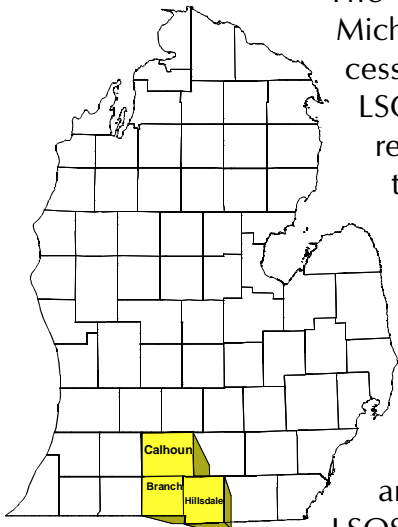


LEGAL SERVICES ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN

LSOSM Office Locations: Battle Creek, Coldwater, Hillsdale

LSOSM Service Area: Branch, Calhoun, and Hillsdale Counties

Service Population: 40,180 individuals living at or below 125% of the poverty level



The number of low-income Michigan residents provided access to the justice system in LSOSM's region through legal representation, legal education, and pro se clinics increased in 1997. IOLTA and Filing Fee funds were essential in the support of that growth. These funds were used to leverage additional resources from many other private and government supporters.

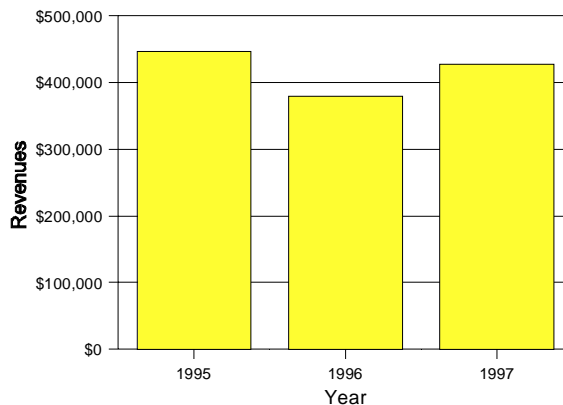
LSOSM represented a six-year-old child who had been denied SSI assistance. The child had been misdiagnosed with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder. LSOSM demonstrated that the child suffered from a more serious condition, pervasive developmental disorder, a mild form of autism. The child was awarded retroactive benefits and can now receive proper medical treatment.

LSOSM overhauled its outdated telephone system, which helped modernize client intake procedures. New case management software speeded up the processing of new clients as well as the time necessary to locate a current client file, assuring service to even more people than in previous years. LSOSM maintained satellite offices in

Branch and Hillsdale Counties and strengthened the computer connections between all offices. All computers received memory upgrades. LSOSM entered into a six-month joint telephone hotline pilot with Berrien County Legal Services, sharing intake duties four days a week.

A 44-year-old woman suffered from severe asthma and received disability benefits. She switched to a new health maintenance organization's Medicaid program after receiving assurance that she would receive the same benefits as under her previous health plan. However, the new HMO refused to pay for a Flovent inhaler, which her previous plan had covered. Disregarding her doctor's prescription, the new HMO paid only for a less potent inhaler. After three days of using the new inhaler, the woman ended up in the emergency room. An LSOSM attorney called the HMO, which agreed to approve the Flovent inhaler immediately.

LSOSM Funding



LEGAL SERVICES ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHCENTRAL MICHIGAN

Contact: Jeanne M. McGuire, Executive Director • (616) 965-3951

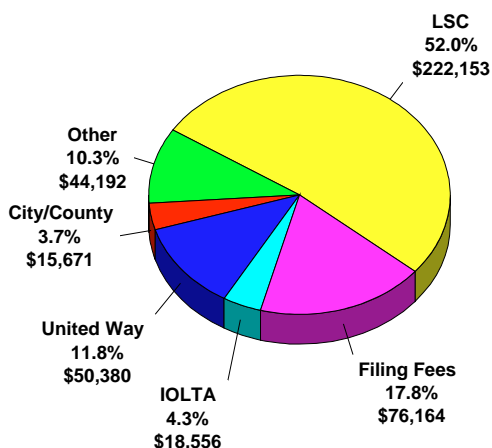
Community Outreach and Collaboration. LSOSM is a critical link in the community's justice system, providing legal education programs approximately three times per month on topics such as landlord-tenant, consumer, and estate planning law. The monthly pro se family law clinic taught clients to handle their own relatively simple family law actions such as divorce or change in child support or visitation. A library of self-help materials is exhibited in each of LSOSM's offices. The Community Legal Education Program targets low-income people, at-risk youth, and human service providers with information to prevent or minimize legal problems. LSOSM also routinely provides advice and counsel to other local nonprofit organizations.

Client Age	
18 & Under	29
19-59	2,186
60 & Over	170
Groups	0
Total	2,385

Pro Bono Support. Requests for legal assistance far outweighed LSOSM's capacity to provide assistance. Therefore, LSOSM set priorities to handle the more urgent or complex cases. Other matters are handled by LSOSM's pro bono attorney panel. With the assistance of local bar associations, LSOSM has organized a volunteer attorney program. In 1997, 60 attorneys agreed to provide legal representation, at no charge, to low-income clients referred to them by LSOSM. These lawyers closed 81 cases for LSOSM clients in 1997. They assisted mothers trying to obtain child support, helped elderly clients preparing wills and other end-of-life plans, and enforced consumer rights against less reputable merchants.

Client Ethnicity	
White	1,786
Black	549
Hispanic	32
Native American	6
Asian	12
Other	0
Total	2,385

LSOSM Sources of Funding for 1997: \$ 427,116



LSOSM Cases Closed in 1997: 2,385

