

HOTLINE AND INTAKE BUDGETING

BUDGETING: SAMPLE NON-PHONE EXPENSES¹

We polled several legal aid hotlines and asked for their expenditures on things like Case Management Systems, Start Up Management, and Space Costs related to starting a hotline. We also asked Kathleen Brokel in New Mexico for her expenses on a start-up, stand-alone hotline. Again, these are not absolute numbers. Your costs will depend on your hotline type, staffing, and goals.

Example of General Costs -- New Mexico

Law Access New Mexico (no IT on staff, 7 workstations, stand-alone hotline developed from ground-up)

New Mexico Hotline Costs

Year	Expenses	Equipment	Supplies	Tech Svcs
1st	\$190,000	\$35,000	\$17,000	\$3,000
2nd	\$517,547	\$38,000	\$6,000	\$15,000
3rd	\$658,360	\$25,000	\$7,000	\$20,000

Sample Specific Costs from Programs (Non-Phone)

Case Management Systems

APALC spent about \$25,000 on a customized, newly created CMS developed for their hotline.

Idaho Legal Aid Society spent \$62,000 for a centralized CMS for seven offices.

Legal Aid of North Carolina spent \$70,000 for web-based CMS.

Start Up Management

Bay Legal spent \$48,000 on start up management (6 months full-time consultant)

¹May be found at www.lsnatp.org.

Legal Services of Alabama used 45 + hours of time from a start-up project manager (consultant), plus 400+ hours of a FT Managing Attorney

Room and Basics

Bay Legal created a workstation that included 12 cubicles and 12 computers.

Other programs spent between \$2,500 - \$7,000 on cubicles and workstations

BUDGETING: SAMPLE TELEPHONE EXPENDITURES

We polled several legal aid programs with hotlines to assess how much they spent on their telephone systems. These numbers are below simply as they were reported. Please take these numbers with a grain of salt. There is no apples-to-apples comparisons because: we did not analyze costs spent per similar phone systems; we did not adjust for inflation; we did not do a levelling approach that analyzed the type of hotline per type of phone system. Still, this is one of the top five questions we are asked. So, for you, here it is. While some programs don't have dates next to their expenditures, I believe all are within the last five years.

Telephone Consulting and Systems

Asian Pacific American Law Center (2002) spent:

Phone Consultant: \$22,578

Various Phone Technologies: \$12,000

Phone Bills (first year): \$30,000

(APALC's hotline coordinated intake services for four legal aid programs for specific monolingual Asian speakers. Each program had their own telephone technology already. These costs paid to integrate calls between all four and expand existing telephone technology at APALC to run a coordinated hotline.)

Bay Area Legal Services (2004) spent:

Phone Technology: \$275,000

(This was for a new purchase of a telephone system to serve a new hotline system coordinating several offices.)

Inland Counties Legal Services (6 offices, 1 satellite)

Phone Upgrade with Consultant help: \$101,000

Legal Services of Alabama: (4 sites)

Phone Technology (Open Source VOIP): \$42,000

Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York (7 sites / 13 counties)

Phone System with Consultant help; \$260,000

Legal Services of Northern California (SLH)

NEC Phone Technology: \$150,000

Phone Consultant:\$12,000

Legal Aid Society of San Diego (3 offices)

Phone Upgrade with Consultant help:\$258,000 (five-year lease)

BUDGETING: SAMPLE BUDGET RANGES

We polled seven programs about their budget expenditures on their hotline. This is not an apples-to-apples comparison because there are a lot of factors that determine why one program that only operates a small hotline might use a part-time manager whereas another program with a larger, coordinated, statewide hotline might need a full-time new hire. However, we thought it was useful to demonstrate the ranges that managers indicated as expenses for hotline costs.

Sample Budget Ranges by Predecessors

Start-Up Project Manager Consultant (6 - 9 months): \$30,000 - 75,000

New Hardware & Software: \$1,000 per station

Phone System: \$30,000 to \$225,000

Rent/Space (incl. utilities) : \$0 - 80,000

Office Supplies: \$2,000 - \$20,000

CMS: \$2,000 - \$150,000

Training/Travel : \$500 - \$7,000

Phone Consultant: \$4,000 - \$15,000

Marketing/Advertising: \$500 - \$4,000

Written Materials for Inhouse/Outreach: \$0 (in-kind) - \$20,000 (Initial
Drafting &Reproduction)

Staffing:

Intake Screener : \$15,000 - \$19,000/yr

Paralegal : \$24,000 - \$37,000/yr

Staff Attorney: \$31,000 - \$50,000/yr

Managing/Supervision Attorney : \$40,000 - \$75,000/yr

Fringe : 20-36%

Many allocate percentage executive management time

Contract Staff : \$16-\$50/hr

BUDGETING: STAFF TRAINING COSTS AND RESOURCES

Staff Training Costs. There are staff training considerations that will affect your budget. There are also cost savings tips and resources. See below.

Staff Training Cost Considerations

In-house v. Professional Training

Materials

Video Costs

Training Frequency and Protocols

new training at start-up

periodic trainings in key areas

routine trainings on hotline issues

Cost Savings Tips

Use Cheaper or Free Trainers

Experienced attorneys in-house for substantive law

Online training presentations with experienced hotline managers

Community partners can offer parts of your training core, i.e.,

Referrals and resources

Non-substantive skills

Working with special populations including seniors, mental health consumers, LEP, physically disabled

Video your trainings for future use

Schedule ongoing, refresher trainings to reduce errors (saves time correcting)

Staff Training Resources

AARP Foundation National Legal Training Project: Web Trainings for Lawyers on Particular Topics

Legal Aid University: <http://www.legalaiduniversity.org/>: Web Trainings for Hotline Lawyers

Bar-Sponsored Classes

BUDGETING AND COST DETERMINATIONS

How do you determine the cost of a hotline? You will have a budget associated with start-up and a budget associated with management. This article simply lists items that should be included in a start up budget, and items that should be included as on-going costs. See our articles on [Sample Budgets for Telephone Systems](#), [Non-Phone Systems](#), and [Start-Up/Operations](#) to get a sense of how much other programs spent on hotline development or operation.

Start Up Budget for Hotline should include:

Staffing

Technology

Development of Materials and Policies

Office space and equipment

Phone Equipment

Training

On-going costs

Staffing

Refresher training

Volunteer recruitment and coordination

Outreach

Advertising/Phone book listings

Technology

Maintenance

Upgrades

Long-distance charges