

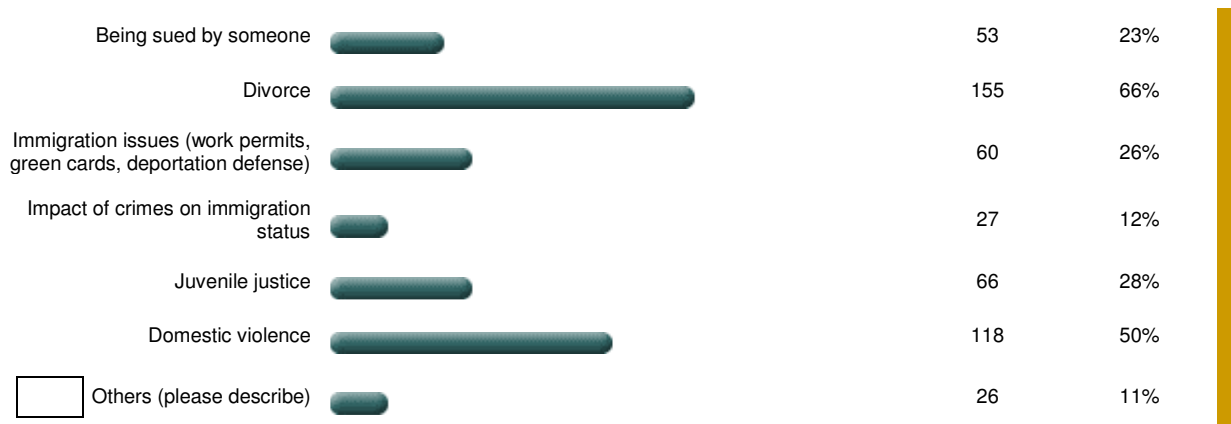
Zoomerang Survey Results

1. Please check all of the following you believe to be problems experienced by people in accessing Maine's civil legal system:		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Lack of awareness that they have a legal problem		110	46%
Lack of awareness of the availability of legal aid		158	67%
Over income for legal aid but lack money for private attorney		212	89%
Financially qualified for legal aid, but told legal aid cannot assist		98	41%
Limited pro bono resources		170	72%
Lack of awareness of alternatives to full representation by an attorney		137	58%
Lack of ability to find or use self-representation tools		140	59%
Lack of local legal aid office		91	38%
Limitation of legal aid office hours		35	15%
Inability to read/understand and respond to legal documents		166	70%
Lack of transportation to reach assistance		96	41%
Phone lines are busy		60	25%
Absence of toll-free number		28	12%
Lack of physical accessibility or accommodations for the disabled		11	5%
Lack of translators or interpreters		69	29%
Immigration status poses barriers to accessing assistance		59	25%
Lack of resources for self-representation		99	42%



3. Please check each legal problem that you consider significant in your area of Maine, or among low-income or vulnerable people of whom you are aware:

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Don't know	16	7%
Not Applicable	1	0%
Debt collection (including court hearings and/or phone harassment)	103	44%
Federal taxes (filing or getting the earned income credit or refund check, etc.)	33	14%
State taxes (filing or getting refund, etc.)	32	14%
Bankruptcy	82	35%
Getting phones/heat/electricity installed or disconnected because of credit problems	67	29%
Consumer purchase/sales agreement that didn't work out as expected	82	35%
Problems with an auto purchase or repair	82	35%
Educational services for a child (including discipline or special ed)	93	40%
Job problems (hiring, firing, getting paid the right amount or on time, etc.)	89	38%
Problems with work-related injury and/or workers' compensation	69	29%
Problems getting unemployment compensation	38	16%
Child visitation, custody or child support	165	71%
Enforcing the terms of a court order on divorce or parental rights	150	64%
Dealing with DHS on child support collection	111	47%
A DHS notice about child abuse substantiation	73	31%
Getting needed medical services for a parent or child	80	34%
Living in unsafe housing	62	26%
Paying property taxes on a home	51	22%
Problems with a landlord (including evictions)	113	48%
Discrimination in housing, work or accommodation	41	18%
Getting or keeping welfare benefits (TANF, food stamps, 551, Medicaid, MaineCare etc.) Getting or keeping veteran's benefits	75	32%



Zoomerang Survey Results Continued

These questions correspond to the numbered questions on the survey that ask the respondent to write in additional answers.

1. Please Check all of the following you believe to be problems experienced by people in accessing Maine's civil legal system:

-No Agency offers free or low cost assistance with the following legal issues (please list):

- low or not cost GALs for contested family law issues
- divorce or family law issues
- Defense against PFA; legal aid only takes case where abuse is claimed
- foreclosures
- lack of services in Franklin county
- bankruptcy, criminal matters, and small claims
- family law
- divorce/family law, debt collection
- child custody, job discrimination
- people who want to pursue contempt motions in FM cases can't find lawyers
- limited resources in rural Maine
- Resources for battered men
- PFA/PFH cases

2. Please list any special difficulties or barriers not covered in the previous sections:

FUNDING/AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- It is not the quality of public interest legal assistance available that is the problem, it is the lack of funding to staff those offices in order to reach the overwhelming need in Maine for low-to-no-cost legal assistance.
- Simply not enough funds are available to increase the number of legal aid attorneys. I work for a legal services organization, and know that if we had at least twice as many attorneys as we now have, that we could significantly lower the number of people who are currently unrepresented.
- Workers Compensation Board does not pay for interpreters for anything other than mediation or contested hearings; it is difficult to communicate with a Mexican egg worker, e.g.
- Limited legal aid resources re family matters in York County.
- Not enough judges.
- Lack of court time/judicial availability
- lack of day care lack of enough hope to even try
- I think one major problem that was generally listed above is the lack of legal aid offices. The Augusta Pine Tree office is supposed to cover such a large area that people in the outlying areas do not have access to their

services. Two examples are Farmington and Skowhegan. This is particularly problematic because of the high rate of domestic violence in some of these communities.

- No representation available for Plaintiff's in family law matters (other than PFA)

- Courts are understaffed so that Clerks are not able to provide enough basic information to pro se litigants to enable them to find the help they need.

- Court-appointed fees are so low that they preclude experienced attorneys from taking cases. Court-appointed cases often take more time than similar retained cases because of difficulties in communication with the client, difficulty obtaining outside services pro bono.

- rural elderly,(low income, just over FPL income limit), often lack access to local face to face legal counsel

- no access to a computer to access materials and lack of training to use (for example) local library resources

- Lack of non-attorney advocates to aid elderly in navigating a legal issue and aiding them in getting to an attorney in the first place.

- Lack of enough voluntary attorney time.

- services for the elderly - esp. qualifying for Medicaid (Maine Care) and related issues

- Lack of access to legal help with post judgment motions, actions etc.

- Middle-class women whose money is inaccessible to them so they cannot hire an attorney for divorce, etc.

- Prisoner access to attorneys for treatment complaints at jail/prisons. Getting court orders enforced, esp. for low-income; small claims debt collection

UNDERSTANDING THE LEGAL SYSTEM/ACCESS TO COURTS

- There is quality information on-line to help private citizens but most are unaware of how to access such information if they don't have their own computer and internet connection. An awareness campaign in communities to let those with needs know where to access such information (such as at the local library)

- Feelings of intimidation or powerlessness fostered by a lack of understanding of the judicial system

- Misinformation about legal rights; fear that one's own past or separate possible noncompliance will be barrier to resolving current problems

- lack of critical thinking ability; e.g. unable to identify and focus on the legal problem

- Pleadings/rules are so technical that it is almost impossible for pro se litigants to navigate through the court process. I am speaking mostly of family matters.

- Many attorneys and judges do not know about their responsibilities under the ADA for individuals who are deaf. They do not know about the legal interpreting fund. Also they do not know that in criminal cases that will not result in jail time it could be possible to get a court appointed attorney as a reasonable accommodation.

- The poor, the disabled and ethnic minorities have been conditioned by years of discrimination to feel that that is just the way things are. So, for example, if they are denied housing because they have section 8 or because they are Native American, they just go to the next apartment on their list. They rarely call legal services.

- No one in Augusta gets it. Every year we get another survey about this issue, and every year the process is changed to make it more and more expensive, so more and more people are priced out of representation. There are some simple, direct solutions to at least part of the problem, but Augusta might as well be on Mars as far as people in northern Maine are concerned.

- (1) court procedures and rules which confuse and intimidate, (2) unfair advantage when one side is represented. (3) Complexity of legal issues which confuse even those with law degrees

- Difficulty in discerning whether their problem has a legal solution.

- Courts are not user friendly or concerned about customer service because they have a monopoly on the administration of justice.

- Perceived or actual ability of pro bono resources to assist quickly (defendants usually wait until the day of/day before court date)

- Middle income people seem to encounter legal problems than ever before and now find themselves unable to afford legal representation. The access problem is growing. Some people are embarrassed to have to seek pro bono services

- Legal needs of state and local prisoners are almost totally neglected in Maine. Legal problems of the poor often require non-traditional relationships and advocacy methods that many lawyers, even Legal Aid lawyers, are uncomfortable with or unwilling to pursue. Both Legal Services and Private Bar advocates need to have a better understanding of the nature of both situational and generational poverty, and the full scope of the legal problems which are connected to poverty, better skills for developing their relationships with poor clients and more effective, realistic solutions to their legal problems.

- Dealing with DHHS as an accused wrongdoer. Without legal resources/representation, due process is only a theoretical right.

- Mental Health barriers Literacy

- Substance Abuse/ Mental Health
- Before October 17, 2005, there was no avenue for in forma pauperis filing in bankruptcy. It's available now, but the law is more complex, the process more cumbersome, than before.
- The persons most at risk are lower middle class persons who don't qualify for legal aid but lack the funds to retain private counsel, particularly in the family law area.
- Conflicts - if one party contacts legal aid (whether they qualify for aid or not) the opposing party cannot.
- Most court processes are too complicated for Pro Se litigants. Pro Se litigants don't stand a chance against opponents with attorneys. Federal court does not permit limited representation by attorneys.
- regulatory barriers to class action lawsuits and to public policy advocacy on behalf of system change (i.e. health care, housing, benefits for low-income citizens)
- When a conflict occurs there is no other legal aid office in the area to handle the opposing side's case. For example, when the wife in a potential divorce proceeding calls the legal aid office there is no other legal aid office to handle the husband's case or if the wife files for a Protection from Abuse Order the legal aid office handles her claim but not the defendant's due to a conflict yet there is no other legal aid office for husband.

OTHER

- The complex nature of low income legal problems presents a barrier to involvement by attorneys on a pro bono level, because they must spend hours counseling and addressing life style issues that lead to the legal problems. A deterrent to involvement on a pro bono level.
- The Court system drives costs up due to scheduling issues (waiting time for getting heard, trailing dockets, etc.), mandatory party paid mediators, written motion requirements when oral motions would do, reluctance to consider workable solutions instead of all or nothing decisions, and reluctance to require open and full disclosure without expensive discovery processes.
- priorities of clients
- Low fee awards pending divorce and at divorce (plus cost of collection of fees awarded) disadvantage low-earning spouse.
- Part of legal issue, i.e. child protection, is covered by Court appointed attorney and related issues like family matter are not.
- I believe that it is most difficult for lawyers to take family cases on a free basis because they are labor intensive, and free legal services have no cost/benefit analysis

3. Please check each legal problem that you consider significant in your area of Maine, or among low-income or vulnerable people of whom you are aware:

Others (please describe)

Non-DHS cases involving child support collection
 Criminal system involvement
 DHHS involvement or investigation w/o court action
 Credit "fixed and the need to sue on an agreement
 No protection from intimidation
 Foreclosure
 Compliance wit the Americans with Disabilities Act
 Elder law issues/planning
 Defense of protection of abuse complaints
 Care of the elderly, small dollar civil cases
 Over use and improper use of protective orders
 Harassment issues between parties
 Parents of children who are bullied at school
 White collar crimes affecting retirement funds
 Abuse of harassment order process
 Civil re-entry issues for prisoners.(Housing, etc)
 Meaningful due process when dealing with DHHS
 Contempt actions in family matters
 Financial abuse of the elderly
 Small plaintiff personal injury and property cases
 Elder financial abuse by family and caregivers
 Women as defendants in assault cases

Guardian ad litem
Obtaining social security benefits
Difficulty with car sales/repairs; privacy issues
Sexual orientation discrimination still stigmatize

4. Please list any solutions or strategies you can think of which will alleviate these barriers to accessing Maine's civil legal system:

(Responses are grouped according to the March 21, 2006 Retreat Issue Work Groups)

FUNDING

-More money so that organizations like Pine Tree Legal, the VLP, MEJP, Cumberland Legal Aid Clinic, and ILAP can have more staff so they can help address the need.
-More pro bono contributions; state and federal grants to pay for legal representation.

Pro Se

-Easier access to the legal system for unrepresented people, such as expansion of the small claims court, night court, and mandatory disclosures
-a mandatory workshop for pro se filers in selected types of cases to explain the process, forms and what happens at each stage.
-skill building in conflict resolution practical skills: writing an effective letter, navigating the free or low-cost resources that are available.
-Continued enhancements of self-help resources,

Reducing the Need for Crisis Intervention

Consumer Friendly System

-expanded team of courthouse greeters to put a human face on the legal system, and to assist in answering questions and directing folks to the proper court
-Set up legal kiosks in all courthouses where interactive forms and information regarding legal problems will be available.
-More Pro Bono services, local clinic staffed by volunteer services, literature - readable, adult ed classes, high school class for seniors
-The NALS of Central Maine Family Law Project in Waterville is an example of a "clinic" format program. Once a month, a member of the Association is at the Waterville District Court to help pro se family law litigants fill out initial documents and understand the process they will be experiencing. The Downeast chapter of NALS has run a similar program including both family law and small claims. Similar programs could be held in other courts to ensure that at least the initial filings were complete.
-More publicity for legal aid services, an easy way to contact a single starting point, and more offices, maybe even in the courthouse.
-Educate in public school setting. Lawyer Mentors for kids and for adult ed. People don't have time to "find resources" - it must be accessible in a place that all people go in their communities. Schools are in every community.
-Education about problems of deaf is needed. Hearing people do not know that the average deaf graduate of a deaf high school reads English at the fourth grade level. Self help through the legal system is not realistic for most deaf individuals who use American Sign Language to communicate. Hearing adults acquire information predominantly not by studying books but by listening to the TV, radio or talking to friends (incidental learning). Deaf adults are cut off from this information. (They can watch TV with captioning, but it is not as pleasurable and mindless as with sound.) They, therefore, live in a different culture. What they know and what every hearing person knows is very different. For example, yesterday a young client did not know what Ground Hog day was.
-Availability of mid-priced legal assistance (somewhere between no-cost and full cost).
-more attorneys willing to give pro bono time to answer questions
-Increase the visibility of available legal aid and pro bono services to the public.
-Start up a program for pro bono lawyers in Maine that address immigration problems and solutions.
-Several people I have met who couldn't afford to pay for legal services never got call backs from Volunteer Lawyer's Project and neither PTLA or Penquis Law Project would provide aide for their type of civil problems.

- more, and more thorough, explanation of whys and hows of the system; e.g. one person getting these benefits shuts someone else off from the benefit, i.e. recipients must not squander the services that are donated to them
- use, but do not abuse the services.
- Better information at the courts regarding where to seek help, i.e. pamphlets, posters, etc. Adult education classes on legal issues. Department of Human Services hiring and using more experienced case workers who can provide better and more accurate information to their clients.
- An active, advertised, attorney referral system.
- Continue to find efficient ways of getting information to potential clients (i.e. LSE 800 # model) Encourage use of alternatives to litigation (i.e. mediation, arbitration)
- Resource information in different languages; expertise available pro bono in range of easy to reach sites.
- Each courthouse should set aside time when individuals can expect assistance with basic questions. I think there are many qualified volunteers who would willingly assist individuals fill out forms and get basic questions answered about the legal system. The problem is that lawyers have no time to organize such a thing. This is a Volunteer Lawyers Project type of assistance with support from good management and oversight. But, VLP is overworked in urban areas and has no money to expand its assistance to rural areas. Pine Tree Legal Assistance is present in our community but few people know about what it offers.
- Expand/ extend the availability of pre-existing legal services, e.g., Pine Tree, to better account for the geographical disbursement of Maine's citizenry and their often limited means of transportation.
- 1) More comprehensive resource directory for all intake workers, maybe on-line and up-dated on a regular basis quarterly basis 2) Lawyer-on-the-line nights in various areas of law where simple questions can be answered, and callers advised to seek further consultation with an attorney, without requiring income screening 3) Scheduled clinics for non-emergency kinds of legal issues in all areas of the state, perhaps using trained students to help people fill forms out under the oversight of an attorney

Promoting Innovation

- Increased opportunities for pro bono limited representation through programs like the PTLA DV Project
- More attorneys might be inclined to assist in pro bono services if litigants would be forced to pay on a sliding scale a portion of the fees generated. It has been my experience in pro bono cases that litigants who receive all legal assistance pro bono tend to be less inclined to settle cases. As a result, I have found myself litigating numerous issues which should not ordinarily be litigated but for the fact that the parties just decline to settle. If low income litigants still stood to feel some financial burden toward the cost of counsel, then I think they would not litigate needlessly. I know I have avoided many cases as a result of bad experiences in this regard. I simply can not afford to provide free legal services through programs such as the Volunteer lawyer's project if it appears the parties will assume unreasonable positions as they have no economic incentive in terms of attorney costs to settle.
- allowing court appointed compensation in some family matters cases; better access to courts (quicker court dates) so taking on a pro bono or reduced fee case is not such a long and expensive commitment; clearer rules about awarding attorney's fees; court appointed rates for defending against a state agency such as DHS.
- Help lawyers to provide pro bono services even if not coordinated through the Volunteer Lawyer Project. One way might be to give CLE credits for pro bono assistance.
- I think legal aid should often include a paid component, perhaps at a very steep discount. If legal services, like any other service or product, is free, then it will tend to be overused, causing too many resources to be spent on some problems and not enough on others. Even a nominal charge would help filter out the true legal problems. If a person is not willing to pay ANYTHING, then we might question how much value he or she places on the service. Exceptions exist, however, such as for children, and for mothers who have had to leave the family residence with children in order to escape abuse.
- More attorneys willing to offer a sliding fee scale based on income/ability to pay.
- It may not help a lot, but if clients were obligated to pay even a little bit towards legal fees more attorneys might be willing to do VLP work. Having done several, it is the VLP clients who call relentlessly, refuse to settle, demand a trial, etc. and it is my (and several colleagues) opinion that it is because they have no vested interest in a negotiated outcome. Even a payment of \$1/hour could assist this process. VLP matters can notoriously take the most time from an attorney and result in the lowest level of client satisfaction. Knowing this makes attorneys reluctant to take on the cases. I will continue to do so, but I will take fewer than I otherwise might. The same holds true of court appointments. On another note, having court appointed GALs in family court, as they do in probate court, is an absolute necessity and would alleviate many family law trials and thus reduce the overall burden on the court - it could, I believe, have the potential to practically pay for itself.
- As a solo practitioner, I would love to provide pro bono help to those who need it. However, time and money constraints prevent me from being able to provide such services as I'm trying to cover my bills and stay solvent

myself. However, if lawyers were offered some modicum of incentive, it would be easier to justify the gift of time and loss of money. By suggesting an incentive, I don't mean to subvert the entire premise of pro bono work, however, I believe a small state income tax break or CLE credits in exchange for pro bono work would enable solo practitioners such as myself to provide pro bono services without breaking the bank.

- Get the information on legal aid out to the community INCLUDING THE LEGAL COMMUNITY; many attorneys do not know whether and to what extent each legal aid group can assist a client.

- variable fee schedules; VLP and pro bono cases require a disproportionate number of legal hours and clients do not negotiate. Suggest attaching a modest out-of-pocket fee to these cases. With fees in advance of service.

- I do not have the statistics at hand, but I understand that a majority of the bar participate in VLP cases. Nevertheless, a huge need exists. Although draconian, I would support a pro-bono requirement for bar members. I would also support an enhanced requirement for members of larger firms to allocate the burden to those better able to bear it. This would create more resources, but not necessarily better access. Access and awareness is harder to treat. Among the immigrant populations in the state, better relationships with community leaders - religious and social in addition to political leaders, is essential. I would also support an increase in bar dues to support programs for low and moderate income Mainers. Perhaps some form of means testing would be appropriate to determine who among the bar can bear the increased burden. I make these recommendations as an associate at a small but successful firm, notwithstanding the fact that under my proposal we would bear an increased cost.

- Licensing and compensation fund scheme for residential construction/repair contractors; better funding for judicial branch

- I would advertise atty's who will sue domestic abusers, I think victim getting \$ from an alleged abuser is empowering and is one significant way to stem domestic violence.

- Local community-based approaches. Work closely with community groups. More local, staffed legal services offices. Major increase in private bar commitment to handle family law, foreclosures and bankruptcy. Increase funding by at least 100%. Direct substantial new funding (and/or re-structure the legal services community in Maine) to programs which are not LSC-restricted, or persuade LSC and other funders to remove the restrictions on types of advocacy, especially attorneys fees and community organizing. Substantially improve the coordination between legal services providers in Maine. (PTLA, LSE, Pro Bono, DRC, MEJP, Law School Clinic, etc.) Get MCLU more involved in issues that disproportionately impact poor people, such as racial discrimination, criminal justice and corrections. Develop coordination between court-appointed criminal attorneys and civil legal services programs. Establish Juvenile Public Defenders/Civil Youth Advocacy program that takes holistic approach to all legal needs of Juveniles.

- legal services organizations which aren't free, but are paid on a sliding scale. Lawyers may be more willing to participate in these for family matters.

- Pay more to court-appointed attys. Make known to the public, the potential clients/parties, the limitations of the legal system to solve certain kinds of personal and familial problems.

- More funding for victims lawyers in domestic abuse court. More funding for lawyers in family matters. Volunteers cannot do all that is needed. Untrained volunteers mean well but may not be able to do the work.

- Support Pine Tree Legal Aid/Kids' Legal Aid and the clinical program at the law school

- More money to increase resources among legal service providers. More money to increase education and awareness among low income Mainers.

- More public interest attorneys

- Having attorneys available to assist people, paid for by donations from other attorneys.

Making Institutional Changes to Enhance Access to Justice

- Public Defender System which incorporates criminal and civil areas of law.

- Possibly more use of paralegals in law offices, in the way that physicians are using physician assistants.

- \$ or in kind- for pro bono program(s) with services to rural Maine elderly in venue where they live

- More money for more legal aid staff in more areas of the state

- Attorneys who are state or county employees for juvenile matters, and for victims of crimes who may have a small but meaningful civil remedy against the accused.

- Maine needs Public Defenders.

- Make it easier to get a divorce in a situation where there are no children.

- Modify the divorce laws to deal with problems that recur so that the divorce order anticipates these situations.

- Provided more draconian consequences to parents who fail to abide by the terms of an order.

- Provide a place/person where parents who can not seem to deal with each other must drop off child for visitation so there is no need for parent to go to the other's house or call. If the parents are unable to deal with

this, don't bog the courts down; put in an intermediary. If then the intermediary confirms things are not happening, then put consequences into effect.

-Increased funding so that we can offer more services to the population.

-A simpler legal system--perhaps mandatory arbitration system for certain levels of problems.

-Paid representation of GAL's/attorneys by the state

-Public funding for access to justice

-Having a state-paid attorney to provide some services for low-income people.

-More money to the courts to speed things up. Time is money. The longer it takes, the more it costs.

-Public assistance for criminal defense at a level that attorneys can afford -- say \$150 for certificate work to start! Many, small legal aid clinics, which are not limited to criminal landlord/tenant, soc. assistance stuff, but provide also provide general info.

-institutionalize a system where needy receive low cost (not free) assistance from attorneys.

-legal aid/public defender services for parents in child protective; legal aid guardian ad litem for all children in divorce and pr & r cases so the GALs have support staff, supervision, etc

-We need more monetary support for legal services. The federal government has ceased funding on a level that makes legal services viable, therefore their service has become grant driven. If they get a HUD grant they do housing, if they get a VAWA grant they do domestic violence. A partial solution could be that every large law firm would hire a pro-bono attorney. This person would do only pro-bono, legal services work. The smaller firms could have a half-time pro-bono attorney. it is interesting to note that the attorneys who give the most time to VLP are small practices or solos. Also, third year law students could be required to work for legal services for one semester. It is often easier to give money rather than time and yes, money is needed, but committed and caring people are also a necessity.

-streamline the system. Make Discovery rules in domestic cases more rigid and assign costs and fees to recalcitrant parties; require GALS in all contested domestics with children (and get CASA the hell out of the way. More untrained voices do nothing to help); Do all CMC's and pretrials by teleconference; do anything and everything that can be done to lower the built-in, institutional costs of providing legal services and more people will be able to afford legal services. The way it is now, a simple divorce, with a house and a couple kids, is \$2500 minimum by the time all the forms are filled out, a CMC, mediation and pretrial are attended, some basic discovery is served, and a draft judgment (with child support documents, a release deed or so, and maybe a will tossed in afterward). It should be a \$750 deal. Time after time, the institutional costs of complying with an over engineered process just prices it out of reach for people. Also, on another tangent, the court appointed fee is so low that we and many other firms just can't take court appointed cases--so the firms that do, quickly get overburdened.

-Adoption of program similar to Pine Tree, but for all sorts of civil matters

-More streamlined court procedures and forms, also courthouse advocates to help with routine matters. Also more Coffin fellows -- perhaps focusing on food, housing and medical care issues. The lawyer of the day system needs revamping -- require or provide incentives for lawyers to serve as VLP lawyers and automatically assign cases to them (with the right to say no only for conflicts of interest or other really good cause).

-Making the system less expensive by increasing the "though-put time." The longer civil litigation stays in the system the more it costs and the more frustration and distress inflicted on the litigant. Although notable efforts are being made by the Court to work more efficiently and for increased funding, it is submitted that a more aggressive approach must be taken to meet the requirements of Article 5 of the Maine constitution. Secondly, there needs to be a some form of "one stop" shopping for all income levels to direct them to the best source for representation. Perhaps a triage approach in which some people are advised how to deal with their own problems and the non-profit/volunteer resources are reserved for more complex or more difficult situations. Representation in civil litigation seems to be much less available to the needy but it is important not only to resolve conflict but also to resolve the root cause of domestic violence and other emergency issues. The inability to collect money or deal with a debt or to obtain resolution causes frustration and emotional distress. It may be that too much emphasis is placed on representation for emergency social issues denying resources for the addressing of the causes.

-I believe that as long as we give lip service to the fact that we, as a society, have chosen to live by a system of laws...that each person must have equal access to legal services at a basic level - because that is the only way to guarantee equal access to justice. Let me repeat EACH person, EACH citizen, MUST have equal access to justice. Otherwise, that means we are a society of the elite and the slaves of the elite. If that means free basic legal services as a cost of a living in a society that has voluntarily chosen to be governed by laws, so be it. I would do my part. ANYTHING LESS is discrimination, with some people being more favored by the laws and access to justice than others...generally based on how much money they have. Often, if I have more money than you, I have more justice than you. Sure, above a certain income level the playing field levels out (except for

the very rich); but NOT below that level. Below that level, by and large, Justice is available to those who can buy it - despite our meager (and often valiant) efforts to help. [The efforts of the few at trying to provide access to justice for all is often heroic.] I'll stop here, but that is only the tip of the iceberg of how we have become an elitist and class society...not an egalitarian and classless society.

- lawyer for the day programs in key courthouses on a limited number of issues. Requires cooperation with bar assns, training, materials, and coordination with court personnel. Needs to be advertised to service agencies.
- in domestic cases, have legal fee awards be collected in same manner as child support; clear policy and complaint procedure for bullying in school as well as increased funding for advocates since these children often seem to have mental health issues - not sure how large this population is, but problem is very serious for those who experience it.
- expand VLP
- Increase funding of free legal services.
- The system must take the deprivation of financial resources seriously. Financial crimes zap seniors of their confidence and ability to provide for themselves.
- Establishing a Public Defender system. Maine's court-appointed system is a scandal in my opinion.
- more money devoted to legal access and the court system
- Eliminate the court's monopoly on the administration of justice.
- harassment order process needs expedited due process hearing before order issues...ex parte process puts many innocents to great expense with essentially untested allegations
- More involvement by private bar (e.g. private Lawyer of the Day) for evictions, PFA, PFH, etc.
- Without taking the opportunity to fully analyze this suggestion from the perspective of Rules regarding limited representation or the ability to fund such a program, I know that a "lawyer of the day" program in District Courts for family matters would be well received and well utilized. I also believe that more effort needs to be made by DHHS to notify those accused of child abuse and neglect that legal representation is prudent. Like laws requiring representation for the indigent in the event of terminating parental rights, similar provisions need to be made available for those involved in the substantiation process.
- can the lawyer of the day procedure now used in some district courts for criminal and juvenile matters be expanded to other types of cases?
- Family law procedures should be simplified and streamlined so that middle income litigants are better able to navigate the system without having to hire an attorney.
- Establish an in house GAL program sponsored by the courts for divorce and Parental rights cases Secure adequate funding for testing, referrals for children of low income wage earners for things such as counseling, hearing testing
- An "intermediary" service could be established for incidents when the parent/ party works. Nominal payment for legal services would likely encourage more attorneys to participate. Court appointed work pays \$50 but there is often no cost to clients, therefore there is often no incentive to resolve the conflict. This is also the case with strictly pro bono representation. Some financial investment is appropriate in many cases.
- More judges.
- More legal aide offices, obviously people who need legal aide services often have difficulty with transportation and having more sites available would help. There are those who could cover some costs of legal services perhaps, but can not pay full freight.
- more money and resources for legal aid attorneys.
- expanding scope, workforce, and teaching function of Pine Tree Legal, coupled with advertising subsidized by one third of all interest on judgments, a modest increase in user fees on all court forms and services, and a legislatively funded contract overseen by the administrator of the courts.
- More required volunteer attorney time.
- significant increase in Pine Tree's roster
- We don't have system for those who don't qualify for aid but can't really afford an attorney. maybe in addition to VLP, could get attys to volunteer to do reduced fee/payment plan work under certain circumstances.
- Require leases to advise tenants of access to legal representation; provide for pro se divorces in a simpler format; etc
- 1. Have attorneys volunteer a day or half a day to be in the courthouse and represent any Pro Se litigants who want representation that day. 2. Make attorneys more aware of the limited representation option, and encourage them to do it for Pro Se's. 3. Get the Federal court to allow limited representations by attorneys.
- Coordinated, statewide system of legal services and pro bono services combined with self-help services/assistance that is fully funded and available in rural parts of the state as well as "urban" areas.
- sufficient funding for civil legal services! -improved educational system.
- 1. Creating and funding a "conflicts" legal aid office. 2. Obtaining funding through grants or the state's budget

for attorneys to assist in the above legal matters even if at the court-appointed rate and not relying only on a pro bono basis.

-More resources in every area.

-In handling Protective Custody matters, I have encountered the situation where 'jeopardy' has to be contrived in order that the child come into State custody so they could be placed in a residential program - there has to be a better way. . .

-Connecting the various DHHS services so that they can cross reference information regarding one recipient between departments

Sustaining and Assuring Quality

-VLP does not appear to be a successful program, in my experience. Reallocate those funds to existing non-profits to hire additional staff and/or to fund new projects to help the pro bono community.

-I think the State budget should include substantially more aid and that Pine Tree Legal Services be expanded. Fees should be increased for court appointed lawyers, or, alternatively, establish a Public Defender system.

-I think there should be small legal aid offices in more communities throughout the state. These offices would not have to be staffed on a full time basis, there could be a paralegal or secretary at the office on a part-time basis and then a floating attorney between two or three communities.

-Coordination among disparate organizations providing particular areas of assistance

Promoting Leadership for Justice

-Increased recognition by legal community of those who provide pro bono work. Recognition of solos who often do pro bono work but without any formal recognition process by bar.

-Need funding for legal assistance for the poor. Not enough attorney willing or able to take pro bono cases.

5. YOUR TOWN

Albany Township
Auburn (3)
Augusta (9)
Bangor (17)
Bar Harbor
Bath (4)
Belfast
Bethel
Biddeford (4)
Boothbay Harbor
Bridgton
Brownville
Brunswick (4)
Buxton
Cape Elizabeth
Carrabasset Valley
Cumberland (2)
Cumberland County
East Machias
Ellsworth (4)
Falmouth
Freeport
Gardiner (2)
Gorham
Gray
Hallowell
Houlton (2)
Island Falls
Jefferson
Kennebunk (2)
Lewiston (6)
Lincoln

Lubec
Maine (5)
Millinocket
New Hampshire Attorney
Admitted in North Yarmouth
Old Orchard Beach (2)

Orono
Paris
Portland (72)
Readfield
Rockland (3)
Rockport (2)
Saco (3)
Sanford (2)
Scarborough (3)
Somerset County
South Berwick
South Portland (3)
Topsham
Vassalboro
Waterville (4)
Wells (5)
Westbrook
Windham
Wiscasset

6. Role

Judge (4)
Lawyer (216)
Non-Lawyer (6)

8-9-06