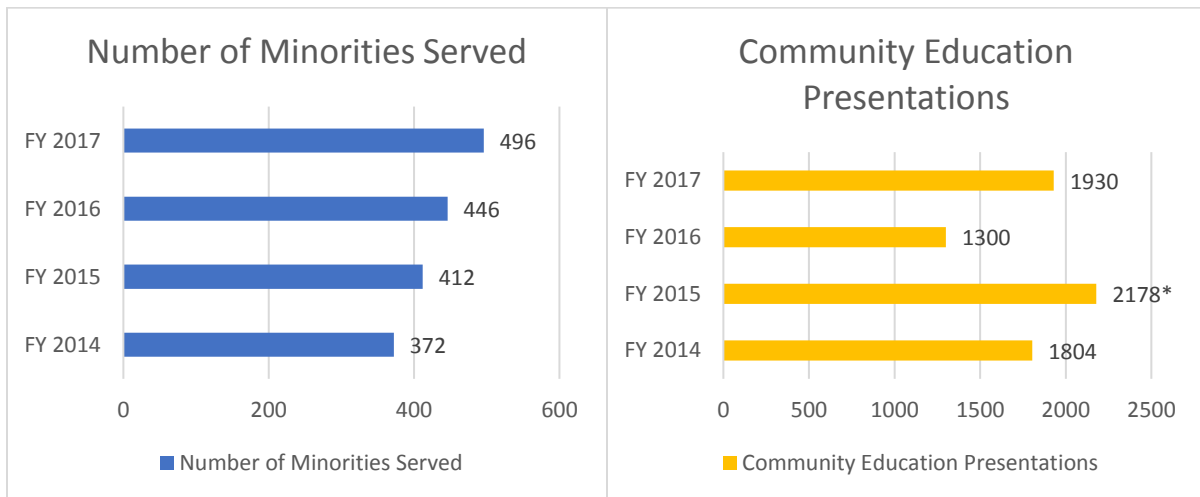
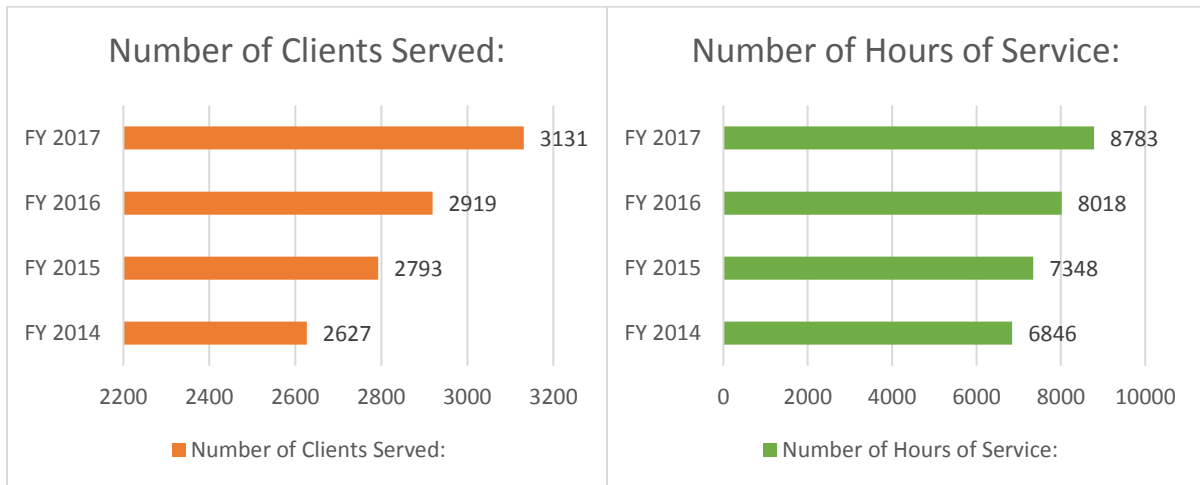


**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
STATE UNIT ON AGING
FY 2017 ANNUAL REPORT ON LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017**

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY REPORT



*Increase was due to additional grant funds for outreach

Top Case Types in FY 2017: Advance Directives, Wills and Estates, Consumer/Finance, Housing, Health and Family

Monetary Impact: FY 2017 – Savings of **\$1,537,025** in legal fees to Nebraskans age 60 and over (8,783 hours x \$175/hour rate for legal services providers). In addition, money was saved for older Nebraskans on some individual cases.

FY 2016 – Savings of \$1,403,150 in legal fees to Nebraskans age 60 and over.

Legal Services Providers reported several “Good stories” including elder abuse and financial exploitation cases that are outlined in the full report.

Extended Representation Cases: Under a contract funded by the Model Approaches to Statewide Legal Services Phase II Grant, Legal Aid of Nebraska closed a total of 223 cases with extended representation in courts. The following major case types were represented: Income Maintenance, Housing, Health, Consumer/Finance, Family, Employment and Education. Number of cases closed by Area Agencies on Aging under the contract with Legal Aid were:

Aging Office of Western Nebraska	16
Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging	9
Eastern Nebraska Office on Aging	157
West Central Nebraska Area Agency on Aging	29
Midland Area Agency on Aging	12

Law School Clinics: The data since inception on law school clinics over three years is listed below.

	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Three-Year Total</u>
Number of Clinics	5	15
Number of Clients Served	93	339
Number of Advance Directive Documents Executed	398	1,248

Best Practices

1. Nebraska Legal Assistance Program conducts non-credit classes on Legal Issues at local community colleges. The colleges charge attendees a nominal fee and handle all registrations. Legal Services Providers teach the evening classes through the colleges' Continuing Education Program. Classes were held in Lincoln and Omaha at Southeast Community College and Metropolitan Community College respectively. This is a new approach to legal services outreach and has been well received by attendees.
2. A panel presentation made up of some members of the statewide Elder Rights Coalition such as a legal service provider, local law enforcement, Adult Protective Services and a geriatric medical professional has been developed. The panel presents at law schools, Nebraska State Bar Association events and the annual statewide training. Continuing Legal Education Credits were provided.
3. A 30-minute television presentation was produced in June 2017 on frauds and scams, elder abuse case investigations by law enforcement and Adult Protective Services, a medical expert presenting on a person's vulnerability for financial exploitation and a legal expert speaking on the roles and responsibilities of the agents of power of attorney. "*Protecting Senior and Vulnerable Nebraskans from Fraud, Abuse and Exploitation*" was aired several times on Nebraska public television, promoted on DHHS Facebook, Area Agencies on Aging Facebook and websites and posted at <http://netnebraska.org/basic-page/television/protecting-senior-and-vulnerable-nebraskans-fraud-abuse-and-exploitation>.
4. The 2017 Elder Justice Training was held in June 2017 with over 300 attending representing state and national staff from the aging network, attorneys, bankers, long-term care facility staff, APS and volunteers in the aging network. The State Unit on Aging also hosted a national train-the-trainer webinar on "*Money Smart for Older Adults*" with speakers from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Visit the training page for details on both trainings, www.dhhs.ne.gov/agingtraining.

5. Nebraska is one of the leading states in the nation on Medical-Legal Partnerships. Legal Aid of Nebraska has a **Health Education & Law Project (HELP)** that collaborates with CHI Health, Nebraska Medicine, Methodist Health System and Children’s Hospital and Medical Center in Omaha. They also have a contract with Bryan Health in Lincoln and a grant-funded collaboration with Health 360 and People’s Health Center in Lincoln. Legal Aid of Nebraska recently received a United Way grant to provide education and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Medicaid representation to children with developmental and/or intellectual disabilities. Legal Aid of Nebraska has applied for a grant through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study the effects of legal assistance to superutilizers of the Emergency Department at hospitals. The Legal Assistance Developer coordinates with Ann Mangiameli who is the Manager of the HELP project to share information about the project at statewide trainings and nationally.
6. The State Unit on Aging (SUA) and the Department of Health and Human Services Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office (LTCO) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to improve cooperation and information sharing between the LTCO Program and the Legal Assistance Program and the SUA in general.

Conclusion: This summary report depicts a well-integrated system of legal assistance to older Nebraskans. With the help of the Model Approaches to Statewide Legal Services Phase II Grant, Nebraska’s Legal Assistance Program has enhanced capacity and promoted greater accessibility to address priority legal issues including those emerging from elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. The development of the Statewide Legal Standards, a Uniform Statewide Reporting System, the utilization of low cost mechanisms such as the Elder Access Line and law school clinics, enhanced outreach efforts and innovative best practices outlined in this summary report demonstrate the impact of the Legal Assistance Program on the independence, health, and financial security of older Nebraskans.