

ATTACHMENT 15—EVALUATION REPORT

CALIFORNIA JUSTICECORPS 2019 RECOMPETE APPLICATION



2017-18 JusticeCorps Program Evaluation Final Summary Report

September 2018



**24 East Main Street
Winters, California 95694**

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Introduction

During the 2017-18 program year, the Judicial Council of California contracted with Philliber Research & Evaluation to implement a two-pronged approach to evaluating the JusticeCorps Program. Each evaluation strategy sought to answer different research questions and involved different methodologies. The following section first describes the JusticeCorps Program theory of change and then goes on to describe the details of the two evaluation strategies including the research questions, rationale, and methodologies. The evaluation contract continues through 2018-19, making this a preliminary report of the results.

JusticeCorps Theory of Change and Logic Model

The overall aim of the JusticeCorps Program is to enhance the ability of individuals facing family, housing, financial, and personal safety crises to navigate the legal system. This is vital to achieving economic self-sufficiency and community stability. JusticeCorps' theory of change takes a systems-level approach, providing inputs and achieving outcomes at the recipient (Self-represented litigants or SRLs), provider (JusticeCorps members), and organizational (participating courts) levels. In this model, members are trained to assist litigants, litigants move through the system more confidently and with better knowledge, and the courts are able to work more efficiently and deliver appropriate service for an entire community at a disadvantage.

Inputs: JusticeCorps invests in 312 members, 27 site supervisors, 9 regional professional program staff, and 16 university representatives to connect the campus, the courts, and the program administration and achieve successful short-term and long-term outcomes.

JusticeCorps members serve under the supervision of qualified court staff, providing assistance for litigants. Typically, Minimum Time (or “student”) members (there are 274, 300-hour M/T members) —enrolled undergraduate students recruited from JusticeCorps partner universities—serve 8 hours per week, either in one full-day or two half-day shifts. Full-Time (or “Fellow”) members (there are 38, 1,700-hour F/T Fellows) serve 5 days a week, providing litigant assistance during self-help center business hours and acting as team leads for the cohort of student members assigned to their site.

Fellows begin service in late August and student members in early September. Fellows serve a full 12-month period while student members serve at least through their academic year (approximately 40 weeks), although many students will continue into the summer, often completing far more than their required 300 hours of service. The smaller cohort of Fellows is typically JusticeCorps alumni who return to serve as expert members and team leaders for the rest of the corps. These members are able to serve more intensively, leading workshops to walk litigants through the steps of specific case types, taking on more complex cases, answering procedural questions for other members, and developing new workshops for litigants.

Core Activities: JusticeCorps members in 27 court-based self-help centers in three regions provide:

- 1) **Triage:** Conducting the initial assessment of litigants' needs and directing them to another JusticeCorps member (who can provide personalized service) or center staff who can assist them, or making a referral.
- 2) **Case Management:** Assessing litigants' case status, educating them about next steps—such as filing for a fee waiver, requesting a hearing, or submitting a proposed judgment.
- 3) **Referrals:** Providing litigants with information to educate them on their options and making referrals to appropriate services inside or outside the courts.
- 4) **Forms Assistance:** Assistance identifying and completing legal forms and procedures, one-on-one or in workshops.
- 5) **Court Follow-up:** Observing in the courtroom and providing litigants with information about the meaning of court orders and next steps after courtroom sessions.
- 6) **Language Assistance:** Providing assistance to litigants in their native language.

In many cases, members provide some or all of the types of assistance described above to the same litigant during one visit or provide assistance over the course of multiple visits. A litigant may simply need a brief referral to move on in his or her case. More often, a JusticeCorps member will sit and work with a litigant one-on-one for two hours or more, assisting with the completion of forms to ensure safety in a domestic violence situation, translating for a litigant who is trying to settle a dispute with his or her landlord, or working on custody paperwork for a parent with low literacy skills. This assistance can have a profound impact on the families and individuals who have come to the court in a time of crisis seeking personal safety and stability. When people emerge from crisis with the help of JusticeCorps members, the collective impact of these instances of assistance reverberates throughout the larger community.

JusticeCorps is managed by a full time administrator at the intermediary level and teams of core program staff in each of the three regions, varying in size depending on the number of members and sites they manage. Local program staff are headquartered at the main courthouse sites for Los Angeles, Alameda County in the Bay Area, and San Diego respectively.

Outputs: Members' target outputs within one program year are 100,000 instances of assistance to self-represented litigants, and 110,000 accurately completed forms. Because of the sheer volume, instances of assistance—not SRLS—are counted. The average dosage is 1 session of 15 minutes in length. However, members provide direct service to litigants in interactions that may range anywhere from 10 minutes to 2 hours to an entire morning, based on litigants' needs and the complexity of their legal issues.

Outcomes: JusticeCorps has articulated outcomes at three levels of the system that it impacts: SRLs (program recipients), JusticeCorps members, and the courts.

- **Program Recipient Outcomes** - In the short term, SRLs are better prepared to move forward with their family, civil, or small claims cases. The JusticeCorps Program intervention gives them the tools they need to navigate an unfamiliar and process-bound system. Long-term, this intervention will help litigants move to a place of stability—securing housing, finalizing custody or guardianship agreements, or settling domestic violence or financial issues that affect their employment, healthcare, or educational prospects.
- **JusticeCorps Member Outcomes** – The members themselves benefit from their year-long participation in the program. By program-end, the members report that their career choices have been influenced by the experience, that they are more likely to continue future civic engagement, and that they feel better prepared to step into a leadership role. Many of the M/T student members go on to serve as F/T Fellows in leadership positions. In the long term, it is expected that the majority of members will enter public service paths by furthering their educations (e.g., law school or masters in social work programs) or have accepted public service employment.
- **Participating Court Outcomes** - The courts also benefit from the JusticeCorps Program as in the medium term, the documents that are filed by SRLs will be accurately completed, thus saving time at the court clerk windows. In the long-term, having SRLs more prepared for the next steps in their court cases will lead to less time needed by court personnel to assist SRLs who typically come unprepared to court. This ultimately leads to the court processes being more efficient and effective.

Evaluation Strategy 1- Instance of Assistance Snapshot Study

Research Questions: The research questions that guided the first evaluation strategy directly connect to the program’s intended outputs and outcomes related to the program recipients:

1. Did the JusticeCorps Program provide at least 15 minutes of personalized assistance to 3,000 SRLs (potentially duplicated)?
2. After being assisted by a JusticeCorps member, to what extent do self-represented litigants (a) have a better understanding of the legal process; (b) feel more confident representing themselves; (c) feel better prepared to proceed with their case; and (d) feel clearer about the next steps to take to resolve their legal issue?
3. Did at least 85% of the SRLs that received at least 15 minutes of personalized service report increased preparedness to proceed and resolve their legal case?

Rationale: This strategy built on past evaluation efforts of the JusticeCorps Program. In 2009, JusticeCorps conducted a two-week snapshot study with recipients of the program. While useful, it was limited in its scope and thus not necessarily representative of the typical experience of SRLs served by the program. This current study has the advantage of gathering satisfaction and outcome data on every SRL served during a quarterly snapshot period.

Methodology: The *Instance of Service Form* augments the *Member Service Tally Sheet* that has been utilized since the inception of the program. The tally sheet documents service delivery in the aggregate which limited the ability to analyze whether some types of cases required longer or more comprehensive interventions. Having fuller data on each instance of assistance (even for a sample) enabled us to better analyze the service experience and use the results for program improvement. See both forms in Appendix A.

Sampling: Programs gathered data using the *Instance of Service Form* for one week every quarter, including the summer months for sites with year-round JusticeCorps (JC) members. For each instance of assistance lasting more than 15 minutes, the JC members filled out one form. Due to the sheer volume of SRLs served by the centers, each instance of assistance is counted separately and SRLs are subsequently duplicated. Because JC members provided approximately 100,000 instances of assistance annually, a sampling method was employed to gather these data during a snapshot period on approximately 3,000 SRLs.

Measurement Tools: The evaluation utilized a retrospective pre-post survey design that will ask SRLs to self-report their change in level of understanding, confidence, and preparation following the service compared to their pre-service level. The *Instance of Service Form* is a multi-part form that gathers data to track both outputs and short-term outcomes including:

- The nature of the services provided by JC members including (a) time spent serving SRL; (b) assistance in another language; (c) type of service provided (e.g., forms assistance); (d) type of case (e.g., domestic violence); and number of forms completed; and
- An assessment from the SRL as to their satisfaction with and impact of the service.

In addition, all contacts (regardless of the length) continued to be tracked using the *Member Service Tally Sheet* during the snapshot period.

Data collection procedures: During each snapshot period, JC members completed the front side of the form either during or immediately following the interaction with the SRL. If the JC member assisted SRLs with forms, then the member brought the completed packet of forms to the supervising attorney for a review and approval. The number of forms reviewed was noted at the bottom of the *Instance of Service Form*.

The member then asked the self-represented litigant for his or her feedback on the back side of the form. A brief explanation was provided to the SRL that explained the reason for and highlighted the anonymous nature of the survey. The member was then given the SRL privacy to respond to the survey. Completed *Instance of Service Forms* were returned to a central location at the site.

Data Entry and Analysis Plan: University representatives were to gather the forms at the end of the snapshot week for data entry into a Google database on the cloud. Entered data were available to Philliber to be reviewed and cleaned. Data were analyzed in Stata and an annual report would be produced for each region and for the program overall that describes the service experience (overall, as well as disaggregating the service experience by key variables, e.g. type of case) and perceived impact.

Evaluation Strategy 2: Quasi-Experimental Study of Court Filing

Research Questions: This quasi-experimental study will address several research questions related to the medium-term outcome of the program impact on the court system.

1. Is the legal paperwork submitted for filing by self-represented litigants who were assisted by a JusticeCorps member more accurately completed than paperwork submitted by self-represented litigants who were not served by a JusticeCorps member?
2. Are at least 95% of the documents filed by SRLs assisted by JusticeCorps members accurately completed?

Each of the program sites and associated courts participated in a one-day snapshot study to determine if the legal paperwork submitted for filing by self-represented litigants who were assisted by JC members was more accurately completed than paperwork submitted by self-represented litigants who were not served by a JC member. This study is quasi-experimental in that SRLs had total self-determination as to whether they seek assistance from a JC member or not. The study took place at the Court Clerks' offices where determination is made as to whether paperwork is completed accurately so as the SRLs can proceed with their cases.

Rationale: In the theory of change, the JC program resulted in court efficiencies and improved outcomes for SRLs assisted by JC members. To date, this theory is supported only by anecdotal evidence. Previous studies conducted for the JC program gathered qualitative data through interviews with program and court administrators to assess whether it was perceived that SRLs served by JC members were better prepared when filing their paperwork for hearings. The proposed study vastly improves on the previous studies by employing a quasi-experimental design to compare the actual time involved to process and the determination of accuracy of paperwork of SRLs assisted by JC members vs. SRLs who received no assistance.

The limitation to this design is the cross-sectional or snapshot nature of the study, with each site and its associated court participating for just a brief period (one to three days). This design allowed us to describe the experience of SRLs utilizing court services during a data collection period, but limited the ability to make inferences about the whole population of SRLs served by the courts. Also, given that the design is quasi-experimental there might be selection bias in which SRLs sought out JC services and which do not. Thus, no causal inferences may be made as a result of this study.

Sampling: This study was piloted during the 2017-18 program year and will be fully implemented during the 2018-19 program year. During the pilot and full-implementation, the study period occurs between February and April, but the Los Angeles sites will participate in the summer months. Regional Program Directors assisted the evaluation contractor in assessing courts' readiness for participation.

Measurement Tool: In close collaboration with Judicial Council and JusticeCorps Regional Program Directors, Philliber designed a *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* that served as the main tool for data collection. The main elements of this tool included: (a) type of SRL (served by JC member or not), (b) type of case, and (c) determination of paperwork accuracy.

Prior to finalizing the form and protocols for full implementation, Philliber piloted the study in each region (Bay Area, Los Angeles, and San Diego) during the 2017-18 year and then made adjustments. Given that each court operates in a unique way, it was anticipated that each court would have a special protocol for how, when and where the data would best be gathered. Philliber built this flexibility into the protocols. The goal was to gather data in the most reliable fashion, but with the least possible burden for the courts.

Data collection procedures: During the 2017-18 pilot, sites and associated courts were selected based on a readiness assessment for participation in the 1-day study. Part of the readiness assessment process was a determination of the level of support necessary to conduct the study. It was assumed that some courts that process a high volume of filings would need a support staff person assigned to shadow the Court Clerk to gather the required data. All persons who participated in the study were trained via a webinar the week prior to data collection. Participating sites also received a written protocol to guide the study. Regional Program Directors and/or Program Coordinators were trained in the study protocol. They were to assist the contract evaluator by making a site visit to observe the study site for quality control purposes. The contract evaluator was available for support and technical assistance as needed during the data collection.

During the study period, the JC program site marked the top form of the paperwork packet with a special stamp to indicate that the SRL was assisted by a JC member. This eliminated the problem of recall given that there might be a delay between the time of service and the actual court filing. Supervising attorneys were trained to stamp the final set of reviewed papers before the SRL leaves the program site.

At the Court Clerk's window or court room where determination was made about proper filing, data was gathered each time a SRL submitted papers for filing. The *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* had a separate row for documenting the experience of each SRL.

Data Entry and Analysis Plan: At the end of each data collection period, the logs were sent to Philliber for data entry into an Excel database. Data were analyzed in Stata and an end-of-year report was produced that analyzed the accuracy rate of paperwork from SRLs served by the JC members compared to SRLs who received no assistance. The following is a preliminary report of those results as the study will continue during the 2018-19 program year.

Evaluation Results

Strategy 1: 2017-18 Instance of Assistance Snapshot Study Results

This is an aggregate summary report of the results from the four snapshot study weeks which occurred in each region during the 2017-18 program year.

Data Collection Periods

Each region selected the most convenient week for their snapshot study period each quarter. Only the Los Angeles region has a full-time JusticeCorps Program during the summer months.

Snapshot Weeks	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
Fall	Nov. 13-17, 2017	Nov. 6-9, 2017	Nov. 13-17, 2017
Winter	Feb. 5-9, 2018	Feb. 5-9, 2018	Feb. 12-16, 2018
Spring	April 30 – May 4, 2018	April 30 – May 4, 2018	May 14-18, 2018
Summer	-	July 16-20, 2018	-

Numbers Served

The JusticeCorps Program aimed to capture instance of assistance data on 3,000 SRLs that received at least 15 minutes of personalized assistance during the 2017-18 program year. The program exceeded this goal by gathering instance of assistance (IoA) forms on 3,851 SRLs during the program year.

Los Angeles Sites – There are 11 JusticeCorps Program sites in the Los Angeles region. Across the four study weeks, a total of 2,902 IoA forms were completed and submitted for data entry. The site submitting the greatest number of forms was the Resource Center at the Mosk Courthouse (n=872) and the site submitting the fewest was the Small Claims Program (n=52) which provides most of their assistance over the telephone.

Total Los Angeles IoA Forms	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Total
Resource Center, Mosk Courthouse	215	258	177	222	872
Norwalk/Whittier Resource Center	81	98	125	104	408
Pasadena Resource Center	79	70	63	75	287
Chatsworth Self-Help	54	91	67	45	257
Long Beach Self-Help	50	64	48	59	221
Compton Self-Help	36	67	61	47	211
Torrance Self-Help	43	67	32	67	209
Van Nuys Self-Help	40	27	27	84	178
Pomona Self-Help	45	63	31	-	139
Santa Monica Self-Help	21	18	14	15	68
Small Claims Program	14	13	-	25	52
TOTAL	678	836	645	743	2,902

Bay Area Sites – Seven sites make up the Bay Area JusticeCorps Program. A total of 670 IoA forms were submitted during the three snapshot period weeks. The site submitting the greatest number of forms was the Hayward Hall of Justice (n=264) and the sites submitting the fewest were the Bay Area Legal Aid (BALA) sites in Richmond, Concord, and Pittsburg (n=21).

Total Bay Area IoA Forms	Fall	Winter	Spring	Total
Hayward Hall of Justice	101	74	89	264
San Francisco Civic Center Courthouse ACCESS Center	53	75	50	178
Santa Clara SHC/FLF	24	47	35	106
San Mateo Hall of Justice, Redwood City	31	42	28	101
BALA - Richmond Courthouse Housing and DV Clinic	5	4	2	11
BALA - Concord Clinic	4	2	-	6
BALA – Pittsburg Clinic	1	2	1	4
TOTAL	219	246	205	670

San Diego Sites - There are 11 JusticeCorps Program sites in the San Diego area. During the three snapshot study weeks 279 IoA forms were collected and submitted. Overall these sites are smaller, with fewer JusticeCorps members, than the program sites in the Bay Area and Los Angeles regions. The sites submitting the greatest number of forms were the Legal Aid Society of San Diego (LASSD) Clinic at the South County Courthouse (n=44) and Family Law Facilitators Office at the Central Courthouse (n=43). The site submitting the fewest was the San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program (SDVLP) clinic at the North County Courthouse (n=10).

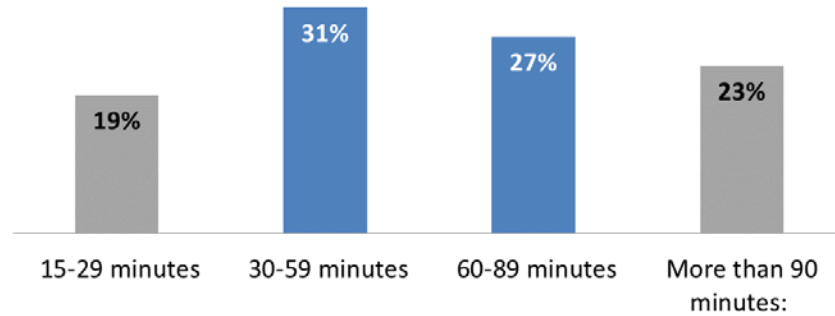
Total SAN DIEGO IoA Forms	Fall	Winter	Spring	Total
LASSD Clinic, South County Courthouse	16	6	22	44
Family Law Facilitators Office, Central Courthouse	6	27	10	43
Civil Division Hall of Justice	21	7	10	38
LASSD Clinic, Hall of Justice	15	2	11	28
Family Law Facilitators Office, North County Courthouse	13	3	11	27
Family Law Facilitators Office, East County Courthouse	8	4	14	26
Civil Division Small Claims, North County Courthouse	-	18	-	18
Family Law Facilitators Office, South County Courthouse	4	7	6	17
Civil Division East County	9	6	-	15
Family Law Facilitators Office, Family Court	13	-	-	13
SDVLP Clinic, North County Courthouse	3	5	2	10
TOTAL	108	85	86	279

Total Time Spent

As seen in the figure below, half of the instances of assistance were 60 minutes or greater in duration with another 31% encounters being between 30-59 minutes in length. Three percent of the responses had an answer that was missing (not shown in figure).

Total time spent

Out of the 97% who answered the question:



The total time spent varied some by region. The Bay Area and San Diego had shorter instances of assistance compared to Los Angeles.

Time Periods	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
15-29 minutes	38%	14%	30%
30-59 minutes	34%	29%	42%
60-89 minutes	13%	32%	15%
More than 90 minutes	15%	25%	13%

Language Assistance

Out of the 94% who answered the question, assistance was provided in languages other than English for 29% of the encounters. Spanish was spoken for three-quarters of these language assistance encounters.

LEP Assistance

Out of the 94% who answered the question:



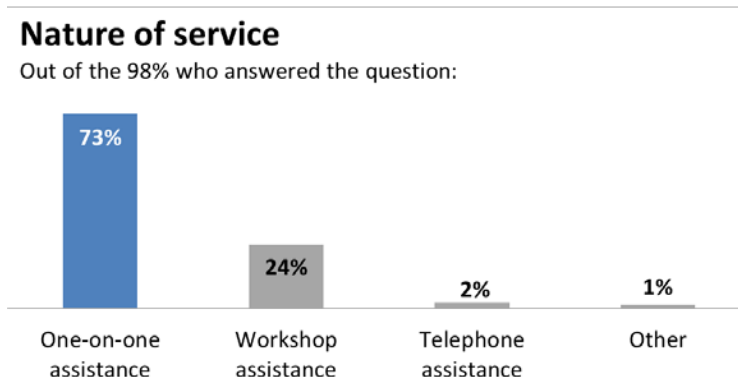
- If yes, what language:
 - 75% - Spanish
 - 4% - Answer missing
 - 2% - Mandarin
 - 1% - Arabic
 - 1% - Vietnamese
 - >1% - Armenian, Farsi, Korean, Russian
 - 17% - Other
 - 93% - English
 - 7% - Hearing impaired, unable to read/write

The percent of encounters that involved language assistance varied by region with San Diego (16%) having the lowest percentage receiving language assistance. Los Angeles assisted mostly in Spanish and about half were assisted in Spanish in the Bay Area and San Diego sites.

Language Assistance	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
Yes	31%	30%	16%
If yes, what language:			
Spanish	48%	83%	54%
All other	52%	17%	46%

Nature of Service

For nearly three-quarters of the encounters, one-on-one assistance was the nature of the service that was provided. Additionally, JusticeCorps members provided workshop assistance a quarter of the time, which serve multiple SRLs who share a common legal issue, such as dissolution of marriage.



One-on-one assistance was the nature of service for all of the San Diego sites and most of the Los Angeles (72%) and Bay Area (68%) sites as well.

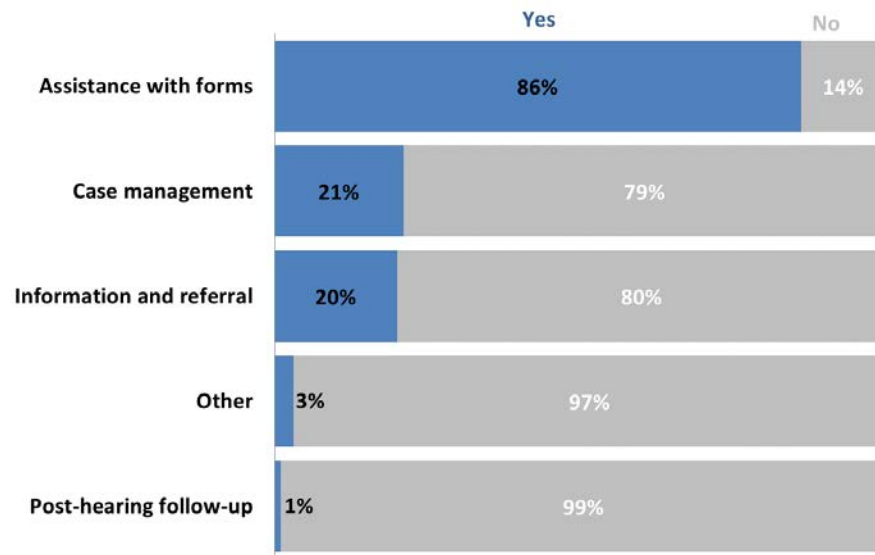
Nature of Service	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
One-on-one assistance	68%	72%	100%
Workshop assistance	20%	27%	0%
Telephone assistance	8%	0%	0%
Other	4%	1%	0%

Type of Service

The most common type of service provided was assistance with forms, which happened in 86% of all encounters. Fewer of the encounters involved case management (21%) or information and referral (20%). The type of service was missing for 7% of the encounters.

Type of service (check all that apply)

Out of the 93% who answered the question:



Assistance with forms was also the most common service delivered in each region.

Type of Service	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
Assistance with forms	85%	86%	95%
Case management	24%	21%	10%
Information and referral	13%	22%	11%
Post-hearing follow-up	>1%	1%	0%
Other	6%	2%	8%

Type of Case

Most commonly, the type of case was family law related (81%) with many fewer being in the area of civil law (19%). Type of case was missing for 4% of the encounters and was not included in the table below.

The most common family law cases were for dissolution of marriage (50%) followed by child custody and/or visitation (32%). The most common civil law case was for housing law (42%).

Family Law	81%	Civil Law	19%
Dissolution of marriage	50%	Housing law	42%
Child custody/visitation	32%	Restraining orders	36%
Parentage	14%	Small claims	12%
Child/spousal support	13%	Other	10%
Other	8%	Answer missing	1%
Domestic violence	6%		
Answer missing	3%		

In each region, the most common cases were family law, but San Diego had higher civil cases than the other regions. The most common type of family law was dissolution of marriage in the Bay Area (47%) and Los Angeles (53%), whereas child custody was most common in San Diego (51%). The type of civil law cases assisted with varied quite a bit by region, with Los Angeles mostly handling housing law cases (59%) and restraining orders handled more commonly in San Diego (75%) and the Bay Area (42%).

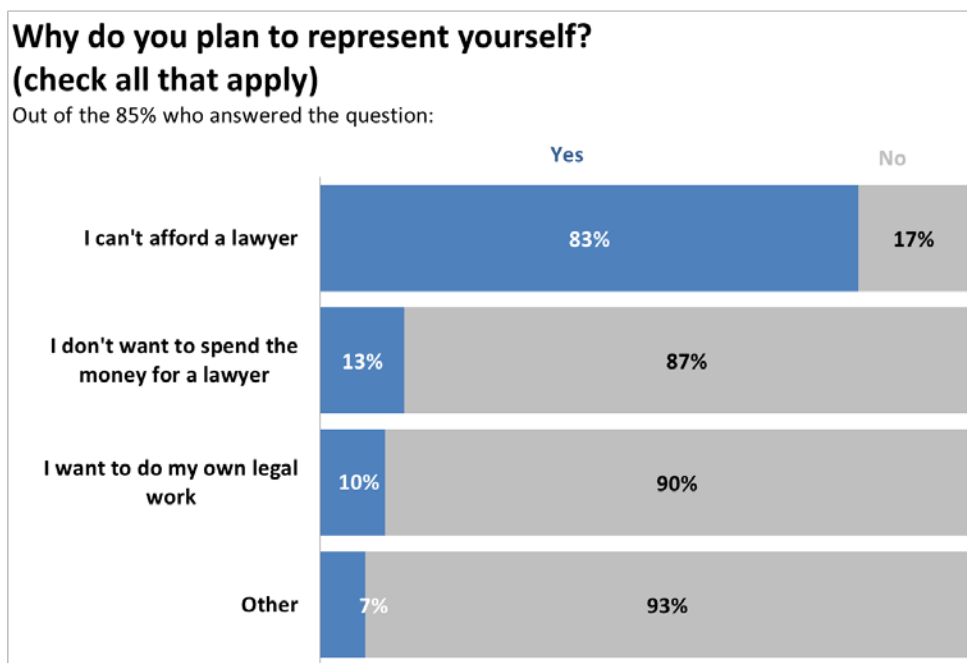
Type of Case	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
Family Law	83%	83%	56%
Dissolution of marriage	47%	53%	9%
Child custody/visitation	37%	29%	51%
Parentage	8%	16%	4%
Other	4%	8%	18%
Child/spousal support	21%	11%	16%
Domestic violence	14%	3%	25%
Answer missing	2%	4%	0%
Civil Law	17%	17%	44%
Housing law	4%	59%	14%
Restraining orders	42%	24%	75%
Other	23%	7%	13%
Small claims	29%	11%	2%
Answer missing	3%	>1%	1%

Litigant Feedback and Outcomes

The self-represented litigants were asked to complete a brief form explaining why they were seeking services from the self-help center and provide feedback about the service that they received from the JusticeCorps Program.

Reason for Self-Representation

Eighty-three percent of the self-represented litigants said that the reason they planned to represent themselves in court was because they could not afford a lawyer. Fifteen percent of the litigants did not provide an answer to the question and were not included in the figure below.



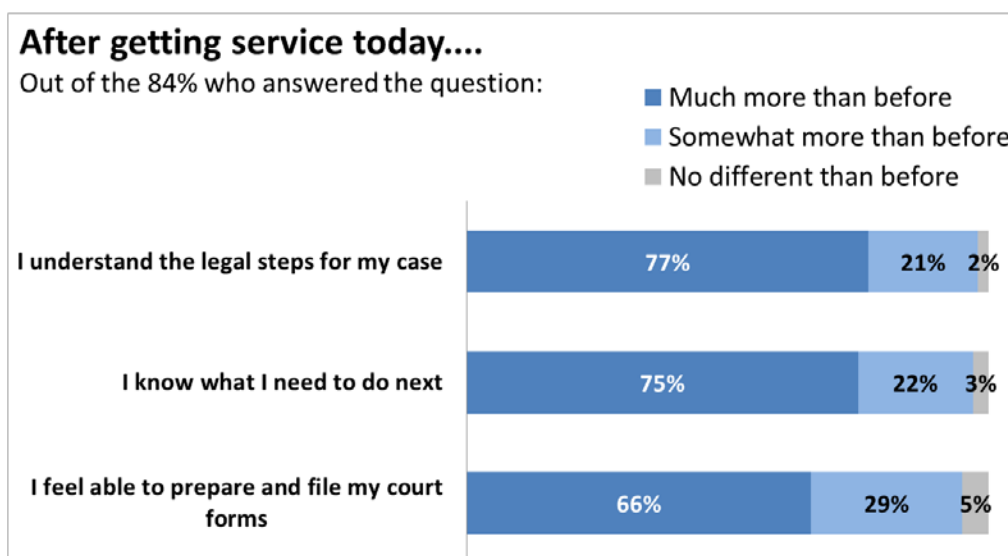
Most commonly across all regions, the reason for self-representation was that the SRLs could not afford a lawyer.

Reason for Self-Representation	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
I can't afford a lawyer	82%	83%	75%
I don't want to spend the money for a lawyer	14%	12%	14%
I want to do my own legal work	9%	10%	17%
Other	4%	8%	9%

Litigant Outcomes

The JusticeCorps Program expected that at least 85% of the SRLs that received at least 15 minutes of personalized service would report increased preparedness to proceed and resolve their legal case (either “somewhat more than before” or “much more than before”).

Following the service received, virtually all of the litigants reported feeling either somewhat or much more confident that they understood the legal steps in their case (98%), knew what to do next in their case (97%), and felt able to prepare and file their court forms (95%). Thus the program far exceeded their short-term outcome objective. Sixteen percent of the litigants did not answer the question and were not included in the figure below.



These positive results were equally experienced in all three regions.

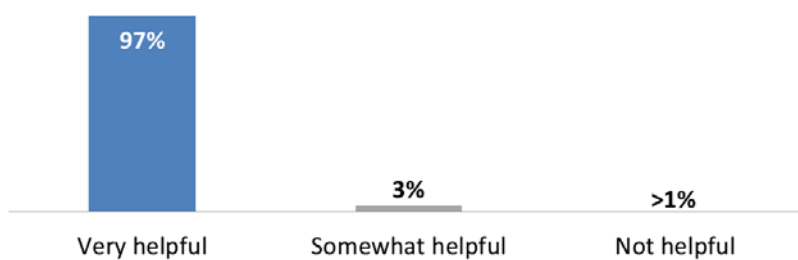
Percent reporting “somewhat more” or “much more than before”	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
I understand the legal steps for my case	97%	98%	98%
I know what I need to do next	97%	97%	94%
I feel able to prepare and file my court forms	96%	95%	94%

Feedback about Services

Virtually all (97%) of the litigants reported that the service received was very helpful. A response to this item was missing for 15% of the litigants (not shown in the figure).

Rate the services you got from the JusticeCorps helper today

Out of the 85% who answered the question:



Self-represented litigants were equally as happy with the services received in each region with the virtually all rating the services from a JusticeCorps member as “very helpful.”

Type of Service	Bay Area	Los Angeles	San Diego
Very helpful	97%	97%	98%
Somewhat helpful	3%	3%	1%
Not helpful	>1%	0%	1%

Strategy 2: 2017-18 Justice Corps Quasi-Experimental Study of Court Filing Pilot Study Results

Quasi-Experimental Study Launch

While the quasi-experimental study was introduced in August 2017, the actual launch was delayed until spring 2018 due to the programs' effort involved with successfully launching the first strategy. The following was the timeline for the study during the 2017-18 program year.

Task	Date
Designed the <i>Court Readiness Assessment Tool</i> and procedures	December 2017
Pilot tested and revised the <i>Court Readiness Assessment Tool</i>	January 2018
Trained JusticeCorps Program Directors and Coordinators on the CRA process	February 2018
Received completed court readiness assessments	March 2018
Telephone discussions with Program Directors about their CRA results and selected the "most ready sites" for pilot test of the quasi-experimental study	April and June 2018
Trained staff to prepare for 1-day study pilot tests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hayward Hall of Justice ◆ San Diego Central and South Courthouses ◆ Mosk Courthouse 	April and July 2018
Observational site visits to prepare for 1-day study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hayward Hall of Justice ◆ San Diego Central and South Courthouses ◆ Mosk Courthouse 	April, May, and July 2018
Pilot tested study at four court sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hayward Hall of Justice ◆ San Diego Central Courthouse ◆ San Diego South Courthouse ◆ Mosk Courthouse 	April 2018 May 2018 June 2018 July 2018
Debriefed experience and received feedback for revisions to study design, forms and protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ AOC Study Review Team ◆ Statewide JusticeCorps Meeting 	May 2018 June 2018

Court Readiness Assessment

As a first step in the process, Regional Program Directors were asked to assist Philliber in assessing readiness for court participation. Toward that end, Philliber researched and developed the *Court Readiness Assessment Tool*. This tool was pilot tested with one Bay area program (San Mateo) and then refined for full implementation. See the tool in Appendix B.

CRA Tools were completed for the courts served by all Bay Area and San Diego program sites. Los Angeles declined to participate in the process.

JusticeCorps Location	Number of JusticeCorps Program Sites	CRA Tools Returned
Bay Area	7*	4
Los Angeles	11	0
San Diego	10	10

* Three of the sites are operated by Bay Area Legal Aid and are very small and didn't complete a form

Completed *Court Readiness Assessment Tools* enabled the research team to get a better understanding of court paperwork flow at each site.

Court Filing Windows – The flow of paperwork varies by court house. In the San Diego court houses, some have separate filing windows for family law and civil, whereas in other court houses there is a central filing window for all court filings regardless of type. In the Bay Area courts, there are different filing windows for different court departments. The number of windows with clerks processing papers also varies by the size of the court house, with the number ranging from 3 to 16 windows. It is not uncommon to have one or more specific windows for specific court actions, such as for ex parte orders (e.g., temporary restraining orders) that need to be sent for a same day hearing.

To deal with the possible confusion of having separate departmental filing windows, the Hayward Hall of Justice (Bay Area) and the North Family Business Office (San Diego) have instituted a screening window where all SRLs begin the court filing process. At this window, cases are reviewed and triaged to the correct filing window or directed to the Self Help Center if they have not begun the required paperwork. At the Family Justice Center Courthouse in Santa Clara (Bay area) and at the Family Business office at the Central Courthouse in San Diego, they use a self-serve kiosk system that triages cases and prints out a ticket for the appropriate clerk window.

In a few Bay Area locations, there are court clerks right in the self-help centers, which is also the location of the JusticeCorps Program. At the Hayward Hall of Justice, a clerk is present daily at the self-help center. In San Francisco, a clerk is present and processes papers at the ACCESS Center's concluding divorce workshop.

Volume of Filings – The Court Readiness Form asked the clerk administrators to estimate the daily volume of filings processed and give a rough estimate of what percent of paperwork is filed by SRLs. Most typically, the courts reported the number of daily filings to be in the range of 200-250, but the range was large (a low of 70 filings to a high of 1,225 filings). Some courts were unable to give an estimate about the percent of filings by SRLs, but of those who reported the average was about two-thirds (67%) with a range between 40% and 90%.

Time to File - The wait time to file forms most typically was in the 15 minute range although the Hayward Hall of Justice (Bay Area) reported an average wait time of 3 hours. In some court houses, attorneys have separate filing lines than SRLs. Wait times are also affected by the ability of SRLs to pay fees at the clerks' window, which was not always the process.

The actual amount of time for paperwork review and filing was estimated to be around 5-10 minutes in the Bay Area courthouses and 5-25 minutes in the San Diego courthouses. The variation in time depends on the types and number of forms required for a filing, as well as the accuracy and completeness of the forms (the factor being studied).

Review Process - The court clerks review the forms for completeness and signatures but not for substantive content accuracy. It is possible, that an SRL would file the wrong set of forms, which might not be discovered until the hearing. The court clerks are constrained by time and also role (e.g., they are not able to provide legal advice) from determining whether the correct forms have been submitted. Court clerks only offer assistance in a very limited way (e.g., directing SRLs to fill out missing name, date, or case number). If the court clerks notice a great deal of errors, they most typically will refer the SRLs to the self-help center associated with that court house.

Acceptance Rates – Unless there is a great deal of errors that cannot be fixed quickly at the window, the court clerks routinely accept paperwork submitted by SRLs. The Court Readiness Assessment Form asked the court administrators what percent of time SRLs attempt to file the wrong forms. The response varied between 10% and 75% of the time, with a clarification that it was much more prevalent for SRLs that had not received assistance at the court's self-help center (where the JusticeCorps Programs are housed).

Common Problematic Forms - The court administrators that completed the Court Readiness Assessment Forms were asked if there were certain forms or packets of forms which were the most problematic for SRLs. The following were mentioned as common problem areas:

- New petitions are often filled out on the wrong forms
- Wrong forms filled out for parentage actions and grandparent visitation
- Dissolution of marriage judgement are often returned for a vast range of reasons
- Ex parte forms and procedures (e.g., notice)
- Proof of service forms are often incomplete, improperly served, or signed by the wrong party
- Defaults and judgements are also often completed incorrectly as they do not address the issues from the petition into the judgement appropriately
- Fee waivers are not filled out correctly

Receptiveness for Study – Only the Bay Area courts filled out the item on receptivity to participating in the study of court clerk filings by SRLs. They responded on a 5-point scale of “not at all receptive” to “very receptive.” The responses ranged from 1 “not at all receptive” to 4 “mostly receptive”, with an average score of 2.25 (less than “not very receptive”).

Need for Assistance – In tandem to the receptivity question, court administrators responded to a question about the likelihood that the court staff would need assistance for data collection during the study period. Again, they responded on a 5-point scale of “not likely at all” to “very likely.” Again, only the Bay Area court administrators responded. Their responses were clustered at the top range of the scale with most saying that it was “very likely” that assistance would be needed (average of 4.45).

Pilot Site Selection

After reviewing the completed forms and having conversations with the Bay Area and San Diego Directors, it was ultimately decided to pilot with the courts that were the most receptive to participating. Those courts were the Hayward Hall of Justice in the Bay area and the Central Courthouse business office that serves the family court in San Diego. Subsequently a second site was added in San Diego, the South Courthouse business office. Following conversations with the Los Angeles Director, the Mosk Courthouse was selected for a 1-day study in July.

Pilot Test Methodology

In close collaboration with Judicial Council and JusticeCorps Regional Program Directors, Philliber designed a *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* that will serve as the main tool for data collection. The main elements of this tool originally included: (a) type of SRL (served by JusticeCorps or not), (b) type of case, (c) language assistance, (d) time associated with paperwork review, and (e) determination of paperwork accuracy.

Prior to conducting the 1-day studies, the research team conducted site observations. Following the first observation at the Hayward Hall of Justice, the *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* was revised to include just the following elements: (a) type of SRL (served by JusticeCorps, another service provider, or not), (b) type of case, and (c) determination of paperwork accuracy. Further refinement to the instructions was made following the 1-day study at the Hayward Hall of Justice, which were tested at the San Diego Central Courthouse. See the final tool and instructions in Appendix C.

Prior to the 1-day studies, JusticeCorps Program staff and court clerks were trained on the study procedures. All materials for the study were provided by Philliber. The study was staffed by the research team (which included staff from Philliber, JusticeCorps Statewide Director, and JusticeCorps Regional staff) who shadowed the court clerks to complete the *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* following the clerks’ assessment.

Pilot Test Preliminary Results

During the 1-day study periods, data were collected on a total of 257 self-represented litigants who were either served by a JusticeCorps member (25%) or who received no assistance from any program (75%). All of the other self-represented litigants that were served by the Self-Help Center, Family Law Facilitator's Office, or other legal service provider (e.g., Navy Legal) were noted but not rated.

JusticeCorps Location	SRLs Served by JusticeCorps Member	SRLs Receiving No Assistance
Bay Area (Hayward Hall of Justice)	18	37
San Diego (Central Courthouse)	9	55
San Diego (South Courthouse)	10	22
Los Angeles (Mosk Courthouse)	27	79
TOTAL	64	193

For each self-represented litigant served by a JusticeCorps member or who have received no assistance, the court clerk was asked to rate the accuracy and completeness of the SRL's paperwork on the following 4-point scale:

- 1 Not accurate/complete (e.g., used wrong forms; filing rejected)
- 2 Partly accurate/complete (e.g., many issues noted)
- 3 Mostly accurate/complete (e.g., missing a signature or date)
- 4 Completely accurate/complete (e.g., no issues noted)

The research staff "shadow" completed the *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log*.

Independent sample t-tests were conducted for each program site, as well as overall. At each program site and overall, there was a significant difference between the accuracy rating of the paperwork submitted by those who received assistance by JusticeCorps members and those who had received no service at all (see table on next page).

Most (92%) of the paperwork submitted by those who received assistance by JusticeCorps members was rated at the top of the scale for being completely accurate. The paperwork for those who had received no assistance ranged in quality from a 1 to a 4 on the 4-point scale.

JusticeCorps Location	Mean Score for SRLs Served by JusticeCorps Member	Mean Score for SRLs Receiving No Assistance
Bay Area (Hayward Hall of Justice)	4.00	2.22***
San Diego (Central Courthouse)	4.00	2.27***
San Diego (South Courthouse)	3.35	1.89***
Los Angeles (Mosk Courthouse)	3.96	2.39***
Total	3.88	2.27***

*** $p < .001$

Pilot Test Assessment

The 1-day studies ran quite smoothly at all four sites that piloted the study. The court clerks were on-board and were quite helpful. Early in the day there were a few instances when self-represented litigants that had been served at the Self-Help Center/FLF office, did not receive the special dot (blue if served by a JusticeCorps member and yellow if served by a staff attorney or paralegal). This situation was solved quickly by providing reminders to all of the staff at the Self-Help Center/FLF offices.

Court Clerks on the whole were very complimentary about the services provided at the Self-Help Center/FLF offices. They were not, however, as familiar with the JusticeCorps Program but they did recognize the “blue shirts.” They offered that for the most part forms that were prepared with the assistance of staff at the Self-Help Center/FLF offices were without problems. This was witnessed by research staff during the 1-day study. They did, however, express an interest in knowing more about what services are provided at the self-help centers and more about the JusticeCorps Program.

Self-represented litigants who received no help, typically had poorly filled out forms or no forms at all. Without fail, those litigants were given the recommendation to go to the Self-Help Center/FLF offices. While many did, the researchers also observed self-represented litigants who pulled another ticket to return to the filing window and tried to complete the forms on their own. These self-represented litigants were invariably sent away again one or more times because of the poor quality of their paperwork.

While the 1-day pilot was successful at all four sites and the results show significance between the accuracy of the paperwork submitted by those who received assistance by JusticeCorps members vs. those who had received no service at all, the number of cases of those served by JusticeCorps members was relatively low. Thus the ability to generalize the findings is limited.

Recommendations and Next Steps for Quasi-Experimental Study

In May 2018, following the first two pilots, a Research Advisory Committee (RAC) from the Judicial Council met to address the following questions as we plan to roll out the evaluation strategy at the remaining court sites during the 2018-19 program year. The RAC considered the following questions:

- ◆ What would be a realistic time period for the full study? The courts that participated were agreeable to a 1-day study were not agreeable to conduct a study for a one or two week period.
- ◆ Does it seem realistic that the court clerks would be able to complete the *Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log* without the assistance of a “shadow”? Or is this likely to be a barrier to participation in the full study?
- ◆ Should we seek to involve every program/court site or should we instead try to do just the programs that have the largest number of JusticeCorps members, thus resulting in a larger sample?

Following a lengthy discussion, the following recommendations came out of this meeting:

Stress the Funding Connection – There has been a fair amount of resistance from some of the program sites to engage in this quasi-experimental study. The reality, however, to maintain AmeriCorps funding requires that we provide moderate to strong evidence that the program is having its intended effect. This means that CNCS requires that we engage in a quasi-experimental design (QED) that uses a like comparison group or an randomized control trial (RCT) that would require randomly selecting SRLs for services vs. no service.

Present the Study to the Decision Makers – The JusticeCorps Regional Directors have limited relationships with or control over the Court Clerks offices where the research must occur. The RAC recommends that the JusticeCorps Program presents the need for evaluation research to the CEOs at the courts that programs serve. It is well established from previous qualitative studies of the JusticeCorps Program that their services are appreciated by the courts. It thus needs to be explained to the court administrators that in order to maintain the program, we are obligated to engage in a QED study. Once the CEOs buy-in to the research, then they can negotiate any road blocks that might arise, such as union issues.

Focus on the Larger Program Sites – Some of the JusticeCorps Programs only have a few members working on any given day whereas other programs have a much larger staff of full-time and minimum members working each day. The RAC recommends that we focus our research efforts on the programs with the largest number of members which would subsequently give us the most data for analysis.

Keep the Study Brief – While it was acknowledged that one day of data collection would not gather sufficient data to be credible, the RAC did recommend that we seek to keep the data collection time period as brief as possible. It was recommended that data be gathered for one day at the larger program sites and two-three days at the smaller sites to be sure to get an adequate sample size.

Train University Reps to Gather Data – During the pilot study, Philliber and the statewide JusticeCorps administrators staffed the study. This was necessary to assess the study methodology and make needed revisions before implementing system-wide. However, this was quite costly due to travel costs. During the 2018-19 program year, it would be far more cost effective to train the program’s University Representatives to gather the required data during the study implementation at each site. The University Representatives are funded through the program matching funds and are not restricted in their duties by the AmeriCorps rules as are the JusticeCorps Members. Philliber staff will travel to each region to train the University Reps. They will “train by doing,” by working side by side at one site for one day. At the end of the day, all forms will be reviewed and feedback provided. Once trained, University Representatives will then staff the remaining court for the remaining days.

Program Improvement Opportunity

As noted above, in the process of conducting the 1-day pilot studies in the four courts, it was discovered that the JusticeCorps Program staff and the court clerks know relatively little about each other functions. This is the case despite the fact that in some of the court houses the two offices are literally next door to each other. While the court clerks routinely refer SRLs to the Self-Help Centers and are familiar with the young people in the “blue shirts”, they were unfamiliar about the JusticeCorps Program and how it enhances the Self-Help’s Centers’ abilities to serve more SRLs. Conversely, the JusticeCorps members were aware of the location of the clerks’ office and they had some limited knowledge of the process of filing forms, but the services that they provide for SRLs might be improved if they were able to describe to the SRLs in detail the actual next steps for filing their court paperwork.

It is recommended that in the next program year that the JusticeCorps Program sites plan some cross training opportunities for court clerks and JusticeCorps members to better understand each other’s roles. This would likely improve the program outcomes, especially court efficiencies.

Summary

Strategy 1: 2017-18 Instance of Assistance Snapshot Study

During the 2017-18 program year, the JusticeCorps Programs in each region documented encounters greater than 15 minutes for 3,788 self-represented litigants assisted by JusticeCorps members (exceeding the PMW benchmark of 3,000).

Most of these encounters lasted 60 minutes or more and involved one-on-one assistance. Just over a quarter of this assistance was provided in languages other than English, most typically in Spanish. The most common assistance provided was help filling out legal forms. Most typically, the cases were family law related with the two most common areas being dissolution of marriage or child custody/visitation. About a fifth of the encounters were related to the civil law, most typically for housing law or restraining orders.

The self-represented litigants were asked to complete a brief form explaining why they were seeking services from the self-help center and provide feedback about the service that they received from the JusticeCorps Program. The vast majority reported that they were planning to represent themselves in court because they could not afford an attorney.

The JusticeCorps Program expected that at least 85% of the SRLs that received at least 15 minutes of personalized service would report increased preparedness to proceed and resolve their legal case (either “somewhat more than before” or “much more than before”). Following the service received, virtually all of the litigants reported feeling either somewhat or much more confident that they understood the legal steps in their case (98%), knew what to do next in their case (97%), and felt able to prepare and file their court forms (95%). These positive results were equally experienced in all three regions. Thus the program far exceeded their short-term outcome objective.

The self-represented litigants assisted by JusticeCorps members gave very high marks as to the helpfulness of the service received. Virtually all (97%) of the litigants reported that the service received was very helpful.

Strategy 2: 2017-18 Justice Corps Quasi-Experimental Study of Court Filing Pilot Study

During the 2017-18 program year, Philliber also successfully designed and pilot tested a quasi-experimental study methodology to determine whether the legal paperwork submitted for filing by SRLs who were assisted by a JusticeCorps member was more accurately completed than paperwork submitted by SRLs who were not served by a JusticeCorps member.

The study was piloted for one day at four court sites and the methodology was improved following each implementation. At each of the study sites, Philliber had to staff the data collection as the court clerks were unable to take on this extra burden. While initially there was reluctance at many of the court sites to participate, some of that reluctance was assuaged by the successful implementations at other courts.

The preliminary results from the study are very promising. Data was collected on total of 257 SRLs who were either served by a JusticeCorps member (25%) or who had received no assistance at all (75%).

Independent sample t-tests were conducted for each program site, as well as overall. At each program site and overall, there was a significant difference between the accuracy rating of the paperwork submitted by those who received assistance by JusticeCorps members and those who had received no service at all.

The trained data collectors took notes about the experience during the study implementation. It was learned that for the most part, the court clerks are not very aware about the JusticeCorps Program. Even though they have more knowledge about the self-help centers (where the JusticeCorps Program operates) there is a desire to learn more about the services they deliver.

Philliber will continue operating the quasi-experimental study during the 2018-19 program year and will involve all but the smallest of sites that won't yield much data. The study will be implemented for one to three days at each court site. The JusticeCorps Program's university representatives will be trained as data collectors to keep the study costs down.

Appendix A:
Instance of Assistance/Litigant Feedback Form
and Member Tally Sheet



2017-18 Instance of Assistance Form

Use only for substantial service (when assistance is ≥ 15 minutes)

Member:		Date:			
Site:					
Total time spent: <input type="checkbox"/> 15-29 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 30-59 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 60-89 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> More than 90 minutes: _____		LEP assistance: <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Language spoken: <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi <input type="checkbox"/> Korean <input type="checkbox"/> Mandarin/Cantonese <input type="checkbox"/> Russian <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Nature of Service: <input type="checkbox"/> One-on-one assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Workshop assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		Type of Service (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Case assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance with forms* <input type="checkbox"/> Information and referral <input type="checkbox"/> Post-hearing follow-up <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____			
Type of Case (check all that apply): <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Family law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Dissolution of marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Child/spousal support <input type="checkbox"/> Child custody/visitation <input type="checkbox"/> Parentage <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Civil law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Housing law <input type="checkbox"/> Restraining orders <input type="checkbox"/> Small claims <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ </td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Family law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Dissolution of marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Child/spousal support <input type="checkbox"/> Child custody/visitation <input type="checkbox"/> Parentage <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Housing law <input type="checkbox"/> Restraining orders <input type="checkbox"/> Small claims <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Family law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Dissolution of marriage <input type="checkbox"/> Child/spousal support <input type="checkbox"/> Child custody/visitation <input type="checkbox"/> Parentage <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Civil law (specify): <input type="checkbox"/> Housing law <input type="checkbox"/> Restraining orders <input type="checkbox"/> Small claims <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____				
*Total number of forms: _____					
NOTES (optional): 					



2017-18 Litigant Feedback Form

1. Why do you plan to represent yourself?

(Check all that apply)

- ☐ I can't afford a lawyer.
☐ I don't want to spend the money for a lawyer.
☐ I want to do my own legal work.

☐ Other *(explain)*:

2. After getting service today, ... *(Circle one for each question)*

a. I understand the legal steps for my case.	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	No different than before
b. I feel able to prepare and file my court forms.	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	No different than before
c. I know what I need to do next.	Much more than before	Somewhat more than before	No different than before

3. Rate the services you got from the JusticeCorps helper today

(Circle one):

Very helpful

Somewhat helpful

Not Helpful

4. Comments/suggestions:



2017-18 Member Service Tally Sheet

Name: _____ Month/Year: _____ Site Location: _____

Each day, for every instance of assistance, place a tally mark in the appropriate columns and have your forms reviewed by the designated supervisor. Please have your supervisor sign your tally sheet after every shift you serve.

- (A) **Total Instances of Assistance (>15 minutes)**: For each litigant you assist for fifteen minutes or longer, make one mark.
 (B) **Total Instances of Assistance (<15 minutes)**: For each litigant you assist for fewer than fifteen minutes, make one mark. This includes any substantive type of assistance provided to a litigant, whether it is forms identification, forms completion, referrals, or similar help.
 (C) **Language Assistance**: Mark once for each litigant you assist who is "Limited English Proficient." LEP persons are defined as individuals who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.
 (D) **Total Forms**: Indicate the total number of forms you helped to complete.
 (E) **Supervisor Comments**: This area is for site supervisors to write any notes on the quality of the completed forms. *(Encouraged)*
 (F) **Supervisor Initial**: This area is for site supervisors to initial member's tally sheet after every shift. *(Required)*

Date	(A) Total Instances of Assistance (>15 minutes)	(B) Total Instances of Assistance (<15 minutes)	(C) Language Assistance (LEP)	(D) Total Forms	(E) Supervisor Comments	(F) Supervisor Initial
MONTH TOTAL	<u>TOTAL COLUMN A</u>	<u>TOTAL COLUMN B</u>	<u>TOTAL COLUMN C</u>	<u>TOTAL COLUMN D</u>		

Appendix B:
Court Readiness Assessment Form



Court Readiness Assessment

Court: _____

JusticeCorps Program Location: _____

Person(s) completing assessment: _____

JusticeCorps Program (to be filled out by the JusticeCorps Program)		
1. How many JC members and fellows are at this program site?	_____ Minimum time members _____ Full time fellows	
2. At this program site, in what ways do JC members most commonly assist self-represented litigants (SRLs) and give us a rough estimate of the overall percent of time they engage in this activity?	<i>(Check all that apply)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> one-to-one assistance <input type="checkbox"/> group/workshop assistance <input type="checkbox"/> telephone assistance <input type="checkbox"/> court room assistance ¹ <input type="checkbox"/> other _____	<i>(Overall percent of time)</i> _____% _____% _____% _____% _____% <u>100%</u>
3. <u>Approximately</u> how many self-represented litigants (SRLs) receive 15 minutes or more of form assistance each week at this JusticeCorps program site?	_____ SRLs	
4. <u>Estimate</u> the percentage of SRLs that file their court papers within a week of receiving assistance from a JC member or fellow.	_____ % file paperwork within a week	
Court Filings		
5. Where are court papers filed and are there different clerks for different departments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Central filing window for all court papers <input type="checkbox"/> Different filing windows for different departments What type of cases handled at each window/room? _____	
6. Is the filing window open every day? If not, what are the days/hours that they take filings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Less than daily, when? _____	
7. For the types of cases most typically handled by your JC program, how many filing clerks/windows are typically open?	_____ Filing clerks/windows	
8. Is there a greeter or navigator at the clerk's office that directs people to the appropriate line/window?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, describe? _____	
9. Is there a filing clerk co-located at the self-help center?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, if so, how often? <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Less than daily, when? _____	
10. Are there any types of cases that have mandatory eFiling that don't go to the filing window?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, which type(s) of case(s)? _____	
11. How does the court staff identify filings by SRLs?	_____	

¹ Orders after hearings or judgments

Court Filings (continued)	
12. <u>Estimate</u> the total daily volume of court filings and <u>approximate</u> the percent of daily filings are by SRLs?	_____ total daily filings _____ % of total daily filings by SRLs
13. What is the typical line/wait at windows?	_____ average wait time in line for filing
14. Are there separate lines for SRLs vs frequent court users (e.g., attorneys)?	<input type="checkbox"/> No special lines <input type="checkbox"/> Special line for SRLs
15. Are there special case management procedures for SRLs to navigate the court's system?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, describe: _____
16. Typically, how long does it take a filing clerk to review an SRL's documents?	_____ minutes
17. Does the clerk's office offer packets of forms for SRLs or can these only be accessed at the Self-Help Center or online?	<input type="checkbox"/> Available at clerk's office <input type="checkbox"/> Only available at Self-Help Center or online
18. When SRLs go to the filing window to purchase forms, are they directed to go to self-help center?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Court Form Accuracy Review	
19. Where and when are court forms reviewed for accuracy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Filing window <input type="checkbox"/> Prehearing review of the case file If yes, does it happen on the same day as the hearing? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Staff-conducted readiness review before the day of the hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
20. At the filing window, does anyone ever get turned away or are forms routinely accepted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Forms get rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Forms are routinely accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
21. Will the clerk offer assistance for correcting forms at time of filing?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, describe: _____
22. Is there a requirement that all SRL's receive services and form reviews at the Self-Help Center?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes,
Clerk Training	
23. Have the filing clerks received special training/guidance on interacting with SRLs?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, describe: _____
24. Are clerks in this court trained on what questions they can and cannot answer?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, describe: _____
Common Issues	
25. Which forms or pleadings/petition seem to create the most problems for SRLs (how and why)?	_____
26. Which forms or pleading/petition are most commonly refused for filing/and or returned? Why?	_____
27. <u>Estimate</u> the percent of the time SRLs try to file the wrong forms?	_____ % of time SRLs try to file wrong forms

Court Buy-In for Study											
28. Does this court already count SRL cases?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes a. At what point is the case counted (e.g., filing or disposition)? _____ b. Are cases counted on: <input type="checkbox"/> A regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> In snapshot studies										
29. Who among the court leadership would most likely support this study?	Name: _____ Position: _____										
30. Who among the court leadership would most likely object to this study? Why?	Name: _____ Position: _____ Reason for objection: _____										
31. Who are the court decision makers? What would be the process for getting buy-in?	_____										
32. What issues might be raised by the court about having data collection assistance provided by the JusticeCorps Program? (e.g., space issue)	<input type="checkbox"/> No need for assistance (e.g., small volume) <input type="checkbox"/> No room at court paper filing location for assistant <input type="checkbox"/> Concerns about confidentiality										
33. How receptive would court staff be to conducting the study?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very Receptive</td> <td></td> <td>Moderately Receptive</td> <td></td> <td>Not at All Receptive</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Very Receptive		Moderately Receptive		Not at All Receptive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very Receptive		Moderately Receptive		Not at All Receptive							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>							
34. How likely is it that the court staff would need assistance for data collection during the study?	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Very Likely</td> <td></td> <td>Somewhat Likely</td> <td></td> <td>Not Likely at All</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Very Likely		Somewhat Likely		Not Likely at All	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very Likely		Somewhat Likely		Not Likely at All							
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>							
35. Other comments/notes about any of the items above: _____											

Appendix C:
1-Day Study FAQ's
Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log and Instructions



2017-18 Justice Corps Evaluation 1 – Day Pilot Study of Court Filing

What Question Are We Trying to Answer?

Is the legal paperwork submitted for filing by self-represented litigants who were assisted by a JusticeCorps member more accurately completed than paperwork submitted by self-represented litigants who received no assistance?

What Forms Do We Use, by Whom, When, Where, and How?

What? Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log - An assessment of the accuracy of all submissions of court forms by self-represented litigants. The main elements of this tool include: (1) type of SRL (served by JC or not), (2) type of case, and (3) determination of paperwork accuracy.

By Whom? A trained JusticeCorps representative who shadows the Court Clerk(s)

When? Assessment is completed during a 1-day study during April and May.

Where? Data will be collected at the Court Clerks' offices or other court location (e.g., court room), whichever is the location when determination is made as to whether the correct paperwork is completed accurately enough so as the SRLs can proceed with their cases.

How? For one day before and the day of the 1-day study the JusticeCorps program site will mark the top of the site supervised reviewed and approved paperwork packet with a removable blue dot to indicate that the SRL was assisted by a JusticeCorps member. This will eliminate the problem of recall given that there might be a delay between the time of service and the actual court filing. Supervising attorneys will be trained to put the removable blue dot on the top of final set of reviewed papers before the SRL leaves the site.

Given that at the Family Law Facilitator's office/Self-Help Center might also have paralegals or attorneys also assisting SRLs with filling out court forms, these staff will be trained to put a removable yellow dot on the top of the final set of reviewed papers completed with their assistance. This will enable the researchers to remove these cases from the study. The study is not comparing the work of the JusticeCorps members with other trained FLF/SHC staff.

At the Court Clerk's window or court location (e.g., court room) where determination is made about proper filing, data will be gathered each time a SRL submits papers for filing. The **Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log** will have a separate row for gathering information regarding the paperwork submitted by each SRL.

Why Are We Doing This?

We believe the JusticeCorps program results in court efficiencies and improved outcomes for SRLs assisted by JusticeCorps members. Previous JusticeCorps studies gathered qualitative interview data with court administrators to assess their perception as to whether SRLs served by JusticeCorps members were better prepared when filing their paperwork for hearings.

It is required by AmeriCorps for continued program funding that we engage in more rigorous evaluation of the JusticeCorps Program. This study design vastly improves on the previous studies by employing a more rigorous design to compare the determination of accuracy of paperwork of SRLs assisted by JusticeCorps members vs. SRLs who received no assistance. However, the study methodology has not been tested, which is the purpose of this 1-day study.

How Will Study Sites be Selected?

In March 2018, JusticeCorps Program Directors and Coordinators with assistance of court staff completed a Court Readiness Assessment Form that described process for and volume of court filings. Following a review of these forms and with further discussion with JusticeCorps Program Directors, the highest volume, most amenable site in each region was selected to pilot the study methodology.

How Will Sites be Supported?

Customized Support - Part of the readiness assessment process was to determine of the level of support necessary to conduct the 1-day study. Due to the high volume of filings at the selected sites, it was determined that trained support staff person will be assigned to shadow the Court Clerks to gather the required data.

Training and Written Guides – The key persons (e.g., Site Supervisors and Clerk Supervisors) who will participate in the study will be oriented the week prior to data collection. Participating sites will also receive a written protocol to guide the study. Regional Program Directors and/or Program Coordinators will also be trained in the study protocol. Philliber will be on-site for data collection and technical assistance during the 1-day data collection period.

How Will Confidentiality be Protected?

The **Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log** does not gather any identifying information about the SRLs. The shadow data collector will not review the forms nor take any notes aside from gathering the few data elements required for the study.

What Happens to Next?

Analysis and Report - The logs will be sent to Philliber for data entry into an Excel database. Data will be analyzed in Stata and a report will be produced that analyzes the average time the court staff needs to spend reviewing packets and the accuracy rate of paperwork from SRLs served by the JC program compared to SRLs who received no assistance.

Research Advisory Committee – The results of the 1-day study will be presented to a group of court researchers to get feedback and advice about the design and methodology. The results of the convening of the Research Advisory Committee will be presented at the JusticeCorps statewide meeting in June.



Court	Clerk/Window	
Rater	Time started	Time Ended

[illegible]



Legal Paperwork Accuracy Log Instructions for Data Collectors

For each self-reprinted litigant (SRL) that is served at the clerk's window (other court location) please fill out one row on the log.

Do not fill out a row for litigants that are represented by an attorney.

1. Has the SRL been served by the JusticeCorps program (JC) or by the Legal Self-help Center/Family Law Facilitator's office?

SRL's served by JusticeCorps will have a **blue dot** at the top right hand corner of the first form. Circle "JC."

Those SRLS served by the SHC/FLF office will have a **yellow dot** at the top right hand corner of the first form. Circle "SHC."

If there is no dot, then circle "No."

If the SRL tells the clerk that they had received help at the SHC/FLF before the study began, or if they received assistance by another organization or document preparer, then circle "Other."

2. For what type of case is the SRL filing paperwork?

Enter the description or code(s) on the line that corresponds to the type of case.

Family law

FL – DM Dissolution of marriage
FL - C/SS Child/spousal support
FL – CC/V Child custody/visitation
FL – P Parentage
FL- DV Domestic Violence
FL - O Other

Civil law

CL – HL Housing law
CL – RO Restraining orders
CL- SC Small claims
CL – O Other

3. For SRL's served by JC or who have received no assistance, ask the court clerk/court staff to rate the accuracy and completeness of the SRL's paperwork on the following 4-point scale:

1	Not accurate/complete (e.g., used wrong forms; filing rejected)
2	Partly accurate/complete (e.g., many issues noted)
3	Mostly accurate/complete (e.g., missing a signature or date)
4	Completely accurate/complete (e.g., no issues noted)

Do not have the court clerk/court staff rate forms for SRLs that received assistance by an attorney at the Self-Help Center.

4. In the notes column, indicate whether the SRL had been served by another outside service (e.g., a legal service agency or document preparation business). Also indicate any SRLs that were served by the "SHC" two or more days ago. For those cases, circle "Other" in the first column.