

CALGARY POVERTY REDUCTION INITIATIVE JUSTICE SECTOR CONSTELLATION
SYNOPSIS UPDATE
MARCH 19, 2013

The Justice Sector Constellation of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative met in October, November and December to develop goals, objectives and strategies with a view to addressing the issues within the legal system faced by those with low income and the access to justice issues faced by such people as identified by the Constellation. The recommendations developed by the Constellation were consolidated into three categories: education, service enhancement, and systemic change. The general themes or sub-categories of the recommendations are described below:

- Education:
 - Enhance public legal education
 - Increase awareness among sectors
 - Increase awareness in the justice sector

- Service Enhancement:
 - Enhance form literacy
 - Facilitate courthouse navigation
 - Enhance access to legal services
 - Accommodate diverse populations and complex needs
 - Facilitate reintegration of those convicted of an offence
 - Maximize utilization of existing resources and services
 - Coordinate services between the justice sector and other social service sectors

- Systemic Change:
 - Promote legal health and build in prevention and early intervention
 - Make the justice sector more accessible
 - Expand the options available in the justice sector
 - Expand services to those with low income
 - Expand services to individuals with complex needs
 - Expand the options available in the criminal justice system
 - Policy change
 - Enhance program delivery

It is significant that over 90 percent (47 of 52) of the recommendations developed by the Justice Sector Constellation have previously been made, directly or indirectly, in other reports regarding the legal system and the justice sector.

The Justice Sector Constellation has submitted to the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative Secretariat its final report dated March 19, 2013, which is entitled “Intervening at the Intersection of Poverty and the Legal System”. The report includes background on the intersection of poverty and the legal system; the issues identified by the Justice Sector Constellation; the goals and vision statements for a Calgary with a successful poverty-reduction strategy developed by the Justice Sector Constellation; the detailed list of Justice Sector Constellation recommendations; and sources of information that may inform the implementation of the Justice Sector Constellation recommendations.

It is hoped that the recommendations of the Justice Sector Constellation will be implemented timely and will intervene in a meaningful way on the intersection between poverty and the legal system. At its latest meeting in February, the Justice Sector Constellation agreed to continue to work together to that end.