

UNEMPLOYMENT APPEALS SELF HELP CLINIC 2017 REPORT

In 2017 the clinic assisted 36 people. 12 customers attended the in-person clinic, held at the State Law Library, and 25 attended the clinic via telephone. (One person attended the clinic twice.) Last year cases with at least one pro se party constituted about 92% of unemployment appeal case filings. There were a total of 104 unemployment cases filed.

Clinic details

Typically, the clinic operates twice per month; once via phone and once at the State Law Library. For people using the phone clinic, their experience involves speaking with a volunteer attorney for approximately 30 minutes. Prior to calling the customer, the attorney reviews both the customer's initial decision from the unemployment law judge and the decision in response to the request for reconsideration.

The in-person clinic, at the State Law Library, has an additional component. After the customer meets with the attorney, he or she can spend approximately 15 minutes with a member of the law library staff, who can assist the customer with the unemployment appeals forms packet. Law librarians do not provide legal advice, but offer guidance on the process of filing the appeal. They also show clinic customers samples of informal appellate briefs and the State Law Library's unemployment case law database.

Appeals filed

21 of the clinic customers (57%) decided not to file an appeal after consulting with the clinic attorney.

Full representation provided

Three customers were provided full representation by the Appellate Pro Bono Panel.

Appeal Outcomes

- Appeals dismissed 3
 - (no brief filed – 2)
 - (untimely appeal – 1)
- Appeal dismissed & remanded 2
 - (upon motion by DEED)
- ULJ affirmed 7
- ULJ reversed 1*
 - (upon motion by DEED)
- ULJ reversed and remanded 1*

* Appellant had counsel from the Appellate Pro Bono Panel.

Counties of customers:

Aitkin, Anoka, Benton, Blue Earth, Carver, Goodhue, Hennepin, Hubbard, Kandiyohi, Lyon, Mower, Otter Tail, Ramsey, Rice, Scott, St. Louis, Washington, Wright

About the clinic

In April 2013, the Minnesota State Law Library and the Labor and Employment Section of the MSBA started a free clinic for people contemplating an appeal to the Minnesota Court of Appeals from a denial of unemployment benefits. The clinic is staffed by volunteer attorneys and law library staff.

Attorney volunteers in 2017:

Howard Bolter, Amy Boyle, Sarah Crippen, Joshua Erspamer, Marlene Garvis, Nathan Griffin, Kelly Jeanetta, Mary Kaczorek, Corey Kobbervig, Jonathan Reppe, Brian Rochel

State Law Library volunteers:

Sarah Larsen, Liz Reppe