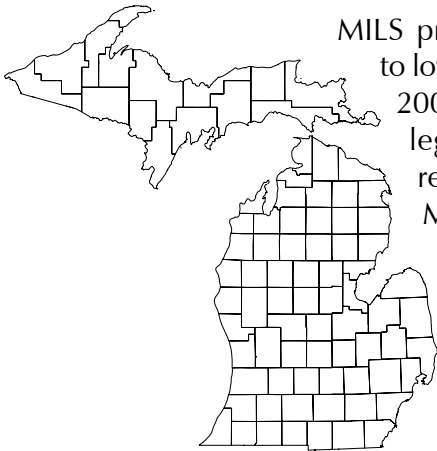


MICHIGAN INDIAN LEGAL SERVICES

2006 MILS Office Locations: Traverse City and Lansing

MILS Service Area: Statewide

Service Population: 25-50,000 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



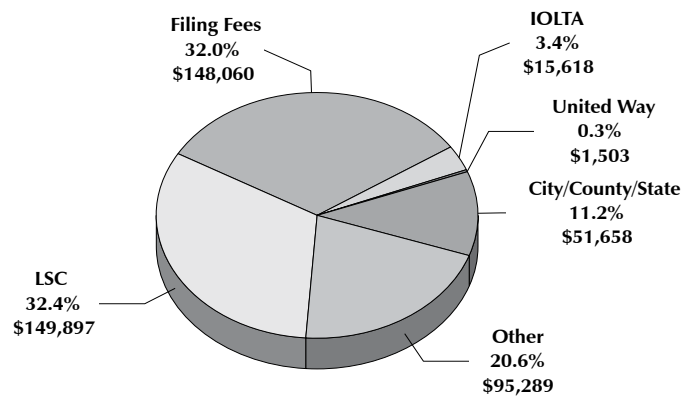
MILS provides civil legal services to low-income Indian tribes. In 2006, MILS completed a draft legal code for a tribe that recently set up a tribal court. MILS attorneys participated with a tribal court judge in a series of meetings to explore techniques in peacekeeping. MILS staff often travel to reservation communities to better serve clients and provide direct

access to an attorney. During outreach events, clients can be helped on the spot with advice and counsel or receive additional follow-up services. MILS has offices in Lansing and Traverse City and uses a toll-free number to take client calls and transfer them directly to an MILS staff attorney in either MILS office. MILS staff use a voice over the internet (VOIP) connection so that staff in Traverse City can talk to Lansing staff the same way an intercom system is used within a building. MILS can also transfer client calls from one office to the other over the VOIP line. Tribes provide MILS with use of their telephone line or Internet connection so MILS can use technology to more efficiently provide statewide services and immediately help clients in the field.

After custody of a very young child was removed from an Indian mother by a state court judge, the case was transferred to tribal court. MILS worked closely with the Department of Human Services Indian Outreach Worker, helping the mother secure needed services to improve her parenting skills to assure the child's health and well-being in the mother's home. That allowed the tribal court to restore custody to the mother, who is now able to properly care for her child.

MILS represented a state historic Indian tribe seeking federal recognition to help it obtain services to overcome poverty. For several years, MILS attended numerous meetings and telephonic conference calls with tribal officials, historians and others to work on the recognition petition. In 2006, MILS submitted a document responding to areas that the federal agency reviewing the petition found needed strengthening. As a result, the agency determined that the tribe's petition was now ready for active review.

MILS Sources of Funding for 2006: \$ 462,025



MICHIGAN INDIAN LEGAL SERVICES

Contact: James A. Keedy, Executive Director • (231) 947-0122

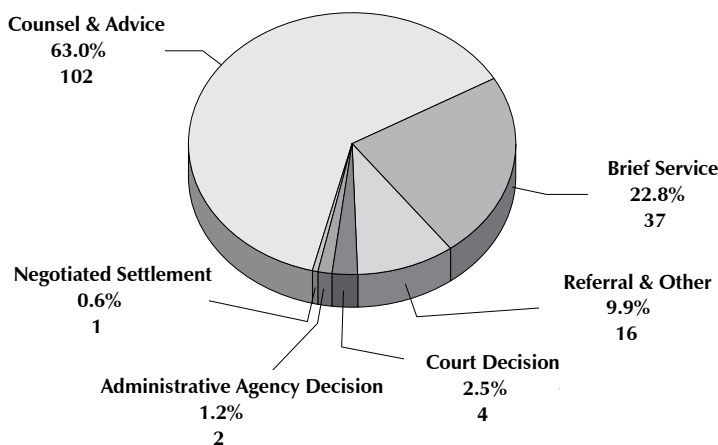
Community Outreach and Collaboration. MILS continues to partner with other agencies in the Michigan Tribal/State Partnership. The Tribal/State Partnership meets four times a year and gathers state and tribal social workers from most tribes and many county Family Independence Agency offices to discuss ways to improve compliance under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and encourage better care for Indian children. Various human services agencies and staff who work with the Indian Child Welfare Act often rely on MILS to provide expertise when issues arise concerning the removal of Native American children from their homes and families. MILS and the Department of Human Services continue to work together to train tribal and state social workers and attorneys on the operation of Indian Child Welfare Act and other information relevant to its purpose of keeping Native American families together.

Client Age	
18 & Under	3
19-59	150
60 & Over	8
Groups	1
Total	162

Pro Bono Support. MILS involves the private bar whenever possible on a case by case basis. Because of the specialized nature of MILS' work, it is difficult to engage general pro bono attorneys to assist MILS clients directly. Typically, MILS encourages other Indian law practitioners to assist clients in need of pro bono services. On occasion, MILS seeks advice and counsel from the Michigan Litigation Assistance Partnership Program (MI-LAPP) and pro bono programs of the American Bar Association. Two MILS attorneys provide pro bono services at a weekly clinic at the Third Level Crisis Center in Traverse City. MILS receives financial donations from attorneys through the Access to Justice Fund.

Client Ethnicity	
White	11
Black	2
Hispanic	1
Native American	143
Asian	0
Other	5
Total	162

MILS Types of Service in 2006



MILS Cases Closed in 2006: 162

