

Working Together: Legal Hotlines, Pro Bono, and the Bar

Amanda Hartmann, Managing Staff Attorney,
Lawyer Referral for the Elderly Program Albuquerque, NM
505-797-6053 ahartmann@nmbar

Brief Description:

Legal Hotlines and the private bar work together to benefit both clients and attorneys. The panelists discuss how a hotline program can cultivate and maintain a vibrant relationship with the state bar association to yield an effective pro bono network. Experienced hotlines describe their variable-fee referral panels which provide financial support for hotline operations. A private attorney member of a hotline referral panel gives his view on this partnership. Panelists provide information on using bar association resources for pro bono case placement, recruitment, education and development of programs.

Topical Outline: Relationship with New Mexico Bar Association

- I. Introduction
 - a. Nature of NM seniors and cases often seen
 - b. A brief history of Lawyer Referral for the Elderly Program (LREP) in New Mexico
 - c. From regional hotline to statewide legal service
 - d. AoA funding comes to NM and the state bar

- II. How LREP works
 - a. Intakes statewide anyone over 55 who is NM resident
 - b. Hotline attorneys as the first line of assistance
 - c. LREP referral department – linking to private attorneys
 - i. Part time paralegal
 - ii. Fax, phone, e-mail and letters

- III. Private attorneys and what they do for LREP
 - a. Types of referrals: pro bono, reduced fee and full fee
 - i. Cases by type
 - ii. Pro bono and consultations
 - iii. Reduced fee (workshops, consumer issues esp. mobile homes)
 - iv. Full fee (estate planning, lawsuits, contract and probate)
 - b. Workshops and clinics
 - c. Rural Outreach program attorneys
 - i. Increasing assistance
 - ii. Recruiting local attorneys

- IV. Increasing Attorney participation
 - a. Outreach
 - i. Advertisements in bar bulletin
 - b. Contract pilot program
 - i. Rural areas
 - ii. Building name recognition
 - iii. Part time
 - c. Rewarding/recognizing participating attorneys
 - i. Publications
 - ii. Recognition (paperweights)
 - iii. Case referral preferences
 - d. Other awards –legislative, state bar awards

- V. Growing the program
 - a. Working with other legal service providers
 - b. Working with other bars and associations (CD workshops)
 - c. Working with other providers (ombudsman, NHLTF, ALTSD)
 - d. Working with other government agencies, Law School, Equal Access to justice, etc.

- VI. Stats revisited
 - a. Intakes
 - b. Pro bono referrals
 - c. Full fee referrals
 - d. Some interesting cases LREP has found attorneys to help with
 - i. Mobile homes
 - ii. Blind woman whose son sold her house and put new condo on wife's name
 - iii. Nursing home litigation – qui tam case