South Carolina Legal Services

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LSC Performance Criteria Review

When the LSC Performance Criteria and the ABA Standards were introduced in draft format, South Carolina Legal Services (SCLS) undertook a self-evaluation review, and compared the Performance Criteria and ABA Standards with the SCLS operations. The process began in the early Spring of 2006. Below is the processed we followed:

- The LSC Performance Criteria was discussed with managing attorneys and members of administration at an in-person meeting.

- LSC Performance Criteria and the ABA standards were sent to all staff.

- Staff committees were appointed for each of the LSC Performance Areas.

It was the collective job of each Performance Area Committee to review their LSC Performance Criteria and the ABA Standards, and to show how SCLS was meeting the criteria and standards.

Committee members included representatives from:

- Large and small offices
- All former programs (programs prior to the merger)
- All areas of the state
- Members of management
- Other employees were invited to volunteer for committees

Committee Process:

- Sub-committees (working groups) formed within each of the larger committees and met by video-conferencing or in-person
- Working groups reviewed the LSC performance criteria, ABA standards, and the SCLS policies.
- Where the workgroups perceived deficiencies, a recommendation was made as to a policy.
- Full committees met to review the information of subcommittees and consider the draft policies.

- Review

  - Managing attorneys reviewed the criteria and standards and the proposed new policies.
  - Proposed new policies were submitted to all staff for input.
  - Full Performance Criteria Committees met to consider input from managing attorneys and staff.
  - Two-day meeting held by members of administration, chairs of the Performance Area committees, and members of the SCLS Procedures Committee to finalize new policies.
  - New policies were reviewed with staff at meetings in every office. A member of management was present to assist in the explanation of the policies.
  - Policy and Procedures manual was revised/ restructured to include the new policies.
  - Reviewed by SCLS Board.

- Benefits of Using the Criteria to Review SCLS Policies and Procedures

  - Committee process was a way for staff to get to know each other
  - Organized way for assessment of our existing policies and procedures
  - Standardized the procedures for offices
  - Served as self-evaluation
  - Having gone through process made it easier to write LSC grant
  - Easier to prepare for the LSC OPP assessment visit
    - Teams consisting of administration, managing attorneys, and unit heads were formed to compare the performance criteria.
    - Teams drafted responses to the Performance Criteria Areas of Inquiry.
    - Draft responses compiled into a single draft report.
    - Draft report sent to administration, managing attorneys, and unit heads for accuracy review and comments.
    - Comments incorporated into report and sent to all staff for review.
    - Report sent to LSC prior to OPP visit.
  - Document used by the Board as a guide for its general responsibilities and also to guide specific responsibilities of committee.

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Below is the grid that was used by Performance Criteria Area Two. The workgroups (subcommittees) within Performance Area Two were LEP, SCLS Policy & Procedure Manual, Intake, Facilities, and Client Involvement & Communication. The composition of the Performance Criteria Area 2 Committee was: 2 Managing Attorneys in addition to the Managing Attorney of the statewide Intake Office; Senior Staff Attorney; Unit Head; LEP Attorney; Paralegal; 2 Office Managers; Receptionist (Spanish fluency); Deputy Director of Access & Development; the IT Administrator; and Grants & Compliance Administrator.

Cite to LSC Performance Criteria & Specific Language	Cite to Applicable ABA Standards	Cite to SCCEJ Policy showing how we meet this Criteria / Standards	Perceived deficiencies in SCCEJ Policy	Proposed changes to SCCEJ Policy to insure Criteria and Standards are met	Working groups**: LEP; Intake; Policies & Procedure; Facilities; Client Involvement and Communications
AREAS OF INQUIRY (1)					
Does the intake policy and procedure reflect a concern for the client's needs?	4.1 (intake)	Procedure manual p.27 (confidentiality); p.130 (respect and dignity); 144-48 (client communication); p. 128 (retainer); p.118 (general policy from intake to closure); Intake Playbook (generally); Language Access Policy p. 1-7	None	None	Intake LEP
Are office hours convenient, including for those who work, such as being available during lunch or in the evening?	2.3 (uniform access) 4.1 (intake) 4.5 (access)	Personnel Manual p. 21-23 (office routines and procedures); Procedure Manual, p. 116 (requirement to exceed 40 hour work week when necessary); Intake Playbook, p. 1	Friday office hours policy is vague and differs from office to office Lunch policy is not uniformly applied some offices are closed for lunch Not all offices have evening hours	Amend Friday office hours policy and include in Procedure Manual in addition to Personnel; Include language about office hours of operation, including extended evening hours. Lunch policy to be inserted in Procedure Manual and enforced. Evening hours policy to be revised, included in Procedure Manual, enforced.	Facilities P&P
Are educational materials available in the waiting rooms?		Procedure Manual p. 35-36 (Housekeeping)	SCCEJ Policy does not address this	Insert provision requiring waiting rooms to be stocked with current educational materials and outdated materials to be discarded / recycled (they are already in practice); also items for entertainment of children who maybe present?	Facilities