

Funding Cuts Expected to Result in Nearly 750 Fewer Staff Positions at LSC-funded Programs

Washington DC –According to a recent survey conducted by the Legal Services Corporation (LSC), local legal aid programs expect to reduce staffing by nearly 750 employees in 2012, including 350 attorneys, because of funding cuts. This represents a reduction of 8 percent of full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions from the end of 2011.

Nationwide, programs receiving grants from LSC reported significant reductions in funding, staffing, and operations. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents report that their total (LSC and non-LSC) funding in 2012 will decrease significantly from 2011. Eighty-two percent of the programs with reserves expect to use those funds in 2012 to continue operations. One hundred thirty-three of the 134 LSC grantees responded to the survey.

As of December 2011, LSC-funded programs employed 9,185 FTE staff—including 4,360 attorneys—a reduction of 6.7 percent (661 positions) since December 2010. Over the two-year period from 2010 to 2012, LSC-funded programs expect to lose 14 percent of their staff, including 591 attorneys (nearly 13 percent) and 320 paralegals (18 percent). Sixteen percent of respondents expect to close offices in 2012.

Of the programs reporting decreases in their total funding from 2011 to 2012, 91 percent (87 programs) expect to serve fewer clients and accept fewer cases, and 73 percent (70 programs) will restrict the types of cases accepted. Twenty-nine percent of programs expect to cut back services on foreclosure-related issues and services to victims of domestic violence.

LSC was established by the Congress in 1974 to provide equal access to justice and to ensure the delivery of high-quality civil legal assistance to low-income Americans. The Corporation currently provides funding to 134 independent nonprofit legal aid programs in every state, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories.

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