



The *Alberta Legal Services Mapping Project* (ALSMP) is a province-wide project aimed providing an understanding of the public’s legal needs and the current state of legal service provision. <http://cfcj-fcjc.org/research/mapping-en.php>

Edmonton Judicial District – SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

The goals of the ALSMP are to:

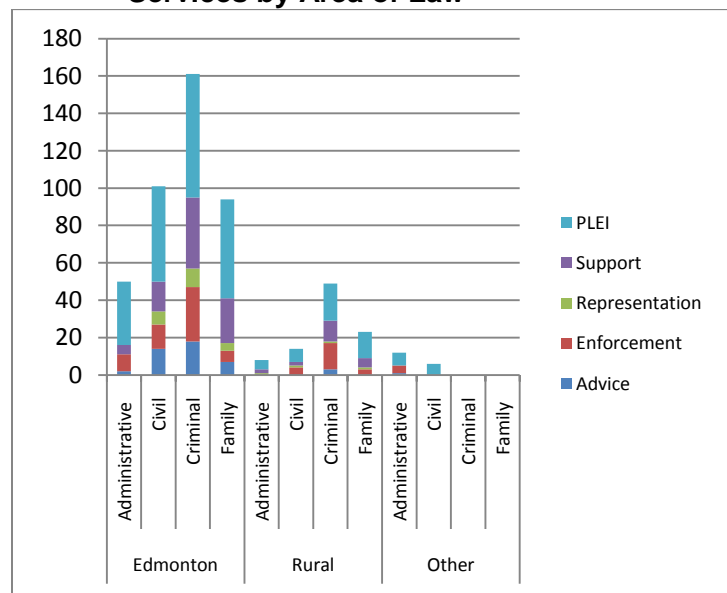
- Collect and share information about existing legal services in Alberta.
- Gain a better understanding about the characteristics of people and communities across Alberta and their legal needs.
- Identify strengths and gaps in current legal service delivery and resources.
- Strengthen relationships between legal service providers through the sharing of knowledge and expertise.
- 122 were sole purpose legal services.
- 38 offered legal as well as social or health components.
- 344 were related social and health services.

All legal services were classified by the types of service available (advice, enforcement, representation, support and PLEI) and area of law (criminal, administrative, family and civil). Although this District has a satisfactory range of services (Figure 1), there is a need to further develop their capacity and enhance networking among services.

The Edmonton Judicial District

- The current population of the city of Edmonton is estimated at 917,200.
- Over 172,249 people live in rural communities in this District.
- Immigrants and temporary residents account for over 24% of Edmonton’s population.
- Almost a quarter of Edmonton residents are dropping out of school before grade 12 and not pursuing any type of formal training.
- The portion of people who are completing university or college is less than half the provincial average.
- Unemployment has risen from 4.8% in 2006 to 6.7% by the end of 2009.
- According to the most recent International Housing Affordability Survey (2010), Edmonton was ranked 168 for affordability out of 265 cities in six developed countries.

Figure 1 – Services by Area of Law

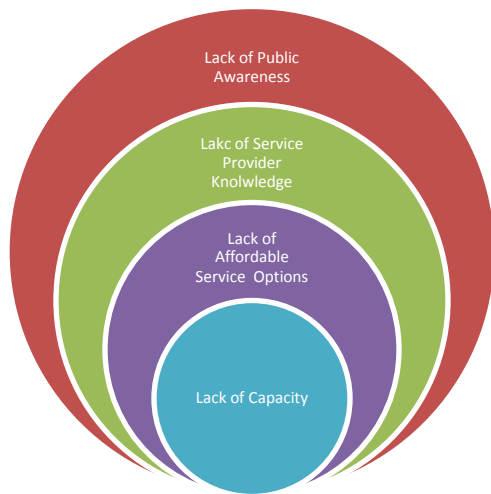


Existing Legal Services

Of the 504 services that were mapped:

Understanding Legal Needs in the Edmonton Judicial District

The major barriers that were identified in this District stem from lack of capacity:



Additional barriers include:

- Geography of the District.
- Scattered service locations.
- Transportation.
- Poverty.
- Cultural divides.

Gaps and Priorities in Meeting Legal Needs

Service providers and members of the public identified four categories of missing or inadequate legal services. These are:

- Inadequate access to advice and supports for civil, criminal and family matters.
- Lack of preventative services for children and youth.
- Enhanced services for Aboriginal peoples.
- Services for New Canadians.

Improving Legal Service Delivery

There is much that is already being done well in this District to improve the

accessibility of legal services. The Report details:

Good Practices to Build On

- Service Provider Relationships.
- Creative formal and informal initiatives.

District Strengths

- Legal services that received praise.
- Public legal education and information (PLEI).

Recommendations

Based on research findings we make 11 recommendations aimed at:

- supporting good practices,
- removing barriers, and
- filling gaps in legal services.

These are presented in Section 7 of the Report.

Where to Begin: Suggestions for Funders

Suggestions for legal services funders to focus on in order to have the greatest impact in removing barriers and filling gaps are:

- Facilitate increased PLEI on financial matters and on relevant topics for New Canadians.
- Enhance relationship-building with Aboriginal peoples in this District.
- Enhance the coordination of PLEI and free legal advice provision.
- Increase access to justice for rural Aboriginal peoples.

Suggestions for how to achieve these recommendations are included in the Report.