APPENDIX 3

A REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF ACTION PLANS THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

Note: Since this report to the State Justice Institute was originally made, several more local courts have submitted their action plans to assist self-represented litigants.

A REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF ACTION PLANS THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

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Action Plans Summary Chart

The four Regional Conferences on Assisting Self-Represented Litigants in California in 2001 and this publication were made possible by a grant from the State Justice Institute (SJI-01-N-117), with supplemental funding from the Foundation of the State Bar of California and the State Bar of California. Points of view expressed herein do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the Judicial Council of California, the California Administrative Office of the Courts, the State Justice Institute, the Foundation of the State Bar of California, or the State Bar of California.

This is an excerpt from a report entitled "A Report and Analysis of Action Plans Throughout California: Integrating services for self-represented litigants into the court system" may be obtained from the Administrative Office of the Courts. The report is also available on the California Courts Web site: *www. courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc.*

I. Introduction

Assistance for unrepresented litigants has become one of the most crucial issues facing the court system as it works to enhance public trust and confidence. This report describes work that, with support from the State Justice Institute, has enabled courts throughout California to engage in community-focused planning to meet this challenge.

In November 1999, the American Judicature Society held a *National Conference on Self-Represented Litigants Appearing in Court*, sponsored by the State Justice Institute. Chief Justice Ronald M. George appointed a team to attend the conference, and others from California participated as speakers. The team developed a draft action plan that was submitted to the American Judicature Society in January 2000, in response to the conference.

Among its recommendations, the action plan called on Administrative Office of the Courts staff to seek a grant from the State Justice Institute to hold four regional conferences in California to encourage trial courts to develop their own action plans for serving self-represented litigants. The regional approach was used because needs and resources vary dramatically among California's 58 counties. California is an extremely large and diverse state. It ranges from Alpine County in the Sierra, with approximately 1,200 residents, to Los Angeles County, with more than 9,000,000 residents. There are counties with no private attorneys, let alone legal service programs, and counties with a wide variety of resources that with coordination could be much more effective. A different type of action plan to serve self-represented litigants is needed for each of these areas.

It is often enormously frustrating for a small county to hear from a larger one about all the wonderful things it is doing and to feel that it simply does not have the resources to replicate those programs. It can also be frustrating for large counties to hear about the small number of litigants who must be served in smaller counties. The goal was to provide replicable models and foster the participation of groups of counties with similar demographic issues so that they could talk to each other about what would work in their communities. In addition, by holding regional conferences, the costs of transportation and accommodations were significantly lowered. More people were able to attend and participate in discussions.

The conferences were designed to (1) enable a wide group of participants from each county to learn about some of the cutting-edge thinking about serving unrepresented litigants and (2) provide them an opportunity to hear from programs in other communities with similar demographics. California has numerous court-based self-help programs. These include small claims advisors, family law facilitators, and many legal services or pro bono programs. However, each of these has a different funding source, works with different litigants, and is already operating at breakneck speed - leaving no time to coordinate efforts, consider common issues, or develop a strategy to maximize the combined

resources. The goal was to provide key partners with a common base of knowledge and the time to begin developing an action plan to address the issues.

The grant proposal was funded, and four conferences were held in the spring of 2001. More than 600 persons attended these conferences, representing 57 out of 58 of California's counties. Attendance at the conferences was by invitation only. The Chief Justice sent a letter of invitation to all presiding judges, encouraging them to appoint a diverse team to attend the conference. Each conference was two days long and had a similar format.

Welcomes were extended by Chief Justice Ronald M. George and a representative from the State Bar Board of Governors. In each region, a judicial leader gave a keynote speech describing regional characteristics and issues. A plenary session on evaluation was held. Other plenary sessions concerned technology and cultural diversity. A resource center was set up at each conference to showcase innovations and distribute materials.

Thirty workshops were held at each conference. Topics included:

- Unbundling legal services
- The changing role of court clerks and law librarians
- Judicial communication and ethics
- Making the courthouse more accessible for self-represented litigants
- Funding for self-help programs
- Alternative dispute resolution programs
- Providing services to non-English speaking litigants
- Court partnerships with the bar and legal services agencies
- Technological resources to help self-represented persons

Binders with materials for each of the sessions, as well as leading articles on the topic, were prepared for all participants and continue to be ordered by local planning groups. The binder contents are available at *http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/selfhelp/list.htm*.

Three breakout sessions were held for counties to consider specific questions in developing an initial action plan. Facilitators were available for each of the groups. A county action plan packet was developed to help the participants identify:

- Resources currently available;
- Challenges facing self-represented litigants;
- Services needed in the community;
- Potential partners for providing services;
- What they were trying to achieve and the strategies they might use to evaluate that; and
- What objectives they wanted to focus on first, and how to accomplish those objectives.

Breakout sessions were also held for professional groups such as facilitators, judges, court administrators, private attorneys, small claims advisors, and others to encourage regional networking and discussion.

Evaluations from the conferences were very positive; some stated that it was the best conference that they had ever attended. Others commented that it was the first time they had ever been able to meet with partners in their community and that they were amazed at how much could be accomplished in those discussions.

In the course of the conferences, most courts developed initial action plans. The level of detail in the plans varied significantly among the counties. To encourage the further development of those plans and to encourage courts to obtain community input on them, the Judicial Council made $300,000 of Trial Court Improvement Funds available in 2000 – 2001 to assist courts in developing their action plans. Forty courts applied for and were granted these planning funds. An additional $300,000 was offered in 2001-2002 and again in 2002-2003 to assist courts that had not yet received planning funds and to provide funding for courts that had created plans to begin implementation. To date, 44 plans have been received, 7 are still being developed, and 7 smaller courts have not developed plans. Each of the completed plans is posted on a password-protected site that is available to court employees throughout the state.

This planning effort built on a major initiative launched by Chief Justice Ronald M. George in 1999 toward community-focused court planning to improve public trust and confidence in the courts and provide direction for the courts.

In that planning process, 41 of the 52 courts that submitted plans identified the need for increased access for self-represented litigants. Seventy-three percent of the courts identified at least four strategies for assisting self-represented litigants. Those strategies included self-help centers, informational materials, kiosks or public terminals, information and services through the Internet, expanded interpreting, training of court personnel, and use of lawyers and paralegals to provide information and assistance to self-represented litigants. See *www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/* for a synopsis of the plans.

It is clear that the additional information available to the courts from the SJI-sponsored conferences, as well as the increased attention and focus on the needs of self-represented litigants, has led to a much more sophisticated approach to this issue.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is planning an online conference in late spring of 2003 in which self-represented litigant teams throughout the state will share what's been learned, brainstorm about new ideas, and identify ways to sustain the momentum through difficult budget years.

We hope that the following analysis of the action plans submitted to date will enhance the court community's understanding of how services for self-represented litigants can be incorporated into the core of the court's functions.

II. The Action Plans[1]

California has a total of 58 counties and a population of 33,871,648.[2] As already stated, the counties vary greatly in size and population demographics. The smallest is Alpine County, with a population of 1,208, and the largest is Los Angeles County, with a population of 9,519,338, approximately one-third of the state's entire population.[3] The court in each county was invited to submit a proposal for planning or for implementation of a plan. For purposes of this report, the courts have been divided into five categories defined by the number of judges allocated to each.

Category 1	Smallest	13 counties[4]	0 – 4 judges
Category 2	Small	15 counties[5]	5 – 14 judges
Category 3	Medium	12 counties[6]	15 – 49 judges
Category 4	Large	8 counties[7]	50 or more judges
Category 5	Regional	10 counties[8]	Multi – county proposals

For the most part, the multi-county proposals were submitted by smaller courts. The largest of these 10 courts was the Superior Court of Monterey County, with 18 judges allocated to it. All the other courts in this group have fewer than 15 judges, and 6 of them have fewer than 5.

[1] A chart summarizing the proposals is attached at Appendix C.
[2] U.S. Census Bureau, *United States Census* 2000, DP-1 Population and Housing Characteristics, Summary File 1 (SF1), *http://factfinder.census.gov*, 3/10/03.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Alpine, Colusa, Del Norte, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Plumas, Siskiyou, Trinity, and Tuolumne.
[5] El Dorado, Humboldt, Imperial, Kings, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Merced, Napa, Placer, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba
[6] Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Riverside, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura.
[7] Alameda, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, and Santa Clara.
[8] Butte/Glenn/Tehama, Calaveras/Amador, Monterey/Santa Cruz/San Benito, and Nevada/Sierra.

COURT	IMPLEMENTATION PLANS SUBMITTED	STILL IN PLANNING PROCESS	NOTHING PROPOSED
1. SMALLEST	8	2	3
2. SMALL	10	2	3
3. MEDIUM	12	–	–
4. LARGE	7	1	–
5. REGIONAL	8[8]	2[9]	–
TOTAL	**45**	**7**	**6**

Since the regional conferences on self-represented litigant assistance, the courts from 52 of California's 58 counties have submitted to the AOC proposals for programs to assist self-represented litigants. All counties with more than 15 judges have submitted proposals for either planning or implementation. Most of the courts have developed plans that they are now working on implementing, but a few are still in the planning stage.

[9] Represents one proposal covering two counties.

A. Needs Assessments

The local action plan proposals characterized the barriers faced by self-represented litigants by grouping their needs into six basic types: (1) access to legal information; (2) language access; (3) distance/geographic access; (4) income to afford private assistance; (5) training of court staff; and (6) settlement assistance.

1. ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION

Lack of access to legal information for pro se litigants was the central theme in all the action plans that were submitted. Forty-nine percent of the plans specifically mentioned lack of information access in their needs assessment sections; the other 51 percent addressed it in their program designs.

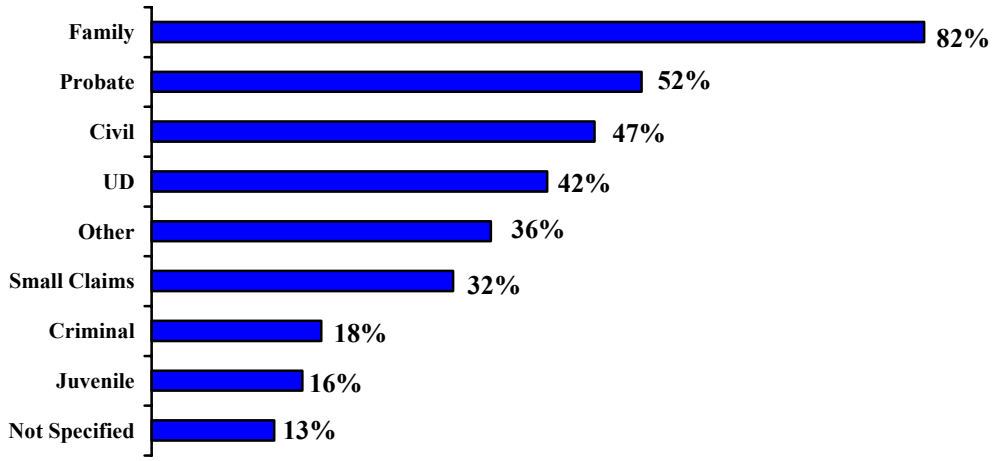
The smallest counties (those with fewer than five judicial positions) expressed this concern more frequently in their needs assessments. These courts also reported a serious shortage of community resources for pro se litigants, particularly legal aid services. This lack of community resources tends to differentiate smaller, rural counties from larger, urban ones. There were no counties with more than 50 judicial positions that expressed a primary concern with a lack of community resources per se. In the large counties, the lack of access to legal information seemed to be attributed more frequently to the enormous numbers of people needing services compared to the size of the available services, and to language barriers.

Case Types

Most of the local action plans assessed the needs of self-represented litigants in terms of the case types in which they most frequently appear.

Pro Se Needs--by Case Type

% of local plans citing each case type (*n* = 45)



All the courts except the largest group reported that the greatest need for services is in the family law area. The largest courts cited unlawful detainer, small claims and civil cases as the ones where self-represented litigants have the greatest needs. The medium-sized and large courts were more likely to cite the need for services in probate guardianship and conservatorship cases. These differences among counties may be related to the greater availability in large counties of community-based services for self-represented litigants in family law. Another significant factor may be the fact that many smaller counties often have only a part-time family law facilitator,[10] or a facilitator funded only to assist with matters of child support. The larger counties have had full-time facilitators and have been better able to provide the additional funding required to allow the facilitators to expand services beyond just child support.

Among the cases making up the "Other" category were bankruptcy, SSI, immigration, appeals, tax, workers' compensation, and other public benefits.

There were eight counties that reported needing services in the criminal area for self-represented litigants. In seven of these, the assistance proposed was for traffic court matters. One county did not specify the types of criminal cases considered.

Five of the courts that specified needing services in family law cases indicated that they would seek to provide services in other, unspecified civil cases. Six courts did not specify which case types involved the most difficulty for self-represented litigants.

Size of the Demand for Self Represented Litigant Services in California

The only uniform data available about the size of the pro se population in California comes from the California Family Law Facilitator Survey Project. [11]

Although family law facilitators are funded specifically to provide assistance with child support-related issues, many courts have provided additional funding for these programs that allows them to offer assistance with other aspects of family law. The Family Law Facilitator Survey Project gathers uniform data from these programs monthly. Statewide, family law facilitators provided services to 463,680 self-represented litigants in calendar year 2002.[12]

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[10] Family law facilitators are attorneys who work for the courts, providing information to self-represented litigants with respect to child support. The funding for the family law facilitators limits them to working only on child support–related issues, particularly in title IV-D child support enforcement actions.

[11] Family Law Facilitator Survey Project. Data available at the California Judicial Council, Administrative Office of the Courts, San Francisco (2003).

[12] Some of these litigants used the services of facilitators on more than one occasion.

SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS SEEKING HELP FROM THE FAMILY LAW FACILITATORS (FLFs)					
Action Plan/Planning Counties	Number of Counties	Total Population in 2002[13]	Percentage of Total Population	Pro Se Litigants Seeking Help From FLFs in 2002	Percentage of FLF Customers in 2002
Smallest < 5 judges	10	291,517	1%	13,608	3%
Small <15 judges	12	1,726809	5%	32,628	7%
Medium <50 judges	12	8,046,732	24%	129,468	28%
Large 50+ judges	8	22,015,452	65%	246,720	53%
Regional	10	1,167,503	3%	30,312	7%
No Proposals Submitted	6	623,635	2%	10,944	2%
Totals	58	33,871,648	100%	463,680	100%

The 52 courts that have participated in the self-represented litigant action planning process to date cover counties accounting for 98 percent of California's population of almost 34 million people. The family law facilitators in these counties account for 98% of those customers seeking help from facilitators statewide in family law matters. In the action-planning counties, the total number of self-represented litigants seeking help in family law matters from the facilitators in 2002 was 452,736.

California also funds three Family Law Information Centers located in three of the action-planning counties. In fiscal year 2001 – 2002, these Family Law Information Centers served 45,000 self-represented litigants in family law matters not covered by local family law facilitators.[14]

It was anticipated in all action plans that the number of self-represented litigants seeking help in family law matters would be very great. Twenty of the 45 action plans estimated the percentages of self-represented litigants in their family law courts. Those estimates ranged from 31 percent to 95 percent. The mean was 67 percent.

Less information was available about the demand for services for self-represented litigants in other areas of civil law. Los Angeles County estimated that it had 282,000 filings per year by self-represented litigants.

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[13] U.S. Census Bureau, *United States Census 2000,* Summary File1;(*http://factfinder.census.gov*, 3/26/03*)*.
[14] Family Law Information Centers: An Evaluation of Three Pilot Programs, A Report to the Legislature, Judicial Council of California (March 2003), *http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/publications /FLICrpt.htm*

Five of the action plans estimated the percentages of self-represented litigants in unlawful detainer cases. Those estimates ranged from 13 percent to 95 percent. The mean was 34 percent.

Five of the action plans estimated the pro se rates in their probate departments. Those estimates ranged from 6 percent to 55 percent. The mean was 22 percent.

Ten of the action plans estimated the percentage of pro se litigants appearing in their civil departments, both limited and unlimited. Those estimates ranged from 6 percent to 50 percent. The mean was 16 percent.

One court estimated that 40 percent of juvenile dependency litigants appear without attorneys.

Most Helpful Kinds of Services

Self-Represented Litigant Surveys. Six of the courts conducted surveys of self-represented litigants asking them what sorts of services they believe are most useful to them. The choices were (1) staff to answer questions; (2) written instructional materials; (3) Web/Internet assistance; (4) referrals to attorneys; and (5) unspecified other types of assistance.

In all six surveys, litigants rated the availability of staff to answer their questions as the most valuable service. Likewise, in a recent study of three pilot family law information centers in California in which self-represented litigants were similarly surveyed, they responded that staff to answer questions was the most helpful service they had received.[15]

In the six action plan surveys, litigants rated written materials, such as forms with instructions and informational brochures, as the second most helpful type of assistance.

The litigants rated assistance on the Internet as third most helpful.

An equal number of survey respondents rated attorney referral and other unspecified services as fourth and fifth most helpful.

Court Staff Surveys. Three courts interviewed their staffs to assess the needs of pro se litigants. Interestingly, the clerks did not agree with the litigants on the priority of staff to answer questions. None of the court staffs rated this as the most desirable service for the court to offer to pro se litigants. Instead, all three groups ranked written materials, such as

[15] id

forms with instructions and informational brochures, as most important for the court to offer.

Two groups ranked other forms of self-help (a walk-in self-help center and Web site information) as the second most important service to offer. Only one group ranked staff to answer questions as the second most important court service to pro se litigants.

Two groups ranked staff to answer questions as third in priority. One ranked attorney referral services as third.

The differences in perception between the self-represented litigants and the court staffs is interesting. Even more interesting are the responses of the court staffs when compared to their other answers about the sorts of information self-represented litigants most frequently requested from them. Two of the three court staff groups responded that pro se litigants most frequently asked for information about their legal options. One group reported that they were most commonly asked for forms; however, information about legal options was a very close second. These are not questions that seem easily addressed without knowledgeable staff available to answer questions. This seeming contradiction may be related to how court clerks have traditionally been trained with respect to answering questions from the public. In most cases, the traditional position is that clerks should not answer the public's questions for fear of inadvertently giving erroneous information or crossing a line into legal advice. Without a clear definition of which answers are information and which are advice, the position has been to simply refrain from answering any questions.

Staffs in three courts were asked what they felt was the most frustrating aspect of their jobs with respect to pro se litigants. In all three surveys, the court staffs responded that having to refuse to answer questions for pro se litigants when they knew the answers was the most frustrating. Also, in all the surveys, the court staffs responded that the most rewarding aspect of their jobs was feeling that they had been helpful to a litigant and that the litigant was appreciative of the help.

The frustration of court staffs in dealing with self-represented litigants may also express itself in the way responsibility for difficulties is attributed. For example, court staff members in the two surveys were asked what the greatest obstacles were for a pro se litigant outside the courtroom. In one of the groups, respondents seemed ready to place responsibility on the self-represented litigants for much of their own difficulties with the court. Here are some examples of their responses:

a. Self-represented litigants are unable to follow directions.
b. Self-represented litigants don't understand the legal procedures.
c. Self-represented litigants are hostile.
d. Self-represented litigants are unwilling to seek outside legal advice.

Asked what the obstacles inside the courtroom were, they responded:

a. Self-represented litigants don't pay attention.
b. Self-represented litigants don't understand the law.
c. Self-represented litigants don't understand why they are in court.
d. Self-represented litigants don't know how to present information.
e. Self-represented litigants are late for court.

Responses such as these were more frequent from staff members in the largest courts. Those are the courts where the enormous numbers of pro se litigants can be routinely overwhelming to the court staffs.

One study of judges may have relevance to this situation. It was found that when judges felt unable to spend adequate time hearing a case due to large caseloads and felt as if they were simply processing people, there was a tendency for these judges to withdraw their empathy and respect for the litigants.[16] The frustration of these judges is not dissimilar to that common among court staffs and may contribute to an array of negative perceptions of the pro se population. Insufficient staffing can add greatly to the frustration of both court personnel and the public.

Judicial Surveys. One court conducted a survey of its judicial officers with respect to the needs of pro se litigants. The judges who responded to that survey agreed with the self-represented litigants that the most helpful assistance was the availability of staff to answer questions. The second most helpful type of service was written materials, such as forms with instructions. The judges also reported that the type of information pro se litigants requested most frequently from them was information about their legal options.

In accord with the judges in this survey were 24 judges who were surveyed as part of the recent evaluation of the three pilot Family Law Information Centers. These judges were on family law assignments in all three counties. When asked what services they thought were most beneficial to the litigants, they reported that, aside from improvement in paperwork, having staff to answer their questions was the most beneficial to the litigants. Comments included:[17]

- "It gives the litigant the ability to sit down with someone who can provide guidance."
- "It is important that they have a live person who pays attention to them and provides accurate information."

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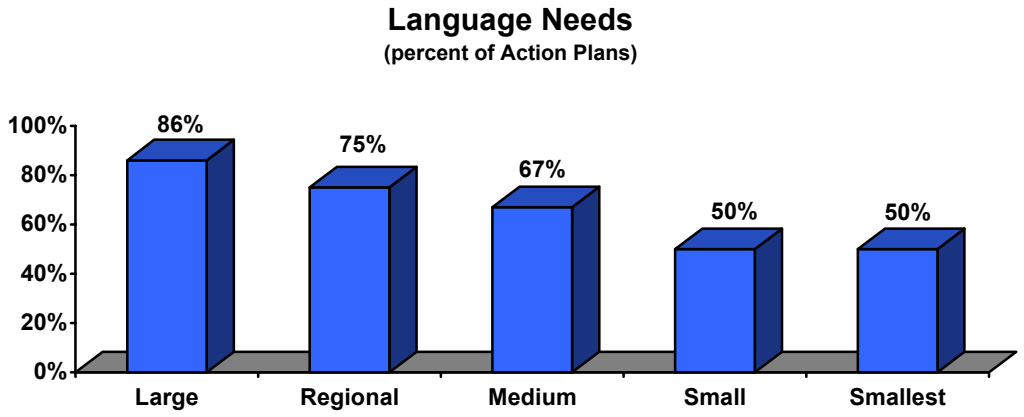
[16] I. M. Zimmerman, Stress—What It Does to Judges and How It Can Be Lessened (1981) 20. *Judges Journal, 4 – 9.*
[17] Family Law Information Centers: An Evaluation of Three Pilot Programs, A Report to the Legislature, Judicial Council of California, March 2003. *http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/publications/FLICrpt.htm*

2. LANGUAGE ACCESS

All of the action plans mentioned the need for language access—translation of written materials, videos, and other self-help materials into a variety of languages. The non-English language mentioned most frequently was Spanish.



Twenty-nine of the local action plans (64 percent) cited language in the needs assessment as a particularly important barrier for the self-represented litigants in their courts. Among the largest courts, 86 percent of the plans cited language access as a pressing need for the public.

The percentage of action plans citing language access in the needs assessment section increased with the size of the court responding. After large courts, the next largest percentage of action plans citing language access as a primary need came from the regional court groups, followed by the medium sized courts. The courts with fewer than 15 judicial positions were less likely to cite language barriers in their needs assessments.

3. GEOGRAPHIC/DISTANCE ACCESS

Twenty-six (58 percent) of the local action plans described serious problems self-represented litigants have in getting to locations where services are available.

Most of the counties that cited geographic difficulties proposed either physical helps, such as outpost facilities, mobile vans, or transportation to the courthouse, or the use of communications technology, such as telephone help lines, video-conferencing, or Web-based information systems. Most of the proposed solutions involving the physical helps came from the medium and large courts. Smaller courts tended to rely more heavily on technological solutions.

4. SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS' INCOME

Nineteen of the 45 local action plans (42 percent) specifically referred to self-represented litigants' lack of financial resources. This lack was cited more often in the needs

assessments of the smaller counties (50 percent). All of the smaller counties that cited a shortage of available community resources also cited a lack of money as a barrier to legal information for the pro se population. Two of the three regional plans also cited a lack of money as a serious pro se issue. The large (29 percent) and medium (25 percent) counties cited lack of money for pro se litigants in their needs assessment sections somewhat less often

This concern about the lack of money available to the pro se population is supported by demographic data from the family law facilitator survey project published in 2000:

> Overall, 82 percent of facilitator customers have a gross monthly income of under $2,000. Over 67 percent of facilitator customers have gross monthly incomes of under $1,500. Over 45 percent of facilitator customers have gross monthly incomes of under $1,000, and approximately one-fifth report gross monthly income of $500 or less.
>
> In Los Angeles County, 77 percent of the customers report gross monthly incomes of under $2,000. Approximately 62 percent of Los Angeles customers report gross monthly incomes of under $1,500, 35 percent have incomes under $1,000, and 23 percent report incomes of $500 per month or less.
>
> Rural counties, particularly in Central California, with populations between 100,000 and 499,000, report the highest percentages of customers with incomes under $1,000 per month. Over 50 percent of facilitator customers in these counties report incomes that fall within this range. The highest percentages of monthly incomes of $500 or less were also reported in these counties.
>
> Only 18 percent of facilitator customers overall have gross monthly incomes of over $2,000. The highest percentages of those reporting gross monthly incomes between $2,000 and $3,000 per month are in urban counties (11.9 percent) and counties with populations over 1 million (12.7 percent) in both Southern California and the Bay Area. Los Angeles reports that 15 percent of its customers are in this income group. Only 6.8 percent of customers report gross monthly incomes of over $3,000. The highest percentages in this category are reported by counties with populations between 500,000 and 1 million (7.9 percent), primarily in the Bay Area (11.2 percent) and in Los Angeles County (8 percent). This suggests that facilitators in areas where the cost of living is higher and legal representation is more costly may see more individuals in this category. Nevertheless, in all but two Bay Area counties where the cost of living is extremely high, over 90 percent of facilitator customers had gross monthly incomes under $3,000.
>
> For the most part, facilitator customers are not likely to have income sufficient to afford full-service legal representation; however, their incomes may be just high enough to make them ineligible for assistance from Legal Services Corporation or IOLTA-funded legal services programs.[18]

[18] Harrison, F., Chase, D., Surh, T. (2000) California's Family Law Facilitator Program: A New Paradigm for the Courts, *Journal of the Center for Families, Children & the Courts*, Vol. 2, p. 76

In 2003 another cohort of self-represented litigants in family law was studied as part of an evaluation of three pilot Family Law Information Center programs. In that study, it was again reported that the majority of litigants had gross monthly incomes below $2,000. In the three counties studied, the percentage of self-represented litigants with incomes under $3,000 per month greatly exceeded the percentage of the general population with such incomes in those counties, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. The study also found that approximately 80 percent reported not being able to afford an attorney. Approximately half had tried to get help elsewhere and had been unsuccessful.[19]

5. TRAINING FOR COURT STAFF

Fourteen of the local action plans (31 percent) cited lack of training of court staff as a serious problem for self-represented litigants. None of the small or smallest counties mentioned this in the needs assessment. One of the regional plans mentioned lack of staff training in its needs assessment. Eight (67 percent) of the local action plans from medium-sized counties and three (43 percent) from the large counties cited training as a serious issue.

Two of the large courts that conducted staff surveys asked staff members about the manner in which they were trained. The choices were: (1) "learn as you go," (2) verbal instructions from supervisors, and (3) written policies and procedures. In both counties the majority of court staff reported that they were trained by the "learn as you go" method. In one of the counties, only 41 percent of the responding staff felt very confident that they understood how much help they could actually give a pro se litigant. In the other county, 42 percent either were not confident they understood how much help they could give a pro se litigant or felt confident but would like more training.

6. SETTLEMENT ASSISTANCE

Thirteen of the local action plans (29 percent) mentioned the lack of services available to help self-represented litigants reach agreements in their cases. The small and medium-sized counties were most likely to cite lack of settlement services in their needs assessments. Half of these went on to include settlement/mediation services in their program designs. One of the regional plans mentioned lack of settlement services but did not include a settlement component in its program design. None of the large counties mentioned lack of settlement services in the needs assessment; however, one of the large counties did include it as part of the case management component in its program design.

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[19] Family Law Information Centers: An Evaluation of Three Pilot Programs, A Report to the Legislature, Judicial Council of California, March 2003. *http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/resources/publications/FLICrpt.htm*

B. Program Designs

The development of services to make legal information and education available to the public was the primary concern in all the action plans, but it was not the only concern. Assessments of the needs of self-represented litigants led the 45 courts that submitted action plans to design assistance programs around four strategic access-to-justice concerns:

a. Access to legal information and assistance, including legal representation;
b. Usability of legal systems;
c. Physical access to courthouse services; and
d. Usability of courthouse facilities.

Each group of courts, regardless of size, addressed these four areas to some degree.

ACCESS TO LEGAL INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

The areas of the law in which the local action plans proposed providing services reflected those set out in the needs assessments, with family law being the largest category. Forty-two (96 percent) of the 45 action plans proposed the establishment or extension of a self-help center, with staff to answer the questions of self-represented litigants. One of the small courts and two of the medium-sized courts proposed self-help-only services, without staff to assist.

The small court that proposed self-help-only services planned to provide those services in outposts in the community. Service delivery would consist of written and technological vehicles, including forms with written instructions, educational brochures, videos, computers, the Web, and a telephone tree.

The two medium-sized courts that proposed self-help-only services also planned to provide those services outside the courthouse, in the community. One planned to use a mobile van. Both plans provided for instructional materials, computers, kiosks with interactive forms, and videos. One plan included a telephone tree, and another proposed educational programming on cable television.

Staff-Assisted Self-Help Centers

Staffing strategies for the self-help centers did not vary much among the counties. Thirty-three (79 percent) of the 42 plans proposing self-help centers with staff to answer questions structured the staff around attorneys. Their staff descriptions also included paralegals, legal assistants, court clerks, law students, and resource coordinators.

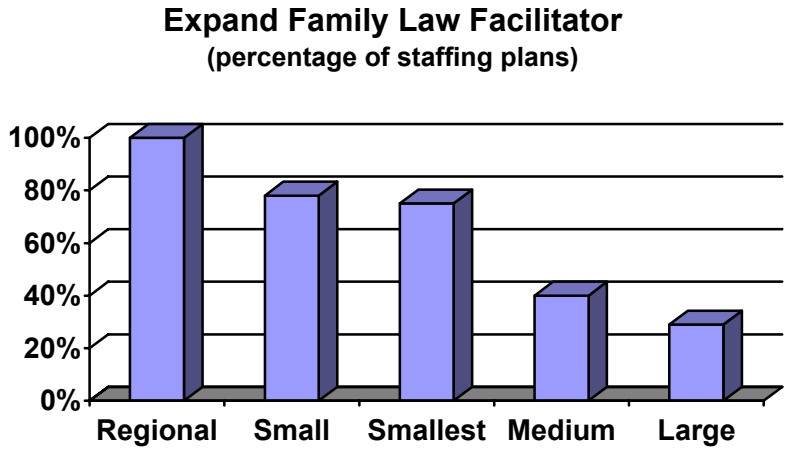
For the most part, the action plans provided for attorney supervision of the non-attorney staff. Only four counties proposed using paralegals or legal assistants without attorney supervision. Each size category had one of those four. Two of the smaller counties

proposed using court clerks in its self-help center, without attorney supervision. Two courts proposed using resource coordinators without attorney supervision, but these individuals were simply intended to provide referrals to other service providers. All of the plans that proposed staff in the "other" category also proposed attorney supervision. The use of attorneys and attorney supervision did not seem to vary according to court size.

Proposed Staffing Structures								
Counties	**Number of Counties With Staff**	**Type of Staff Proposed**						
		Attorney Supervisors		**Paralegal/ Legal Assistant**	**Court Clerk**	**Law Student**	**Resource Coordinator**	**Other**
		No. of Plans	% of Plans	No. of Plans	No. of Plans	No. of Plans	No. of Plans	No. of Plans
Smallest < 5 judges	8	6	*75%*	4	3	0	1	0
Small <15 judges	9	9	*100%*	3	4	0	1	2
Medium <50 judges	10	5	*50%*	4	3	0	1	2
Large 50+ judges	7	5	*71%*	1	0	0	1	4
Regional	8	8	*100%*	0	0	3	0	5
Totals	42	33	*79%*	12	10	3	4	13

The "other" category includes small claims advisors, interpreters, individuals to walk self-help litigants with special needs through the entire court process, and various volunteers from the community.

There was variation, however, in whether and how the counties proposed to expand the services of their family law facilitators' offices. Twenty-seven (82 percent) of the 33 counties planning to provide attorney assistance proposed expanding their family law facilitators' offices. Some of the plans sought to expand the facilitator services to include matters other than child support. Others were simply seeking to increase existing facilitator services from part-time to full-time. The fact that the smaller counties were more likely to propose expansion of the family law facilitator services probably reflects a number of courts with only part-time facilitator services. One of the large courts included expansion of the facilitator service to provide case management and settlement conference services in family law. Several plans proposed building their self-help centers upon the foundations already established by the family law facilitators and expanding that service to provide assistance in all areas of civil litigation.



Service Delivery Methods

Individual Assistance and Workshops. The most frequent method proposed for providing legal information and education was the use of staff to answer questions. Twenty-eight (67 percent) of the 42 plans proposing staffed self-help centers envisioned delivery of this service through one-on-one communication. They proposed that staff be available in the self-help centers to help with the completion of correct paperwork and give information about court procedures throughout the process, from filing until judgment.

Another 14 (33 percent) of the courts proposing staffed programs planned to provide legal information and education through the use of workshops and clinics. Two of the three regional plans included workshops. Seven of the smallest and small courts also proposed conducting workshops.

None of the medium-sized courts and only one of the large courts proposed using workshops to provide legal information and assistance. In the large counties, this may reflect the fact that the action plans tend to focus on unlawful detainer and other civil litigation matters. Workshops are less optimal in time-sensitive matters such as answering unlawful detainer actions. Also, other civil matters do not have the same types of legal and procedural uniformity found in many family law matters. Workshops are less effective for groups with a wide diversity of issues.

Telephone Assistance. Nine (21 percent) of the action plans proposing staffed self-help centers also proposed a telephone help line to provide legal information and education to the public. All size categories except the smallest included at least one plan that proposed access to legal information by a telephone line answered by staff. Two of the regional plans included telephone access to legal information. One small county and one large

county also proposed making telephone assistance available. Two of the medium-sized county plans included help lines.

Courtroom Assistance. Ten (24 percent) of the local action plans proposing staffed self-help centers put forward the idea of using staff to provide assistance either in or near the courtroom. Specific courtroom services that were mentioned included providing procedural information to the litigants who were there for a hearing, conducting settlement negotiations on financial matters, and preparing orders after hearings. There were two action plans each from the small and medium counties and one regional plan that proposed one or another of these services.

Only one of the smallest counties included courtroom assistance in its action plan. That plan proposed providing compliance assistance to self-represented litigants by explaining court orders and helping them obtain court-ordered services, such as batterers' intervention, parent education, or supervised visitation.

Two of the large counties proposed courtroom assistance. One plan included family law facilitator staff to conduct case management conferences in addition to other courtroom assistance. The other large county plan included the provision of staff to accompany litigants with special needs to their court hearings and to help them obtain court-ordered services.

Written Materials. Thirty-two (71 percent) of the action plans specifically mentioned the use of written materials to instruct self-represented litigants in forms completion and basic court procedures. Written materials mentioned included forms packets with instructions, self-help books, procedural flowcharts, and easy reference cards. Also mentioned were instructional audiotapes and general information brochures about the court and how it operates. All three of the non-staffed plans relied heavily on such materials to assist the public. Twenty-nine (69 percent) of the courts proposing staff also proposed the use of written materials to supplement their services. Written materials were a major strategy for supplying language access. Most materials were planned to be translated into two or more non-English languages.

Use of Technology. All three of the action plans proposing self-help-only service centers also proposed various kinds of technology to assist the public. In addition, more than 90 percent of the 42 plans proposing staffed self-help centers also included technological strategies. The technology proposed by the local action plans fell into two major categories. First was technology intended to support and facilitate communication between self-represented litigants and staff. The second category was technology designed for use by litigants alone, without the necessity of staff.

Communication With Staff. Of the 42 action plans proposing staffed self-help centers, 38 (90 percent) proposed the use of technology, and 18 of those (47 percent) included technological ways by which communication between self-represented litigants and staff could be facilitated.

- *Telephone help lines*. As already discussed, 9 (21 percent) of the plans proposing staffed self-help centers also proposed implementing telephone help lines that would be answered in real time by the centers' staff . It is important to differentiate these help lines from telephone trees in which no live person would be available to answer individual callers' questions.

- *Videoconferencing*. Eight (19 percent) of the 42 counties with staffed action plans proposed using videoconferencing to connect litigants from more remote areas with staff at the self-help centers. Two of the smallest county plans and two of the regional plans proposed using videoconferencing technology to conduct workshops for the public. One plan each from the small and medium courts also proposed using videoconferencing to help staff assist the public. There were also two video-conferencing proposals from the large counties. In one of those plans, videoconferencing was proposed for conducting child custody mediations, and in the other it was to be used to conduct hearings for nonresident litigants.

- *Fax or e-mail.* One of the small courts proposed using the fax transmission to assist with forms completion for customers who could not make it to the court. One of the regional plans proposed answering questions for the public by e-mail.

- *Computer networking.* One of the smallest counties and two of the medium counties proposed creating a networking system between the court and community service providers. One of those in the medium courts also planned to develop a touch-screen referral network to help litigants contact service providers directly from the courthouse.

- *Other communication technology.* One of the medium-sized courts planned to use a telephone interpreter service to address language issues. One regional plan mentioned communication technology without further specification. Two plans proposed giving educational presentations on local cable television channels.

Self-Help-Only. Forty (93 percent) of all the action plans proposed the use of self-help-only technology. All three of the counties whose action plans did not include the use of staff to answer questions proposed the use of self-help-only technology. Thirty-seven (88

percent) of the 42 plans proposing staff also included self-help-only technology to provide additional assistance.

- *Computers available to the public*. All of the plans without staff and 31 (74 percent) of the ones with staff specified that they will have computers available for the public to use.

  1. Online assistance—One of the two medium-sized counties proposing non-staffed self-help centers proposed giving self-represented litigants online computer assistance with forms completion. Twenty-one (50 percent) of the plans with staff also included online assistance for the public.

  2. Website expansion—The two medium-sized courts proposing non-staffed programs indicated that they intended to expand their court web sites to provide more information to self-represented litigants. Nineteen (45 percent) of the plans with staff included expansion of court web sites to provide more information.

  3. Interactive forms programs—Two of the plans without staff and 12 (29 percent) of the plans with staff proposed the use of interactive forms programs to help self-represented litigants with paperwork.

- *Kiosks.* Two of the 3 plans without staff proposed the use of kiosks to help litigants fill out forms. The kiosks would contain interactive forms programs that include instructions. Sixteen of the programs with staff also proposed the use of kiosks, particularly in outpost locations. Eleven of these 16 plans proposed using kiosks in locations such as mobile vans, libraries, domestic violence shelters, or other community service locations.

- *Videos.* Two of the three plans without staff propose making instructional videos available to self-represented litigants. Seventeen (41 percent) of the plans with staff also included the use of instructional videos.

- *Telephone trees*. All three of the plans without staff proposed the use of telephone trees to deliver information to litigants. One of the regional plans suggested a 24-hour telephone tree service. None of the other staffed plans proposed the use of telephone trees.

Legal Representation Referrals

The majority (71 percent) of the action plans did not address the issue of full-service legal representation for self-represented litigants. The collaboration with local bar associations in most plans focused on providing services to litigants who would remain self-represented.

One of the plans without staff proposed having a directory of attorney referrals, promoting unbundling, and offering incentives for attorneys to work pro bono, such as calendar preference, pro bono credit, or MCLE credit. One of the regional court groups and one large court also proposed attorney incentives, such as calendar preference.

There was one action plan with staff in each of the county size categories that proposed making attorney referrals.

Eleven (26 percent) of the plans with staff proposed working with local bar associations to promote the unbundling of legal services.

USABILITY OF THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Thirty-two (71 percent) of the 52 total local action plans proposed system changes intended to improve the efficiency of court operations and increase the usability of the justice system for the public. Of those plans that proposed systems changes, 18 (56 percent) included changes in legal procedure and operations. The medium-sized and large courts were more likely to propose changes in legal processing.

Case Management

Eleven (61 percent) of those 18 counties proposed case management techniques to improve the processing of pro se cases. A variety of case management ideas was proposed.

One large court proposed assigning self-help center staff in family law cases to conduct status reviews for pro se litigants. This court had assessed the volume of pro se cases that were not prosecuted to judgment. It sought to clear its backlog of abandoned actions and to assist litigants in completing their cases. Litigants would be noticed to appear for a status conference with the self-help staff. The staff would then help the litigants proceed with the case, should they so desire. Settlement discussions would be conducted whenever possible, stipulations prepared and submitted, default paperwork completed, and the case set for trial when no agreement was possible.

Another large court had conducted a survey of courthouse users on a given day and found that a major complaint was the amount of time it took to conduct business at the courthouse. As a result, that plan included a proposal for staggered hearing times in hopes of reducing the amount of waiting time at court.

One of the smallest courts proposed clustering its domestic violence cases into a domestic violence court based on the assessment that this population was nearly 100 percent pro se. The clustering of cases is intended to facilitate making ancillary support services more available at the courthouse for the litigants. Another of the smallest courts proposed post-

hearing case management to help litigants comply with their court orders by facilitating access to court-ordered services. One of the largest counties also proposed providing post-hearing compliance assistance to self-represented litigants.

One medium-sized court proposed a system by which orders after hearings would be prepared for the litigants so that everyone could leave with an order in hand.

Another medium-sized court proposed having self-help center staff conduct pre-hearing orientations for litigants. This staff would review files prior to hearings to determine readiness to proceed. One regional plan and one small court also proposed pre-hearing orientations.

Simplification and Uniformity—Local Rules and Procedures

Eight (44 percent) of the 18 plans that included changes in legal rules and procedures proposed simplifying rules and procedures to assist both the court and litigants in case processing.

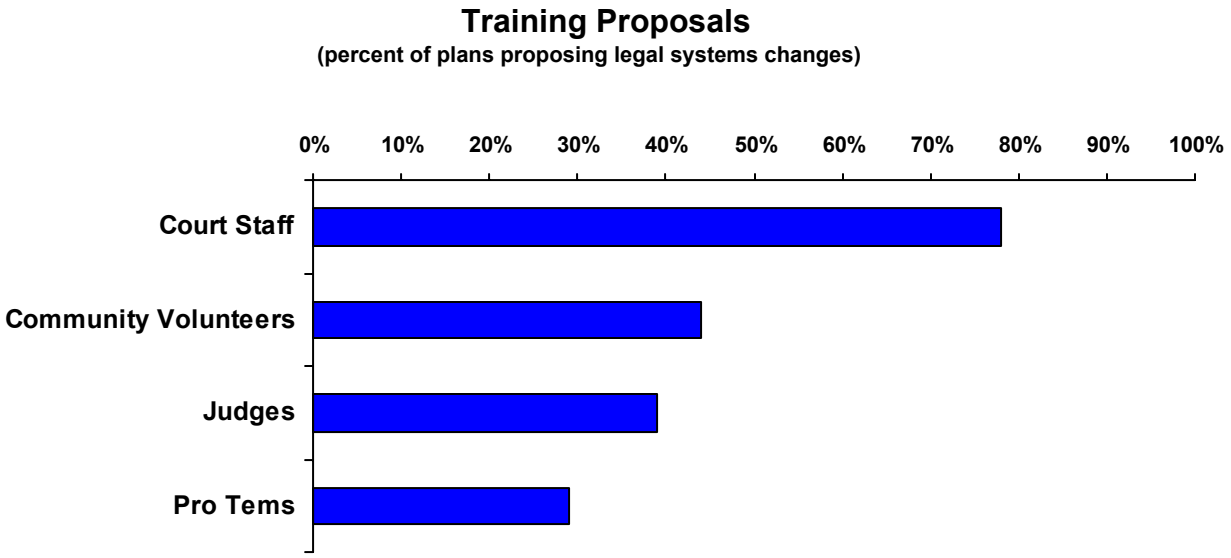
Four medium-sized counties made such proposals. Two proposed simplifying legal forms. One proposed simplifying local rules in family law, and another suggested simplifying the instructions that were handed out with the forms.

Three of the large counties also proposed changing local rules to simplify procedures. One of the counties also wanted to simplify the process by which the public could access case registry information and minute orders.

One of the regional plans clearly set the goal of developing uniform local rules among the three counties the program was servicing.

Training of Court Personnel

All 18 of the courts whose plans included changes in legal systems proposed training for court staff, judicial officers, and community volunteers with respect to the handling of pro se cases.



Fourteen of these 18 courts cited lack of training in their needs assessments. The other four included training in their program designs.

At least one plan from each county size group included training for court staff. The medium-sized and large counties were more likely to have plans that included training for staff. All eight of the medium-sized counties proposing legal systems changes included training for court staff. Those 8 counties made up 75 percent of all the medium-sized county action plans.

In the large counties, three mentioned training in their needs assessments; however, four included training for court staff in their program designs. Those four counties make up 75 percent of those proposing legal systems changes, and 57 percent of all in the large courts group.

Three of the smaller courts and one regional group also included training for court staff in their program designs.

Eight (44 percent) of the 18 courts that proposed training included training for volunteers from the community. None of the smallest counties proposed training for community volunteers. Two small counties, four medium counties, and two large counties proposed training for community volunteers. Two of the medium counties proposed a "train the trainers" strategy designed to teach community service providers how to assist self-represented litigants.

Eleven (61 percent) of these 18 action plans included proposals for training judges and pro tem judges. Eight of these plans came from large and medium-sized counties. Only two

small counties included judicial training in their plans. None of the smallest counties or regional plans proposed judicial training.

PHYSICAL ACCESS TO COURTHOUSE SERVICES

All of the local action plans had some strategy to address the issue of physical access to the courthouse. The plans for physical access fell into two basic categories: (a) in-person access and (b) technological access. As already noted, the smaller courts were more likely to propose technical access solutions. In those counties, resources tend to be scarcer, and the development of critical centralized services is still in progress. For example, many of the courts that still have only part-time family law facilitators fall within these smaller court categories. As a consequence, many of the action plans in this group focused on expanding the family law facilitator service and completing the development of other critical centralized services.

In-Person Access

The majority of plans citing geographic access as a barrier for self-represented litigants in their needs assessments proposed strategies to provide in-person physical access to the court facilities. The proposed solutions for in-person access follow.

Counties	Geographic Access Issues Cited		Proposed Solutions		
			Outpost Facilities	Mobile Vans	Transportation to Courthouse
	Number of Counties	Percentage in size category	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties
Smallest < 5 judges	5	63%	2	1	—
Small <15 judges	7	70%	5	—	1
Medium <50 judges	8	67%	4	3	
Large 50+ judges	3	43%	4	3	1
Regional	3	37%	3	5	3
Totals	**26**	58%	**18**	**12**	**5**

Proposed "outposts" included expansions of services to additional court locations in remote areas and placing specified services in libraries or community centers. One court proposed establishing regional traffic centers. Another proposed taking legal information services into the jails to make assistance with family law matters available to prisoners.

Technological Access

Nearly all of the action plans citing geographic access as a barrier for self-represented litigants made some sort of proposal for technical access to the court. There were 40 of the total 45 action plans that included technology strategies of various kinds. Over half of these included technology to help solve the geographic access problem.

Extended Hours. Seven counties proposed to extend the hours that the courthouse was open so that those unable to make it to the court during the workday could access the court after work or on a weekend day. One of the smallest, one small, and two medium-size counties proposed extending their hours. One of the regional plans also proposed to extend court hours. None of the large counties included this strategy in their action plans.

Courthouse Security. One court identified courthouse security as a physical access issue for victims of family violence. That plan included a proposal to increase security measures to protect the safety of such individuals when they have courthouse business to conduct.

TECHNOLOGICAL GEOGRAPHIC ACCESS STRATEGIES

Counties	Geographic Access Issues Cited		Proposed Solutions						
			Telephone Help Line (staffed)	Video-Conf.	Fax/ Email	On-Line/ Kiosks	Websites	Phone Tree	E-Filing
	Number of Counties	% in size category	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties	Number of Counties
Smallest < 5 judges	**5**	63%	**0**	**2**	**0**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**0**
Small <15 judges	**7**	70%	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**0**
Medium <50 judges	**8**	67%	**2**	**1**	**0**	**6**	**8**	**2**	**0**
Large 50+ judges	**3**	43%	**1**	**1**	**0**	**4**	**2**	**0**	**2**
Regional	**3**	37%	**5**	**3**	**3**	**8**	**6**	**3**	**0**
Totals	**26**	58%	**9**	**8**	**4**	**22**	**21**	**6**	**2**

USABILITY OF COURTHOUSE FACILITIES

General Information

Eighteen (40 percent) of the 45 action plans contained a proposal to provide the public with general information at the courthouse that would make it easier to use while doing court business.

Information Booths. Thirteen counties proposed installing information booths. These booths would have written materials about the court, instructions, and directions for courthouse facilities. No legal information or assistance would be available at the booths. Most of the plans that included information booths proposed that they be staffed with volunteers from the community.

Maps and Signage. Nine of the action plans proposed using signage at the courthouse to help litigants negotiate the facility . Five of the plans described detailed maps in the courthouse that would help people find the location they needed.

Facilities

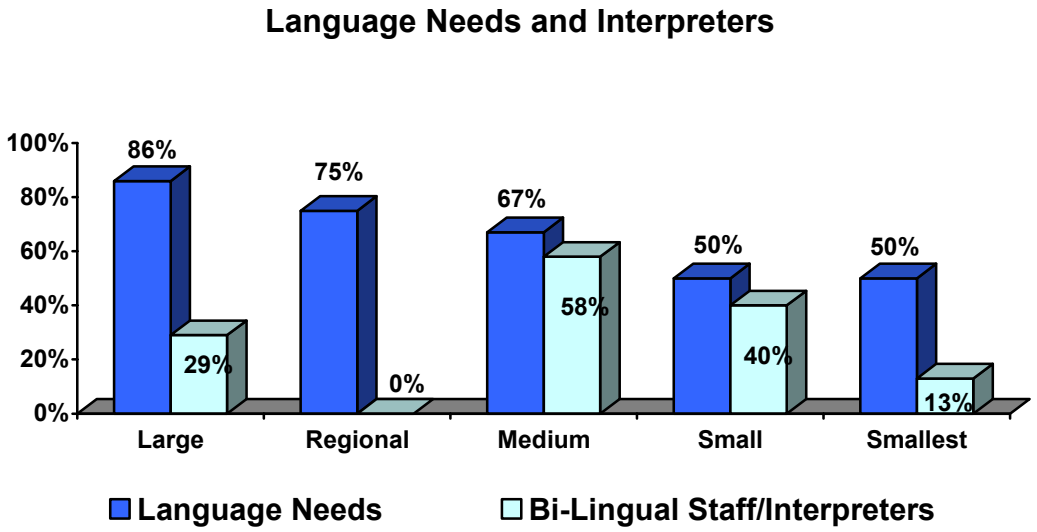
Sixteen (36 percent) of the action plans included proposals for changes in courthouse facilities that would help self-represented litigants use the courthouse.

Children's Waiting Rooms. Seven of the counties proposed the creation of children's waiting rooms. One regional court and at least one court from each of the other size categories proposed a children's waiting room. Thus, the need for this facility was not related to the size of the court but the number of children anticipated. Some plans included detailed descriptions of parents under tremendous stress coming to the courthouse and trying to conduct their business with small children in tow. The lack of a place for the children to wait causes frustration for both litigants and court staff.

Other Waiting Areas. One of the regional plans and one of the small counties proposed waiting areas for litigants who are at court for hearings. There was concern about overcrowding in the courtrooms. An additional concern was the need for a safe waiting area for victims of family violence who have a court hearing at which the alleged perpetrator is present.

Space for Self-Represented Litigants to Work. Nine courts proposed creating space in the courthouse for self-represented litigants to sit down and work. At the minimum, litigants need tables and chairs so they can sit and read instructions and complete forms. Additionally, five of the plans specified providing copy machines for the public to use at the courthouse.

Interpreter Services. As already mentioned, 29 (64 percent) of the total action plans cited language as a barrier for self-represented litigants. Fourteen (48 percent) of those 29 proposals included plans to make staff available to provide services in more than one language. All of the counties proposed the use of translated self-help materials. Fifteen (52 percent) of these counties have chosen to rely exclusively on such translated materials. The regional plans, for example, rely exclusively on translated materials.



The small and medium-sized counties were more likely to propose bilingual staff or interpreters to address the language issue. Seven out of the eight medium sized counties citing language access as a serious issue made such proposals. Two of the largest county plans proposed the use of bilingual staff or interpreters, while six proposed relying on translated self-help materials.

C. Community Partnerships

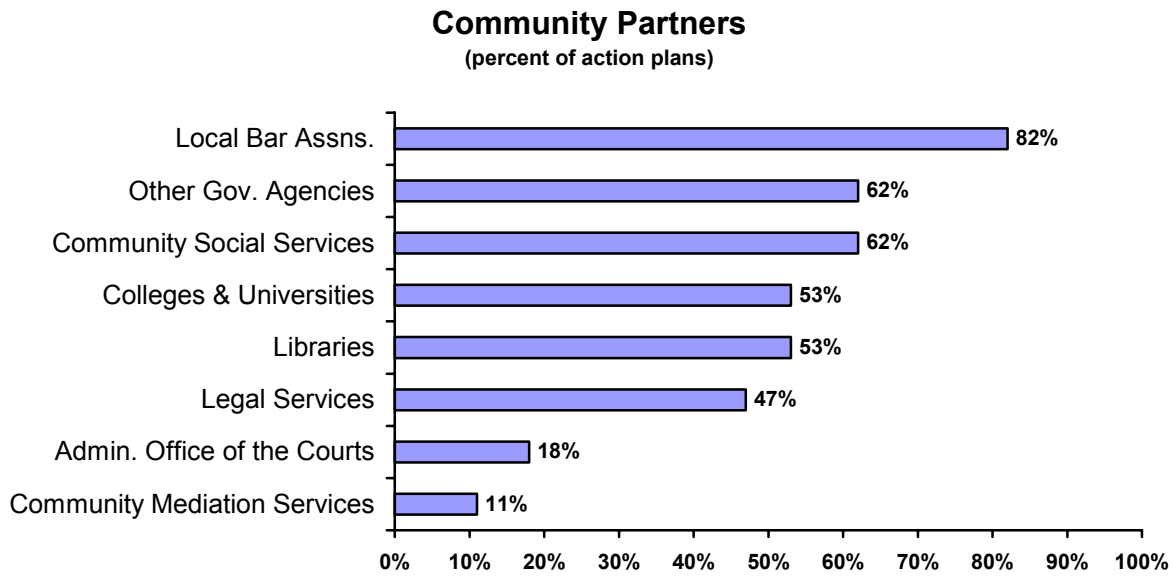
Partnerships between the court and other community service providers were pivotal to the development of these action plans. All the plans included multiple partners from both government and community in their planning process.

Other government agencies that were included were victim-witness programs, the Department of Child Support Services, district attorneys, public defenders, the Department of Social Services, boards of education, public health agencies, law enforcement agencies, a state hospital, departments of probation, and child care councils.

Examples of community social services and other community organizations that were included were churches, domestic violence services, chambers of commerce, the Rotary, Elks Clubs, Moose Lodges, vocational schools, neighborhood resource centers, senior citizen centers, parenting

programs, drug and alcohol programs, childcare centers, fair housing agencies, YWCA, fathers' support groups, the United Way, disability services, newspapers, and the Salvation Army.

College and university partners included both undergraduate programs and law schools. There were also several counties working with paralegal schools.



A few plans mentioned working with the California Administrative Office of the Courts as well as with the National Center for State Courts and courts from other counties.

The community participation in the planning process of the courts is noteworthy. Of the 45 courts that provided action plans, 35 had previously developed detailed community-focused strategic plans for their courts in which providing access to justice for self-represented litigants was cited as a high priority. Of the remaining ten courts, four included self-help centers with staff in their overall strategic plans, and four more included non-staffed self-help centers.

Collaboration with other government and community-based organizations has been central to most of the action plans. The first task in the Los Angeles County court's action plan, for example, was to coordinate the community-based services for self-represented litigants that were already operating at or around their numerous court locations.

Several of the partnerships that courts are crafting with schools, universities, and community centers involve translation of written instructions into several different languages. Some of the same organizations are serving as outposts for the courts where technological assistance (kiosks, etc.) can be located. Plans to use court staff or experts from local bar associations to train individuals in these locations frequently accompanies such proposals.

One of the main subjects of partnerships with local bar associations is limited-scope, or unbundled, legal representation. Bench/bar discussions about the realistic use of unbundling and the necessary

changes in local rules are frequently mentioned. Bench-bar groups are also reviewing local rules on other matters and working together to develop more pro bono services for the public. There are also proposals that include partnerships between the court and legal services to provide legal information and assistance to self-represented litigants.

In addition, partnerships with local newspapers and television and radio stations are mentioned as techniques to get general information about the court and news of available services out to the community.

Conclusion

To date, the courts in 52 of California's 58 counties have participated in the action planning for self-represented litigants. These 52 counties contain 98 percent of California's population of approximately 34 million people. Forty-five of the counties have already provided action plans; 7 are still in the planning process.

While the development of public access legal information and education through the creation of self-help centers remained the centerpiece of most local action plans, 71 percent moved beyond this first step to proposals for system changes designed to facilitate management of self-represented litigant cases.

DIRECT SERVICES TO SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS

Approximately 93 percent of these action plans are structured around staffed self-help centers under the supervision of attorneys. Support staff included paralegals, court clerks, law students and other community volunteers. Over 80 percent planned to expand the role of their family law facilitator to all aspects of family law and/or to other civil matters. In both litigant and judicial surveys where services were rated according to usefulness, staff available to answer questions ranked first in importance. Access to staff is frequently supported by the proposed use of telephone help lines, videoconferencing, fax and e-mail, and the use of self-help assistance vans.

Self-help-only types of technology such as written forms with instructions, interactive online forms programs, Web site information, kiosks, and telephone trees are frequently proposed. In some plans, these tools are used in outpost locations away from the court and are intended to be used by self-represented litigants without staff to answer questions. In others, technology is part of a more comprehensive plan in which these tools are used to augment and support the work of the self-represented litigants assistance staff.

SYSTEMS CHANGES

Reviews of local rules and forms, case management systems, and calendaring strategies were proposed. Some plans proposed the use of staff resources, particularly attorneys, in courtrooms to conduct settlement negotiations, answer procedural questions, and prepare written orders and judgments. Others proposed using attorney staff to review files prior to hearings and determine

their readiness to proceed. One plan proposed having staff conduct prehearing orientations for the public.

Plans included proposals for case management in which staff attorneys would conduct routine status conferences and settlement negotiations and assist litigants with completing the court process. Adjustments in calendaring, clustering of similar cases, staggering hearing times, and rational numbering of courtrooms were all proposed as well.

Facilities changes were also included, such as children's waiting rooms, other waiting areas for litigants, space in the courthouse for litigants to sit and work on their paperwork, the availability of copying machines and phones for litigants to use, extended hours of service, transportation to court, and easier parking.

COLLABORATION AND RESOURCES

Critical to all of the action plans were the partnerships formed with other government and community-based organizations. These partnerships were particularly useful in the planning stages. Some of the partnerships were also central to the implementation of action plans. For example, the participation of local bars with respect to unbundled legal services, pro bono representation, and volunteer services to pro se litigants was important to many plans. Collaboration with colleges, universities, and community centers for translation of materials into many languages was often reported. And working with libraries and other community agencies to create outpost assistance in more remote areas was also extremely important.

Collaboration also helped address the issue of funding, the main barrier to full implementation of all the local action plans. Finding the requisite resources to provide adequate staff for the projects is an ongoing challenge, particularly during the current budget crisis in California. Although one court suggested charging for self-represented litigant services on a sliding scale, most of the action plans reported their dependence on grant funding from various government sources.

In conclusion, the courts in California have gained a tremendous amount of information about the optimal direction for pro se matters from two important sources: the family law facilitator program and the community-focused strategic planning process. The family law facilitator program pioneered court-operated self-help on a mass scale in the state. The court-community focused strategic planning process initiated ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the courts and their communities. The current action planning process has brought these two efforts together to create plans that reflect a comprehensive view of the justice system as it relates to self-represented litigants.

APPENDIX A

Action Plan Summary Chart

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Butte, Glen, Tehema	• Community Collaborations	Use Existing Resources Seek ADR Resources Outreach to churches, etc Research "Family Unity" system			In General: Schools Libraries DCSS Family Law Facilitator Legal Services Small Claims Advisory Parent Education Network Lawyer Referral Service
	• System Changes to make more "user-friendly"	Public transportation Jail services Electronic access Phone & email help Signage Children & other waiting rooms Handwritten pleadings Free consultations On-duty judge for orders Uniform rules & forms Social work training for court staff			
	• Provide Successful models of service delivery	Network with other counties Kiosk system DV Support Person Mobil Van Forms on court's website Incentive for attorneys (calendar preference)			
	• Technology & Education	Library Resources Computer programs-language Law School Library Services Outreach To High schools 24 hr. phone line	Chico State	Students	Schools, Libraries
	• Meet Access needs of diverse population	Self-Help Center Internet, I-CAN, local website, Copying, attorney referrals, Out-station locations	Courthouse Community	Attorney Coordinator	Self-Help Assistance Regional Project (SHARP) (Butte, Glen Tehama)*

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Calaveras, Amador	• Family Law Focus • SRL Education • Expansion of Resources and services for SRLs • Development of infrastructure to support SRL services	Self-help publications; on-line help; education programs, videos, staff assistance to answer questions. SHC in new facility; resource for supervised visitation program; case mgmt & tracking in family law; expanding presentations; use of other technology; develop a community hotline Court Community Action Planning Team	New facility	Family Law Facilitator Family Court Services	Bar Association Legal Services of No, Calif. Calaveras Legal Assistance Service
Colusa	• Extend Family Law Facilitator	Make position full time	Courthouse	Attorney	Judicial Council
	• Enhance Pro Bono Services	Promote Unbundling		Attorney	State & Local Bars
	• Public Information – Website	Court Website			Judicial Council
Contra Costa	• Court Access & Customer Relations	Transportation to court Mobile services- FLF, hearings, filings, computers Maps & signage Children's waiting rooms SRL work areas – kiosks Interpreter service info.	Courthouses Libraries Bus. Ctrs. Senior Ctrs. Schools Clubs Colleges	Coordinator/ Facilitator	Local Bar Legal Services Prison Law Office Sr. Legal Services Bay Area Legal La Raza Centro Friends Outside STAND Sr. Communitiess
	• Technology & Forms	I-CAN/ San Mateo Resource Information online Flowcharts Videos Forms access Links to other webs Education – court decorum Simplify rule CCTV	(same)		PD & DA DCSS Law Enforcement Board of Ed./ Com. Col. Dist St. Mary's & JFK Social Services

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Self-Help Resources	Self-Help Centers Written materials Workshops Videos Extended hours Video-conferencing Internet, computers, Copying	Each court Jails Libraries DCSS Bar. Assn		Above, plus: Small Claims Nat'l Center for Youth Law Family Law Facilitator ADR Legal Services for Children\ Elks, Moose Families First Ctr. For Law and the Deaf
	• Community Outreach & Education	Town Meeting	Community Locations		Above plus: Dependency Mediation
	• Case Management	Fast track: family law (not cc/cv); Probate guard, juvenile, Conservatorships, and limited civil; Differential Assessment; ADR			
El Dorado	• Educating SRLs	Computer workstations Street Law Program	Volunteer attorneys	Placerville Lake Tahoe	Private Bar
	• Expansion of Services to SRLs	Expansion of Family Law Facilitators; allow FLF to do non-AB1058 family law and other civil litigation assistance – also have bi-lingual staff at So. Lake Tahoe	FLF attorneys	Placerville Lake Tahoe	
	• Expansion of Family Law Facilitator				

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Fresno	• Self-Help Center (Spanish model)	Self-Help Center – multiple languages Simplified forms & instructions Public service announcements	Near the Family Law Facilitator	Paralegal; Community Resource Mgr.	Legal Services Local Bar
	• Mobile Access Unit	Hire permanent staff		Volunteers Attorneys	
	• Staff Training •	"Train the Trainers" (all court supervisors); Add SRL training to new judge and new employee training			
	• Technology	Website; kiosks; Internet; protocol database			Local Bar
	• Unbundling	Adopt rules & forms; Focus on family law pilot			
Inyo	• SRL Education	Self-Help publications; Written & online instructions; Videos; assistance from staff, educational programs			
	• Expansion of services & resources for SRLs	Videoconferencing; Computer & Software; Internet	Tecopa Community Center/Sm. Claims Advr		TCC
	• Expansion of Family Law Facilitator	Fulltime position; expand to cover custody/visitation & guardianship; Facilitate compliance w/orders	Courthouse	Family Law Facilitator	
Imperial	• Increased SRLs assistance • Assistance with matter not handled by SHC • Improve physical access	Self-Help Center – pamphlets; computers English/Spanish informational brochures into the community Website Provide transportation to services	Courthouse Pamphlets – law library	Family Law Facilitator Court staff Court staff	Bar Association – including San Diego Bar State Bar, AOC, other courts NCSC; AOC, other courts Salvation Army; Dial-a-Ride; Catholic Charities, ARC

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Kern	• Probate Assistance	Guardianship & Sm. Estates Written information; Document review; Easy Reference Cards Spanish service	Courthouse-Bakersfield	Legal Assistant	
Lake	• Educating SRLs • Expand Services	Expand FLF	Courthouse	Attorneys Paralegals	P.D ADR Program
Lassen	• Assist SRLs • Educate the Public about the Court • Network with community agencies	Assist with adoption; custody/visitation; TROs; Conservatorships;Guardianships; Probate; Landlord Tenant; Civil Harassment; Appeals, Civil, Juvenile & Traffic Education materials, books, videos, packets, brochures, computer resources Same as above – written materials; staff to answer questions	Law Library; Courthouse	Family Law Facilitator, Volunteer Attorneys, Small Claims Advisor; Court Staff	Law Library Board Local Attorneys
Los Angeles	• All Areas - multiple locations	(Volume Data: New SRL Filings 282,006/yr)	Central Family Central Civil, East LA, Pomona Citrus, Rio Hondo, Antelope Valley/ Palmdale/Lancaster, Glendale, Burbank, Pasadena, Alhambra, Santa Anita, San Fernando, Newhall/Santa Clarita, Van Nuys, Long Beach, San Pedro, Compton, Norwalk, Downey, Los Cerritos, Whittier Huntington Park, South Gate, Torrance/So. Bay, Inglewood, Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, West LA/Airport, Culver City, Malibu		Courthouses: LAFLA Barristers DV Project Guard. Vol. Project LAF-Long Beach Comm. Legal Services Jenesse Center Sm. Claims Advr. LA Housing Project FLF/FLIC Community Legal Services Law Schools Local Bars

SRL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Marin	• Self-Help Center: • Bi-lingual triage • Telephone assistance • Children's waiting area • Computer workstations • Videos • Meeting rooms • Referrals to attorneys • Unbundling • Clinics • Resource lists • Fax • Probation – restorative justice	Self-Help Center --- central point of entry	Courthouse-San Rafael	Attorney Coordinator Volunteer Attorneys Paralegals Interpreters Probation	Legal Services Law Libraries Mediation Services Social Services Public Guardian Community Organizations: Canal Comm. Alliance; Latino Council PD Health & Human Services Probation
Mariposa	• Establish a DV Court • Mobile SHC Unit • Develop SHC	Study & develop proposal for a DV Court Purchase van in conjunction with other counties Computers, printers, video, instructional tapes; written materials, develop feedback questionnaires	Courthouse Courthouse	Judicial officer To be determined	Other county courts
Mendocino	• Self-Help Center	Community resource manual, ADR services, Information & referral, bilingual written materials, bilingual videos, kiosks, online assistance, computers; typewriters	Courthouse	Attorneys Volunteers	Local Bar AOC Day Care Provider Volunteers
	• Public Education	Teaching process by case type, video – guide to ct. procedures, pre-hearing clinics, bilingual forms packets			
	• Judicial Officer & Staff Education	Judicial training, pro tem training, clerk training, volunteer trainings			
	• Bilingual Staff	Bilingual attorney & staff Extended hours for filing			
	• Navigation & Court Locations	Directions, signage Court information booth			

SRL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Mono	• On-site consultation with Spanish-speaking paralegal • SRL information on website • On-site computers so SRLs can use internet • Community outreach				Local Bar Paralegals Spanish Interpreters\ Web Consultant
Monterey/ San Benito/ Santa Cruz	• Expanding Available Services	SRL Services	Community	CBO Provider	County Bar Associations AOC – Regional Office Volunteer attorneys Other volunteers DCSS Family Law Facilitators Law Libraries Law Schools Law School Intern Programs
		Hire a Pilot SHC Coordinator		Court staff – nos	
		Extend ESL services to Watsonville; expand civil assistance		Language Line	
		Extend hours of service – research possible locations, link SHC to Family Law Facilitator and extending hours	Family Law Facilitators?		
		Mobile van program - Get information from other courts			
	• Technology	Website; kiosks; I-Can; other software/TurboTax			
	• Education	Outreach clinics; workshops			
	• Informational Materials	Forms w/instructions/flowcharts; English/Spanish brochures			
	• Partnerships	Develop volunteer participation			

SRL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Napa	• Expand Family Law Services	Expanded Family Law Center	Courthouse	Family Law Facilitator	Local Bar Probation Legal Services Law Enforcement H&H Services Dept. Ed. Schools Colleges PD & DA Library State Hosp.
	• General Self-Help Center	Self-Help Center – Materials & referrals Information Center	Courthouse	Attorney Sr. clerk (Spanish)	
	• General Public Information				
	• Technology	Video production/purchase			
	• Court outposts	Remote Center: UD, Fam. Law; Sm. Claims	Calistoga; Am. Canyon		
Orange	• Court Rules, Procedures, Forms & Case Scheduling	Judicial training (clarity of orders) Easy access to minute orders Simplify rules & procedures Stagger hearing times Unbundling			
	• Education & Use of Volunteers	Comm. Resource Guidebook Volunteer interpreters Self-help videos/materials to -Comm. Centers		Volunteers	Whittier Law School
	• Facilities & Expanded Services	Self-Help Centers Information counters Fact sheets of FAQs Re-number courtrooms rationally Regional traffic ticket centers	All courts		
		Mobile van Online services Accept handwritten forms		Attorneys Volunteers or Staff	
	• Technology	I-CAN Other kiosk info (“how to”) e-filing Easy access to case information Create interactive forms		Volunteers	

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Riverside	• Information to Public	Resource Guide Informational brochures; videos Workshops Public Information Booths Interpreters for Translations	Courthouse Law libraries	Attorney	Gov. Agencies Local Bar Law Libraries Faith Community Community Social Services
	• Expand Available Legal Services	Unbundling Calendar priority to pro bono attorneys Incentive for pro bono attorneys Local bar to adopt a 50-hour requirement Publicize low-cost legal services		Attorneys	
	• Regional SH Centers	Technology available		none	
	• Collaboration & Community Outreach	Court speakers bureau Provide information to jurors about low-cost legal services Establish Court Resource Development office to seek grant opportunities		All court staff	
	• Technology	Website, kiosks – I-CAN e-filing video-conferencing-hearings	Law libraries, shelters, community locations	none	
	• Transportation & Parking	Coordinate court times with bus schedules Expand time & signage on parking meters Security for DV victims Translate signage on parking meters Increase parking signage			
	• Training	Training staff, bench, protems, law libraries, agencies Publicize CJER materials Ask CJER for more training tapes on line			

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Sacramento	• Court/Community Liaison Program	Meet with SRL – in community prior to court Accompany to clinics Help with Technology – I-CAN, etc. Assist attaching to services Evaluate litigant's experiences	CBO staff-by contract		Gov. agencies CBOs Info Line VLSP
	• Community Based Court Service Centers	3 Centers + mobile unit Computers, Internet; I-CAN; e-filing Videoconferencing/hearings	Sr. Clerks; volunteer staff		
San Bernardino	• Community Outreach & Collaboration	Unbundling Information & referral Kiosk/computer forms	Law Libraries	Volunteers	Schools, service clubs, libraries, CBOs, churches, Legal Services, Chamber of Commerce, Local Bars
	• Family Law Resources	Expand Family Law Facilitator for non-AB1058 FL; DV assistance by FLF	Courthouse	Attorneys	Legal Services DV Services
	• Language Access	Translate materials into Spanish & Vietnamese	Community		Schools, service clubs, libraries, CBOs, churches, Legal Services, Chamber of Commerce Local Bars
	• Court User Information & Assistance	Written instructions, website, juror information: Put in kiosks - remote sites	Courthouses		
	• Public interface at Courts	Information booths, signage, materials – flowcharts, maps, resource directories; computers	Courthouses		
	• Training	Sensitivity, customer service, judges, court staff Ed. about court for public	Libraries		
	• Regional Self-Help Centers	Instruction packets; child care; parking assistance	Regional Locations		
	• Publicity	Website; press releases, flyers, videos			

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
San Diego	• Inventory of Legal Resources	Legal & social services - directory	Countywide		United Way Inform SD Law Library
	• Self-Help Centers & Clinics	Expand Existing Services CH Clinic UD Clinic DV Clinic Family Law Facilitator Case Management	Courthouses & Community (library)	Attorneys Paralegals IT Staff	
	• Technology	I-CAN; On-Line Disso; e-filing sm.claims			Legal Services Libraries Local Bars State Bar
	• Unbundling			Attorney	Local Bar
	• Funding	Research and collaborative funding			Legal Services, non-profits, libraries
San Francisco	• Multi-Language/Multi-cultural Service Center	Spanish; Cantonese, Vietnamese, Russian, Tagalog SRL services; I-CAN kiosks, SHC, Information Center	Courthouse Community Centers	Attorneys staff	VLSC Cooperative Restraining Order Clinic Bay Area Legal Services Law Library Hastings Law School; SF Bar Assn.
San Joaquin	• Self-Help Center	Expand Family Law Facilitator Computers, written materials Expand to Manteca location	Courthouse	Attorney	
	• Technology	Website Video-conferencing	Courthouses, Community		Other Central Valley Courts; Dual Vocation Institute
	• Language Access	Language Line			Others: FL Cntr. in Manteca Libraries Universities Women's Centers
	• Written Materials	Expand information packets			
	• Signage	Multi-lingual signage			

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Advertising	Outreach in local newspapers Directory of Services Phone book			Catholic Charities Sr. Centers
	• Public Education	Videos, phone access Court-Community Leadership & Liaison Academy			
	• Court Staff	Training			
San Louis Obispo	• Expand FLF • Mediation Services • Small Claims Advisor • Self-Help Library • Reception Center • Implement Clinics • Resource Brochure • Video Series • New SHC	Community Law Night		attorney attorney clerks staff attorneys attorneys/ paralegals	Gov. Agencies Community Mediation Local Bar Local Colleges & Universities Newspapers Cable TV
San Mateo	• Self-Help Resources	Centralized Service Center Mobile unit Kiosks Video viewing Written materials – multi-lingual Public education	Courthouses (or near) In Community		Non-profits Local Bars Libraries Universities Law Schools
	• Access to Services	Computers, copiers, handouts, maps, Courtroom assistance Interpreter services Social service referrals – streamlined intake; ADR referrals			
		Pro bono Programs Law Student volunteers at court		Volunteers	
	• Technology	Expand Interactive Forms Program Enhancement website			
	• Collaboration	Staff training – on available resources Develop a communication plan			

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Santa Barbara	• Public Information/ Education	Informational packets & brochures; expand court's website; public information programs on rules, procedures, forms, options; referral lists Better signage at courthouse			Bar Assn Bar Foundation Board of Supervisors Small Claims Advisor SB Community Mediation Program
	• SRL Resource Center	Tables, chairs, staff to answer questions, reference materials in Spanish & English, videotape library		Volunteer attorneys, paralegals, secretaries, court staff	
	• Language Assistance	I-CAN kiosks; San Mateo SH website; interrupter availability I courtrooms;			
	• Court Rules & Procedures	Review & simplify			
	• Training	More training for court staff—develop a full curriculum		Volunteer Attorney	
	• ADR	Expand to Family Law			
	• Collaboration with the Bar	Unbundling; more mediation services work with DA on UPL issues			
	• Criminal/Traffic	Electronic trials by declaration, requests for continuances, extensions of time, etc.			
Santa Clara	• Coordinate Information Booths Forms instructions	Phone service FAQ brochures Website & interactive forms	Courthouse, Mobile Unit Community Volunteers	Attorneys	Legal Services AOC Neighborhood Resource Centers Sr. Citizen Centers Schools Law Schools Paralegal Schools Libraries Religious/Ethnic Orgs

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Enhance Volunteer Services	Staffing Info. Booths Attorneys for SH Center			
	• Self-Service Center & Mobile Unit	Centralized SH Center + mobile van Individual legal information Web access, forms & handouts Workshops	Court & Mobile Unit Community	Volunteers	
	• Language Access	Translation of Written Materials			
	• Staff Training	Volunteers, ct. staff			
	• Community Outreach	Training & written information to community "experts" regularly in strategic limited subjects	Community	Volunteers	
Shasta	• Adjustment To Court Procedures	Review FL Court Files Expand ADR Generate more timely OAH procedures Review & Enhance training for Pro Tems in UDs	Courthouse	Staff	S.M.A.R.T.\Family Law Committee – Local Bar, Women's Refuge DCSS, Legal Services of No. CA, Senior Legal Services Above plus: HelpLine, Inc. VLSC, No. Valley Catholic Social Services Law Library, Redding Rancheria Shasta College, Simpson College, Chico State University, Student Day Care Assistance, Kids Turn, Cooperating as Separating Parents
	• Increase Low Cost Legal Assistance	Expand Family Law Facilitator Increase Volunteer Services at Women's Refuge Unbundling for private attorneys	Courthouse Community	Attorneys Volunteers Attorneys	
	• Increase Community Collaboration	Develop additional collaborations			
	• Establish a full-service SHC	Needs assessment; forms w/instructions; space for Family Law Facilitator; video information; information desk	Courthouse	Family Law Facilitator	

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Technology	Kiosks; enhance website; video-conferencing ability; computers	Courthouse Law Libraries		Program All above plus: Shasta Drug & Alcohol Program
Siskiyou	• Expand Family Law Facilitator – SRL Assistance to Public	Video-conferencing – outlying branches Front-end services to SRLs – doing a current needs assessment - SHC Refurbish computers for SHC Expanding SHC Hours; Community education Programs – videos MCLE program. – unbundling/ADR	Courthouse	Family Law Facilitator	Bar Assn.; Legal Secretaries Assoc.
		Children's Waiting Room	Courthouse		Family Interagency Service Council Siskiyou County Child Care Council
		ADR directory			County Law Library
		Recycling court files for pro per use		Court clerks	
		Public TV for educational materials – DV restraining orders for petitioners & respondents			Yreka – Channel 4
Solano	• Language Access	Translate written materials		Community volunteers	Community orgs.
	• Community Collaborations	Develop coordinated referral networks			Universities Community orgs Non-Profits

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Increase SRL services	Expand Family Law Facilitator – non-FL civil, Unbundling		Family Law Facilitator Private Attorney	Local Bar Legal Services
	• Simplify court processes & forms				
Sonoma	• Getting the word out	Ongoing service provider network Proactive exchange of information Public forums – career/employment fairs Education programs Recruitment – volunteers, interns	Courthouse community locations		CA Indian Legal Services California Parenting Institute CRLA Council on Aging DCSS Dads Make A Difference Disability Law Clinic Fair Housing of Sonoma FCS Friends Outside Grandparents Parenting…Again No. Bay Regional Center Petaluma People Service Center Recourse Mediation Services Sonoma Bar Assn Sonoma County Human Services Legal Aid Legal Services Foundation Sheriff Victim/Witness Sonoma State YWCA
	• Collaborations	Centralized services; Mobile community forum; Website services; "211" Information Line Services Collaborative in-service trainings; Commission on Community Resources			
	• Internet Connections	Centralized database; kiosks w/legal processes information; community access information – Cable TV; website links; public service segments/press releases			
	• Getting Legal Representation	Providing education to Bar, judges, community; Ongoing comprehensive training: community clinics, mentoring programs, PSAs			

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Public Education	Annual service providers forum, Public forums – fairs; Information Hub; Intra-agency intra-departmental "Ride alongs", expanded hours SHAC			
	• Continuous Improvement	Monitoring of grant opportunities; expanded ADR and CASA; task force development			
Stanislaus	• Language Access in all areas	Language Line – bi-lingual staff-additional interpreters	Courthouse & community locations		CRLA Disability Resources (DRAIL) Stanislaus BHC Modesto Bee Dept. of Education Curbside News United Way Kinship Center Children's Coordinating Council DV Coordinating Council
	• Getting the Word Out	Legal Hotline; signage; brochures; outreach to schools, migrant education, head start, other community locations; service provider network, centralized resource and referral; touch screen computers w/ telephone help at the courthouse, Law Library, Community Service Agency			
	• Collaborations	Resource Fairs; Senior Information Days; STOAAC monthly meetings; meetings; in-service trainings; customer surveys; mentor & support groups; multi-cultural committee			Law Library; other libraries; DCSS; victim-witness; all other collaborations
	• Internet Connections	Standardized platform uniform reporting system countywide; accessibility & simplicity of information; instruction & education; public & private access; FAQs on website; user-friendly process & language			Same as above
	• Getting Legal Representation	Legal information at high school level; collaboration with non-profits for education; leadership training for community leaders			Existing collaborations

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
	• Increasing Understanding of the Courts and Service Providers	More free legal advice & information via SHC; information materials at clerks counters; conflict mgmt/resolution training available to all agencies; court directory of all services; website expansion			Add: VAWA Immigrant Refugee Program; Catholic Charities; Lions, Rotary, community cultural centers
Sutter	• Establish 3-year pilot SHC	Written materials in English and Spanish; research Sikh and Hmong interpreters	Books & pamphlets Workshops – subject matter like the Family Law Facilitator/Family Law Information Center; Videotape presentations	Courthouse or nearby – share space with the Family Law Facilitator Attorney, 2 clerical support; volunteer attorneys (1 bilingual staff)	Local Bar Assn
	• Charge people earning over $20K per year a fee – sliding scale up to $25/hr				

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Tulare	• Purchase of Computer Equipment • Purchase external CD-ROMs for computers in Family Law Facilitator's Office • Develop general courthouse brochure	4 computers/printers	Central & outlying courts	Family Law Facilitators	CRLA Small Claims Advisor\Law Library DV advocates College of Sequoias Paralegal program Tulare Office of Education C-SET job training
Tuolumne	• Coordinating Resources	Resource directory Training for other agencies Expand Family Law Facilitator Videos Workshops Written materials		Family Law Facilitator	Local Bar CPS Non-Profits Libraries DCSS Law Schools
	• Legal Advice	Legal aid to referrals from participating agencies	Courthouse	Contract Attorney	
	• Technology	Donated computers, printers, software video equipment, enhance website; online assistance			
	• Public Education	Workshops, videos clinics (eve/wkds)		Law student interns	

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Ventura	• Improve staffing & staff education • Public education & outreach • Technology • SRL helpful policies & procedures • Language access • Community collaborations	Expand current programs: Self-Help & Family Law Facilitators	Courthouse Community – Mobile Van	Attorneys Court clerks	Churches Schools Libraries Non-profits Health care Colleges
Yolo	• Public Access Desk	PAD: forms, instructions, nolo books, translations, computers, forms software	Main Courthouse		Law Schools
	• Expand Family Law Facilitator	Fulltime Position	2 courthouses		
	• Monthly Clinic Program	Instruction on how to file matters in court To be videotape and available at PAD	8/yr – outlying areas		
	• Traveling Court	Traffic, small claims – hearings			Community Orgs.
	• Mandatory Small Claims Mediation	Mediation program			Local Bar
	• Public Information	Information – 3 languages Website\brochures Public media			Newspapers, Cable TV; Community Orgs.

RL ACTION PLANS 2002 - Detail

COUNTY	Program Areas:	Plan:	Location(s):	Staffing	Partners:
Yuba	• Increasing Community Resources	Create handouts of local resources; create library of local resources	Courthouse & courthouse annex		
	• Improve Legal Information Assistance	Create information assistance; create family law brochure; create brochures for child support and domestic violence			
	• Funding	Apply for grants			
	• Operations	Extend FCS days	Courthouse		
	• Technology	SHC computers available	Courthouse		
	• Public Education	Handouts re: educational resources	Courthouse & Law Library		