



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>

## Drumheller 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.

- The housing costs in this District are the lowest of all Districts mapped thus far.

### Existing Legal Services

Of the 44 organizations and 110 services that were mapped:

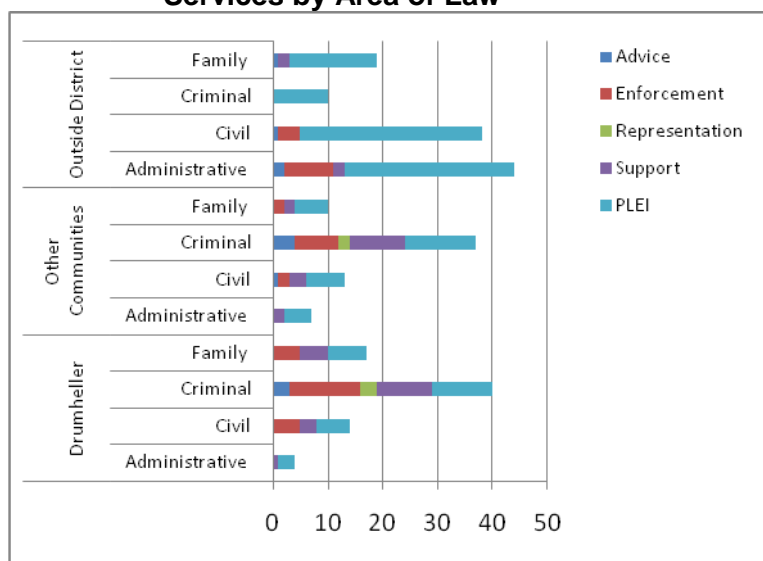
- 65 were sole purpose legal services.
- 19 offered legal as well as social or health components.
- 26 were related social and health services.

### The Drumheller Judicial District

- The town of Drumheller currently has a population of 7,932.
- The total population of the District is approximately 25,000 people.
- There are very small immigrant and Aboriginal populations in this District.
- The vast majority of the immigrant population in Drumheller has been living there for longer than 5 years (in 2006, only 35 reported that they had been there for under 5 years).
- In the 2006 Census, less than 200 people self-identified as being visible minorities. The majority of these are of Filipino, Latin and Chinese descent.
- There are no reserves or Métis Settlements in this District.
- High school dropout rates are almost double provincial averages, and university/college completion rates are 30% lower.
- Labour force participation is not significantly different than provincial averages.

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). Service providers identified that there are low numbers of services located within this District (Figure 1).

**Figure 1 – Services by Area of Law**



They acknowledged that this is a reality of have a lower population. However, there are some missing local services that they felt are needed.

## Understanding Legal Needs in the Drumheller Judicial District

Barriers that emerged were based largely around public awareness of resources, legal rights and responsibilities:

- Lack of Local Options for Services.
- Lack of Coordination of PLEI.
- Lack of Public Knowledge.
- Lack of Transportation.
- Lack of Anonymity/Social Stigma.

## Common Legal Needs

Participants spoke of needs that local residents commonly experience. These include:

- Benefits (eg. AISH and EI).
- Child protection.
- Debt (bankruptcy, consolidation and credit agreements).
- Divorce and related family matters.
- Minor Criminal matters (assault and break and enters, especially).
- Real Estate (lawyers).
- Non-permanent residents (human rights, employment rights and Immigration).
- Wills.

## Gaps and Priorities in Meeting Legal Needs

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

- Family Law Services.
- Community Legal Clinic.
- Duty Counsel.
- Legal Aid Access/Certificates.
- Mediation Services.
- PLEI Providers.

## Improving Legal Service Delivery

Service providers highlighted some things they think are going well in this District. The Report details:

### Good Practices to Build On

- Alberta Health Services - Addictions Services.
- The Youth Justice Committee.

### District Strengths

- Networking (or willingness to network).

## Recommendations

Based on research findings we make 7 recommendations aimed at:

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

These are presented in Section 7 of the Report:

- Improve access to PLEI.
- Coordinate access to current PLEI print materials.
- Provide members of the public with an accessible, effective point of entry into the legal system.
- Provide supports for people with family law needs.
- Provides alternative options to going to court.
- Increase legal support for people going to court.
- Provide increased access to legal representation.

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