

**Annual Priorities Report  
In Compliance with 45 CFR 1620.7(c)**

**Program Name:** Dakota Plains Legal Services  
**Address:** PO Box 489, Mission, SD 57555  
**Recipient Number:** 742018

Dakota Plains Legal Services (DPLS) Policy 1620A, “Establishing Priorities, 45 CFR 1620,” requires the Executive Director to periodically conduct an effective appraisal of the needs of eligible clients in the geographic areas served by DPLS. The appraisal, in addition to input from “DPLS employees, board members, the private bar, and other interested persons” is to be based “upon information received from potential or current clients that is solicited in a manner reasonably calculated to obtain the views of all significant segments of the client population.”

Within this last year DPLS has updated its program priorities pursuant to LSC Tier One recommendations by incorporating the findings of the South Dakota Legal Needs Assessment, which was the most recent appraisal of client needs. This statewide assessment consisted of interviews and surveys from numerous sources including, but not limited to prospective clients, agencies, and court personnel. DPLS has adjusted its priorities and developed commensurate case acceptance guidelines to address the most pressing needs of our client population. The statewide assessment identified family law, housing, public benefits, consumer issues and trusts and wills as continuing legal needs of our client population. These areas have been and remain a high priority for DPLS.

DPLS will also continue to collect client needs surveys as it has previously done in the past as well.

Dated this 20<sup>th</sup> day of December 2024.

**DAKOTA PLAINS LEGAL SERVICES**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas S. Mortland  
Executive Director