.

   j. The system is designed to accommodate persons with disabilities.

2. **Case Management Software**

   a. The legal services provider has a central database covering the entire intake area to allow information sharing and system-wide conflicts checking.

   b. The software allows for regular backups of the database to ensure preservation of data.

   c. There is eligibility checking with built-in error checking to insure statistical reporting accuracy.

   d. The software provides intake workers with a system of questions and advice for applicants keyed to legal problems.

   e. It provides intake workers with searchable referral information on other agencies and service providers to provide applicants with additional help.

   f. It stores sufficient information to prepare needed reports for management and funders.

   g. It provides intake workers with the ability to generate customized form letters for applicants, clients and others, such as pro bono attorneys or other agencies.

   h. It enables advocates to "tickle" cases for a callback to check on the client's progress for cases in which the problem is particularly likely to have serious consequences for the client if the advice is not followed.

Self Assessment Questions For Performance Area D

1. **Examples that illustrate SUCCESS at achieving the goals reflected in the statement above.**

    Please provide below one or more brief examples that represent your program's success at achieving the broad goals reflected in the above statement.

    - *Types of examples --The example(s) outlined in your response might focus on any or all of the following: recent changes in phone systems or case management software or hardware; training of program staff in maximizing their use of existing technology; and/or efforts to learn about and assimilate best practices used in other phone-based legal assistance programs in Pennsylvania and elsewhere.*

    - *Key results -- Please include in your example(s) concrete evidence that indicates the specific benefits of your program's success in achieving these goals, such as evidence of high client satisfaction; good client outcomes; high service efficiency; and/or short client wait times.*

Please enter your response below (200-word limit, as a guideline)*:*

2. **Changes or additions that could IMPROVE your program's performance on this goal.**

   Please list below the most significant changes or additions that, if accomplished, would substantially improve your program's achievement of the goal of acquiring and maintaining with the most "up-to-date telephone and computer technology to ensure the system works efficiently." Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

   - *Acquisition of better phone systems, case management software or other technology that has proven effective in other programs in Pennsylvania or elsewhere.*

   - *Building on successful program design features or practices – expanding best practices such as those indicated in your response to question "1" above throughout your phone-based legal assistance system.*

   - *Identifying and deploying best practices and good ideas used in other programs to achieve the goal of acquiring and maintaining with the most "up-to-date telephone and computer technology to ensure the system works efficiently."*

   Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)***:**

Performance Area E:
Program Achievements Aimed at Promoting
High Quality Legal Services

The quality control system ensures that the service provided to clients is accurate, informative, prompt, professional and conflict-free.

1. *There is a designated supervisor of the intake decisions who is an experienced attorney.*

2. *Within 24 hours of the initial contact, there is a review of intake decisions and assistance.*

3. *The review process is designed to screen for quality and to identify recurrent problems or issues in the client community.*

4. *Intake staff receives ongoing substantive and procedural training on performing intake.*

5. *Attention is given to the effectiveness of the intake system and results achieved for applicants and clients. For example, this can be done by using satisfaction surveys and, when appropriate, outcome measures such as follow-up telephone interviews with random samples of clients to determine what happened in their cases.*

6. *Resource materials used by casehandlers are regularly reviewed and updated.*

7. *Based on ongoing evaluation, appropriate procedural changes are made in the intake system.*

8. *The legal services provider is aware of technological advances that benefit its intake systems as those become available and uses those technologies to enhance the services it provides.*

9. *The legal services provider is aware of and applies best practices that research has shown to enhance outcomes for clients.[3] Examples of research-based best practices include the following:*

    a. *Having a tickler system in place that flags case for a callback to check on the client's progress – especially in cases in which the problem is particularly likely to have serious consequences for the client if the recommended action is not followed.*

    b. *Having the capacity to provide brief services, or having a brief services unit, in addition to legal information and advice, thereby leveraging the investment that the program has made in developing the facts and legal issues in response to clients' calls.*

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[3] A bibliography will be provided in the final report on this project that identifies past studies of telephone-based intake and legal assistance systems containing practical, research-based recommendations for enhancing outcomes obtained for clients. In the meantime, a synopsis of especially relevant sources is provided in the Appendix at the end of this questionnaire.

Self Assessment Questions For Performance Area E

1. **Examples that illustrate SUCCESS at achieving the goals reflected in the statement above.**

   Please provide below one or more brief examples below that represent your program's success at achieving the broad goals reflected in the above statement.

   - *Types of examples --The example(s) outlined in your response might focus on any or all of the following: systems your program has in place for tracking performance on key measures implied by the above criteria; training efforts carried out in the past 12 months aimed at providing staff with requisite skills and knowledge needed to meet the above criteria; and/or efforts to apply best practices found in other programs in Pennsylvania and elsewhere that enhance quality.*

   - *Key results -- Please include in your example(s) concrete evidence that indicates the specific benefits of your program's success in providing high quality service, such as high client satisfaction; good client outcomes; high service efficiency; and/or short client wait times.*

   Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)***:**

2. Changes or additions that could IMPROVE your program's performance on this goal.

Please list below the most significant changes or additions that, if accomplished, would substantially improve your program's achievement of the goal of high service quality. Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

- *Building on successful program design features or practices – expanding best practices such as those indicated in your response to question "1" above throughout your phone-based legal assistance system.*

- *Identifying and deploying best practices and good ideas used in other programs to address specific quality problems faced by your program such as high client wait times on the phone; client complaints; and/or lack of adequate training for staff.*

Please enter your response below (200-word limit, as a guideline):

General Question That Applies Across All Performance Areas:

What assistance from PA IOLTA, PLAN and OTHERS could potentially improve your program's application of best practices in its phone-based intake and legal assistance systems?

Please list below any assistance from PA IOLTA, PLAN or OTHER ENTITIES (please identify) that could contribute to your program's efforts to apply the best practices outlined above. Examples of topics you might include in your response are:

- ***Assistance in enrolling new partners in the community, the bar, the courts or other stakeholders*** *for a collaborative effort that would significantly improve your program's capacity to apply best practices in its phone-based intake and legal assistance system.*

- ***Convening stakeholders*** *to discuss challenges and explore opportunities in addressing a specific problem in application of best practices.*

- ***Changing or adding specific policies*** *that affect your program's ability to achieve this goal, thereby improving results and benefits for clients and other important stakeholders.*

- ***Securing resources for qualified, constructive evaluation*** *– for example, assistance in obtaining foundation or law firm funding to support peer evaluation aimed at addressing specific quality issues or identifying opportunities for enhancing results.*

- ***Other kinds of assistance*** *(specify).*

Please enter your response below *(200-word limit, as a guideline)***:**

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Attachment C:
Web-Based Survey[1] Portion
of Program Questionnaire

See Next Page for Survey Instrument

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[1] The web-based survey was implemented using the ***Survey Monkey™*** service – see www.SurveyMonkey.com for details.

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE BY FRIDAY, MARCH 9.

NOTE: For convenience, this questionnaire is designed so you can complete the survey on multiple visits while preserving your answers.

Your program is being asked to fill out this questionnaire in connection with the 2012 study of phone-based legal assistance systems in Pennsylvania being conducted by The Resource for Great Programs under contract with Pennsylvania IOLTA.

This Survey Monkey portion is the second of two parts. The first part is a narrative questionnaire in MS Word which is also due on March 9. For a copy of that instrument, please contact Ken Smith – see below.

Please respond to all questions by entering the requested information, or by responding "Not Applicable" where the questions do not apply to your program.

FOR INFORMATION...
• About how to navigate this Survey Monkey instrument, contact Kathy Garwold at (231) 947-3280; kathy@greatprograms.org.

• About content of this questionnaire, or about the larger study of phone-based intake and legal assistance systems, contact Ken Smith at (231) 631-1432; ken@greatprograms.org.

1. Geographic Area Covered by Phone-Based Legal Assistance – (Check ONE):

○ Entire service area of program

○ Specific counties or cities (please specify below)

Please specify:

2. Population Segments Served by Phone-Based Legal Assistance – (Check ONE):

○ General low-income population

○ Special population(s) (please specify below)

Please specify:

3. Services Provided by Phone – (Check ALL that apply):

☐ Advice

☐ Brief Services

☐ Legal education materials

☐ Referral

☐ Coaching and/or materials for self (pro se) representation

☐ Other (please specify below)

4. Hours of Operation for Phone-Based Assistance – (Enter days and hours – e.g., "Monday through Thursday, 9a.m. to Noon"):

WEEKDAYS (which days and hours)	
EVENINGS (which days and hours)	
WEEKENDS (which days and hours)	

5. Number of Phone-Based Cases Closed in FY 2010-2011:

By "Advice & Counsel":	
By "Brief Services":	
Total Phone-Based Cases:	

The following questions follow the content and order of the LSC Guidelines for Phone-Based Systems, augmented by best practices identified in past evaluations of legal helplines.

6. Intake is performed – (Check ONE):

○ Through a single telephone number for the entire program

○ Through multiple telephone numbers depending on county or city of residence

○ Through multiple telephone numbers depending on substantive legal area (e.g., consumer law)

○ Through multiple telephone numbers depending on client demographics (e.g., elderly)

○ Combination of the above or other (please specify or provide additional comments or explanations):

7. Special screening and provisions are made for – (Check ALL that apply):

☐ Non-English speakers

☐ People with disabilities

☐ People with a low educational level

☐ People with a lack of transportation to the program's office(s)

☐ Other (please specify):

8. Calls are taken by – (Complete ALL that apply):

STAFF PERSON- (specify which days and hours of operation)	
AUTOMATED CALL SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES OPTIONS FOR CALLER TO BE ROUTED TO APPROPRIATE STAFF PERSON - (specify which days and hours of operation)	
ANSWERING MACHINE or VOICE MAIL to leave message and await callback - (specify which days and hours of operation)	
OTHER:	
COMMENTS (or additional explanation)	

9. Callers are – (Check ONE):

○   Screened for eligibility (and conflict, etc.), then connected with an advocate in same call.

○   Screened for eligibility, then called back later by an advocate to discuss legal situation.

○   Asked to leave message on voice mail. Eligibility screening and service are provided later in one or more follow-up phone calls.

○   Other (please specify or provide comments or additional explanation):

10. Client waiting time, from initial call to first conversation with an advocate – (Answer EACH box and enter the number of hours, or enter "0" or a fraction of an hour, if applicable):

Average hours:

Minimum hours:

Maximum hours:

11. Phone-based intake is done by – (Check ALL that apply):

☐ Staff Lawyers

☐ Staff Paralegals

☐ Other (please specify):

[ ]

12. Phone-based legal assistance is provided by – (Check ALL that apply):

☐ Staff Lawyers

☐ Staff Paralegals

☐ Other (please specify):

[ ]

13. Supervision of phone-based legal assistance is provided by – (Check ALL that apply):

☐ Lawyers (staff or management)

☐ Paralegals

☐ Other (please specify):

[ ]

14. Training received in past 12 months by staff assigned to the phone-based legal assistance system – (Please briefly describe training and indicate number of staff and approximate hours of training provided):

Intake Staff	
Legal Workers	
Others	

15. Policies governing decisions on assistance - Please send copies of your program's policies governing types and levels of services to be provided to callers - based on priorities, client situation and other factors - via email to The Resource at: Kelly@GreatPrograms.org

    ○   Check once sent

16. As a matter of policy, are clients provided with a written letter or other communication after being provided with phone-based legal assistance (for example, a letter summarizing the advice given and/or action recommended)? – (Check ONE):

☐   No – Callers are not generally provided with written communication after a call.

☐   Yes – All clients receive a follow-up letter summarizing the advice or information given.

☐   Yes – Our program uses a library of form letters that can be quickly personalized for the caller by our phone-based legal assistance staff during or after a call.

☐   Yes – Our program provides generic legal information pamphlets to callers appropriate to the circumstances of their situation.

☐   Yes – Our program provides written information to some (but not all) callers depending on circumstances.

☐   Yes – Our program provides information other than the above.

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above, please briefly explain:

17. Phone System – Please indicate whether or not EACH of the following statements applies to your program's phone-based legal assistance system, then use question 19 below to provide further explanation of any capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable."

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
a. Calls for clients are toll-free.	○	○	○
b. The instructions are multi-lingual in locations that warrant it.	○	○	○
c. The telephone system provides information on the program, intake procedure, and basic legal problem areas.	○	○	○
d. It provides methods for an applicant to reach a live attendant, if needed.	○	○	○
e. It is capable of routing calls to multiple intake locations if required by the intake system.	○	○	○
f. It can advise an applicant on the expected hold time and provide an option to leave call-back information.	○	○	○
g. If the initial intake worker transfers the applicant to a case handler, the phone system has the ability to route the call to the case handler without the applicant having to call back or call a different number.	○	○	○
h. The system is designed so that the intake worker either can see who is available to receive a call and route the applicant to that person, or the system does it automatically after the intake worker puts the applicant into the queue.	○	○	○
i. Other Capabilities - If the phone system has additional important features, other than those listed above, please check "Yes" at right, then describe them in the next question below.	○	○	○

18. If your program's phone system has important capabilities other than those listed in Question 17, please specify:

19. Explanation of Above Answers - Please use the space below to provide further information about capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable" in Question 17.

20. Case Management Software – Please indicate whether or not EACH of the following statements applies to your program's case management software, then use question 22 below to provide further explanation of any capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable."

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
a. Our program has a central database covering the entire service area to allow information sharing and system-wide conflicts checking during intake.	○	○	○
b. The software allows for regular backups of the database to ensure preservation of data.	○	○	○
c. There is eligibility checking with built-in error checking to ensure accuracy of case statistical reports.	○	○	○
d. The software provides intake workers with a system of questions and advice for applicants keyed to legal problems.	○	○	○
e. The software provides intake workers with searchable referral information on other agencies and service providers to offer applicants additional help.	○	○	○
f. The software stores sufficient information to prepare needed reports for management and funders.	○	○	○
g. The software provides intake workers with the ability to generate customized form letters for applicants, clients and others, such as pro bono attorneys or other agencies.	○	○	○
h. The software enables advocates to "tickle" cases for a callback to check on the client's progress for cases in which the problem is particularly likely to have serious consequences for the client if the advice is not followed.	○	○	○
i. Other Capabilities - If the software has additional important features, other than those listed above, please check "Yes" at right, then describe them in the next question below.	○	○	○

21. If your program's case management software has important capabilities other than those listed in Question 20, please specify:

22. Explanation of Above Answers - Please use the space below to provide further information about capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable" in Question 20.

23. Are the following systems in place? - Please indicate whether or not EACH of the following statements applies to your program's quality control system, then use question 25 below to provide further explanation of any capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable."

	Yes	No	Not Applicable
a. There is a designated supervisor of the intake decisions who is an experienced attorney.	○	○	○
b. Within 24 hours of the initial contact, there is a review of intake decisions and assistance.	○	○	○
c. The review process is designed to screen for quality and to identify recurrent problems or issues in the client community.	○	○	○
d. Intake staff receives ongoing substantive and procedural training on performing intake.	○	○	○
e. Attention is given to the effectiveness of the intake system and results achieved for applicants and clients. For example, our program conducts client satisfaction surveys and/or makes follow-up calls to random samples of clients to determine whether or not they were able to follow the advice they received from us.	○	○	○
f. Resource materials used by casehandlers are regularly reviewed and updated.	○	○	○
g. Based on ongoing evaluation, appropriate procedural changes are made in the intake system.	○	○	○
h. Our program has a tickler system in place that flags cases for a callback to check on the client's progress – especially in cases in which the problem is particularly likely to have serious consequences if the recommended action is not followed.	○	○	○
i. Our program is aware of technological advances that benefit their intake systems as they become available and use those technologies to enhance the services they provide.	○	○	○
j. Our program has the capacity to provide brief services, or has a brief services unit, in addition to legal information and advice, thereby leveraging the investment made in developing the facts and legal issues as part of our phone-based legal assistance.	○	○	○
k. Other Capabilities - If the quality control system has additional important features, other than those listed above, please check "Yes" at right, then describe them in the next question below.	○	○	○

24. If your program's quality control system has important capabilities other than those listed in Question 23, please specify:

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25. Explanation of Above Answers - Please use the space below to provide further information about capabilities for which you responded "No" or "Not Applicable" in Question 23.

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26. Please provide the following Program Information

Program Name:

Contact Name:

Contact E-Mail:

Contact Phone:

Thank You!

Thank you for participating in the online portion of the phone-based intake and legal assistance system of your program.