



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

Emerging Directions for Serving People

Over the last year, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) has engaged in a listening process with our key stakeholders that has allowed our agency to develop a clearer picture of itself today and to discern the directions that we need to follow to build upon our wonderful history.

This process has resulted in three key outcomes:

The first, and perhaps most important outcome, is **a deepened commitment to a shared mission and a sense of enthusiasm for LSSI's work among its key stakeholders**, including our staff.

This has brought energy to our second outcome — **a shift to a more collaborative and creative way of doing our work**. There is a sense among those who participated in this process that people and communities should be engaged as partners for the sake of creating long-lasting and systemic change.

Next, we learned that **our work is vital in meeting essential needs of people in our state**. The third outcome of the listening process affirmed the five service areas that LSSI currently focuses on.

The last outcome of this process is **the development of an umbrella strategy** to give increased focus and confidence to our agency as we face the challenges of an emerging future. This strategy includes our purpose or mission statement, guiding principles and strategic directions.

People are excited about LSSI's mission.

Our guiding principles emerged from patterns that could be seen as people talked about the things that excite them about LSSI, what they value, along with their worries and hopes for LSSI.

These six principles will reshape our agency's work in dramatic ways. They define the way we will do our work and the nature of our calling to provide leadership in church and society to empower and advocate on behalf of members of our communities who are vulnerable or in need.

Five new strategic directions were also identified, which will help LSSI focus its energy, attention and resources for the sake of moving with confidence into the future.

- #1** Maintain and manage program services effectively and efficiently to meet the growing needs of people and communities.

- #2** Explore and implement new ways of working that are innovative, integrated and collaborative.

- #3** Call and equip churches and communities to tackle local needs to expand our impact.

- #4** Build a brand that reflects our leadership role in Illinois, attracts a more diverse and sustainable funding base, and maximizes our influence.

- #5** Develop resources to upgrade our physical properties and technological infrastructure.

During the coming years, we will work together with those who helped shape this vision, which will move us into our future with a continuous way of seeing and working that releases creativity and uses the assets, gifts and passions from all areas of LSSI's work and our partners throughout the state.

I look forward to sharing this journey with those who share the mission and vision of our work and who also seek to follow God's leading in our new directions.

In Faith,

The Rev. Denver Bitner, D.Min.
President/CEO

Mission Statement

Responding to the Gospel
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois
brings healing, justice and wholeness
to people and communities.

Guiding Principles

Love: We celebrate, respect, and appreciate our staff, clients, donors and friends as unique gifts from God.

Lift: We work in ways that empower people and promote healthy self-reliance and independence.

Learn: We listen and learn from each other, our clients and partners in ministry, as we share our stories, information, and knowledge.

Link: We work together in collaboration with others in the organization and also with church and community partners.

Leverage: We generate and employ an abundant mix of resources in responsible ways to work for excellence in all we do.

Lead: We provide leadership in church and society to empower and advocate on behalf of members of our communities who are vulnerable or in need.

Strategic Directions

1. Maintain and manage program services effectively and efficiently to meet the growing needs of people and communities.
2. Explore and implement new ways of working that are innovative, integrated and collaborative.
3. Call and equip churches and communities to tackle local needs to expand our impact.
4. Build a brand that reflects our leadership role in Illinois, attracts a more diverse and sustainable funding base, and maximizes our influence.
5. Develop resources to upgrade our physical properties and technological infrastructure.