

July 17, 2024

South Dakota Commission on Equal Access to our Courts
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Re: A2J, Inc./DPLS/ERLS Joint Grant Application

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of Access to Justice, Inc., East River Legal Services and Dakota Plains Legal Services, we submit for your consideration the following joint application for funding from the Commission on Equal Access to our Courts for general program support. All three organizations have utilized the criteria of SDCL § 16-2-56.1 to develop our application.

Our joint application seeks funding to continue our work with veterans, the elderly, individuals with a disability, and/or victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. In terms of the \$200,000 currently available in CEAC funds, East River Legal Services (ERLS) and Dakota Plains Legal Services (DPLS) are in agreement that Access to Justice (A2J) will request \$50,000 in funding.

In terms of the remaining \$150,000 in funding, DPLS and ERLS have not reached a mutual agreement as to the proportional split, but all three programs do agree to abide by the CEAC's decision as to the distribution amount of CEAC funding awarded to ERLS and DPLS. Therefore, DPLS formally requests \$48,248 of funding, which is not supported by ERLS due to concerns ERLS has relating to actual financial need by DPLS in addition to concerns regarding the recent LSC compliance visits to DPLS offices. Accordingly, in the event the CEAC chooses not to award funding to DPLS this grant cycle, ERLS requests \$150,000 in funding, or a lesser amount if the CEAC awards DPLS either the \$48,248 requested by DPLS or a lesser amount. In the event the CEAC awards DPLS the full \$48,248 in funding, ERLS requests \$101,752 in funding.

East River Legal Services intends to utilize all CEAC funding awarded during this grant cycle to update technology and supplement their revenue. A letter supporting this request is attached.

Dakota Plains Legal Services intends to use any CEAC funding awarded to make necessary repairs to two different DPLS offices/properties (*see addendum*).

Access to Justice intends to use a portion of the \$50,000 in CEAC funds awarded this cycle to hire a part-time staff person to assist the A2J Coordinator. Any CEAC funds not utilized for the part-time position salary and related expenses will be used to supplement the A2J Judicare program.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this joint application and we look forward to hearing from the Commission. Please feel free to contact any of the organization representatives should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Tom Mortland, Director, Dakota Plains Legal Services
Denise Langley, Coordinator, Access to Justice, Inc.
Lea Wroblewski, Director, East River Legal Services