

Performance Review Summary



“In ten years of reviewing programs, we have not seen a program that achieves a greater impact per dollar than RHLS does.”

In 2011, The Resource for Great Programs, Inc., conducted a review of the Regional Housing Legal Services (RHLS) for the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, Inc. (PLAN). The review found that RHLS excels in the following areas:

Strong outcomes. RHLS has achieved significant dollar benefits for clients and communities that greatly exceed the investment by funders. Over the years, it has spearheaded the construction or preservation of projects that year after year provide safe, decent, affordable housing for scores of thousands of families. It has created new public initiatives and achieved institutional and legal changes that remove barriers and promote fairness in housing for low-income people across the state.

An experienced, innovative staff. The leaders and core staff of RHLS are widely known for effectiveness as catalysts for expansion of affordable housing and strong communities across Pennsylvania.

A clear strategic vision, strengthened by investment of time and resources in a strategic planning and priority setting process in 2008-10.

A good mix of service strategies including representation of community groups, legislative and administrative advocacy and web-based legal assistance.

An entrepreneurial resource development and service delivery approach. A hallmark of RHLS has been an exceptional capacity for using collaboration with other players to leverage vast amounts of investment from both the private and public sectors for joint projects aligned with the missions of all partners.

Regional Housing Legal

Services is a nonprofit law firm with unique expertise in affordable, sustainable housing and its related components — community and economic development, utility matters and preservation of home ownership. RHLS provides innovative project and policy solutions that help create sustainable communities offering decent, safe and affordable housing for lower-income Pennsylvanians. RHLS has been involved in projects with financing of over \$750,000,000.

Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network, Inc. (PLAN) is a client-centered organization that provides leadership, funding, and support to improve the availability and quality of civil legal aid and direct legal services for low income people and victims of domestic violence in Pennsylvania.

The Resource for Great Programs, Inc., is a national organization dedicated to providing strategic support to networks of community based organizations, including legal services programs. Areas of review include:

- Quality of legal services provided
- Identifying and addressing legal needs of low-income people
- Collaboration, integration and community involvement
- Leadership systems
- Staff development
- Stewardship and resource development

“RHLS appears to have played a central role in the successful effort to get federal money for legal assistance by PLAN programs addressing the mortgage foreclosure crisis.”

Qualitative Desk Review Summary for Regional Housing Legal Services

Exceptional:

Outcomes produced for clients	★
Needs assessment	★
Mix of service strategies	★
Collaboration with other community players	★
Integration in regional/statewide legal services delivery systems	★
Mission and vision	★
Board participation	★
Peer leadership	★
Innovation and promotion of “best practice” models	★
Program articulates a clear vision as to how its strategies relate to its mission	★
Program effectively retains capable, experience staff	★
Program strives to address identified needs	★

Key:

- ★ Exceptional
- ❖ Aligned with Standards of Good Practice

Aligned with the Standards of Good Practice:

Efforts to promote diversity	❖
Program capacity and resources	❖
Quality control systems	❖
Program treats clients with dignity, sensitivity, and respect and is culturally competent	❖
Program operates in a way that facilitates access to its services	❖
Clients are highly satisfied with the program	❖



“A success has been RHLS’ partnerships with regional programs leading to development or preservation of affordable housing for low-income people around the state.”



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