

MEMORANDUM

To: Lycoming Law Association
From: John M. Humphrey, Chairman
Date: Wednesday, January 03, 2007
Re: Annual Report of the Legal Services for the Indigent Committee
CC:

The Legal Services for the Indigent Committee (LSIC) met twice during calendar year 2006. The Committee recommended requesting the LLA Community Activities and Outreach Committee and the LLA Foundation to establish a fund for litigation costs in pro bono cases. This request was granted and the fund has been established. Effective January 1, 2007, LLA members handling pro bono cases may apply for reimbursement of litigation expenses. Details and guidelines can be found on the LLA web site.

In its two meetings, the Committee discussed numerous ways to improve the pro bono referral program and the delivery of legal services to the indigent. The following issues were discussed with appropriate action being taken:

1. Deduction in the number of attorneys participating on the Protection from Abuse Panel, and ways of increasing the number of members serving on that panel.
2. The documents have been circulated to LLA members noting a change in procedure whereby they can increase their donations to the program from one arbitration fee per year to two or more arbitration fees per year, ways to encourage attorneys not participating in the program to participate, and to encourage members to donate more than one arbitration fee, were discussed.

3. There is some confusion and inconsistency with respect to *in forma pauperis* and filings, and there is some resistance to such filings in the Magistrates' courts. The Committee discussed ways to have established a more uniform procedure by way of the document from the Court to be distributed to Magistrates and other appropriate offices, and to make it unnecessary to file petitions to proceed IFP as is permitted by Civil Rule 240. The Committee will also be discussing with the court the issue of obtaining transcripts without charge in IFP cases which are appealed or which may be appealed.
4. The Committee discussed looking into the feasibility of having pro bono attorneys fulfill their pro bono requirements by volunteering time to handle "brief service" calls pursuant to a program currently being run by NorthCentral Legal Services attorneys. If this alternative is offered, it is likely that some type of training will be provided in connection with private attorneys handling these brief service calls.

The Committee decided upon the Fair Share Awards to be distributed at the Annual Banquet to attorneys participating in the Pro Bono Program. Additionally, the recipient of this year's Equal Access to Justice Award was chosen. The name of the recipient will not be revealed until the Annual Banquet.