



PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

FOR LEGAL AID

BEGINNER'S JOURNEY

WHY DO PROCESS IMPROVEMENT?

In all organizations:

Despite the best of intentions, over time, and regardless of policies, protocols, checklists, or flow charts:

- processes get quick fixes or add-ons to accommodate new rules or requirements,
- human beings take shortcuts,
- people train their successors using their shortcuts,
- there is no training or insufficient training,
- things have changed since the last time anyone took a good look at a process from beginning to end

In process improvement, organizations discover how the process actually happens, not how it is supposed to happen or how it happens on paper. You uncover where those discrepancies between the ideal and the reality have crept into your process.

It's one thing to map how the process works in the present, but after pinpointing problems and proposing solutions, you have the ability to re-map the process to what it should be.

PI in Legal Aid



Florida Rural
Legal Services, Inc.



Amy Burns
Deputy Director

"Florida Rural saw a 31% increase in intake in one quarter, as compared to the previous year, and a 35% increase in case closings.

We were able to save the time of an "entire" attorney and redeploy her into school-to-prison pipeline work we had long wanted to do."

In legal aid:

Effective process improvement (and a continuous improvement mindset) can a positive impact on any program's capacity to help people. Here are two examples:

Florida Rural Legal Services

When applied to intake and case acceptance systems, process improvement can shorten the time for a caller to get the legal information or assistance he or she needs and it can



PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

FOR LEGAL AID

free up staff time, giving you an opportunity to redeploy your resources and increase advocacy.

That's exactly the outcome LSC-funded Florida Rural Legal Services (FRLS) was able to achieve during its pro bono process improvement

partnership with Toyota North America's not-for-profit affiliate, the Toyota Production System Support Center (TSSC)



<https://www.lsc.gov/business-process-analysis-legal-aid-how-florida-rural-legal-services-partnered-toyota-improve-its>

Kids in Need of Defense (KIND).

In 2011, Seyfarth Shaw LLP announced the completion of a one- year pro bono effort designed to streamline KIND's operations and better equip its staff to carry out KIND's mission to help unaccompanied immigrant children navigate the U.S. immigration system. The firm had adopted Lean Six Sigma methods internally in 2005, which was a new way of thinking about legal processes at the time—then began offering SeyfarthLEAN services to help legal departments and businesses run more efficiently. <https://www.seyfarth.com/news-insights/seyfarth-shaw-and-kids-in-need-of-defense-kind-use-innovative-lean-six-sigma-tools-to-streamline-kind-s-legal-aid-operations-unprecedented-pro-bono-project-aims-to-help-kind-provide-consistent-effic.html>