

## Frequently Asked Questions about Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI)

### 1. What does LSSI do?

LSSI is the largest statewide social service agency in Illinois. It is the social ministry organization of the three Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) synods in Illinois. We offer services for the state's most at-risk residents including:

- Foster care
- Family support services
- Head Start and child care
- Mental health services
- Alcohol and drug treatment
- Home care for seniors
- Affordable senior housing
- Residential programs for people with developmental disabilities
- Programs that help incarcerated individuals remain connected to their children
- Employment skills school for those recently released from incarceration
- Help for families and individuals impacted by natural disasters

### 2. Where is LSSI located?

Our administrative offices are in Des Plaines, but LSSI offers dozens of programs at sites across the state.

### 3. How long has LSSI been around?

LSSI began in 1867 as an orphanage for children who lost their parents in the cholera epidemic. We will mark our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary on October 31, 2017.

### 4. What is LSSI's mission?

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

### 5. Does a person have to be Lutheran to receive services from LSSI?

No – LSSI serves all people without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

### 6. How many people does LSSI serve?

- In FY16 LSSI served over 63,000 people; more than 60% of these clients had a household income of under \$15,000 per year.
- LSSI is the largest provider of foster care in Illinois, caring for 10% of all children in foster care in the state. (2,000 children served annually)
- In FY16, LSSI offered over 26,000 hours of care to homebound seniors.

## **7. What role does the state of Illinois play in LSSI's services?**

The state of Illinois contracts with LSSI to provide services to state residents, including children in foster care and people living with physical and mental disabilities. LSSI receives payments from the state as required by court orders and federal mandates.

## **8. What is Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR)?**

LDR-IL is a program of LSSI that responds to communities within the state that have been affected by disaster; its focus is on long term recovery. We also offer workshops in emergency preparedness for congregations and individuals.

## **9. Does LSSI have affiliations with other organizations?**

LSSI is a social service ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). It is a ministry partner of the three ELCA synods in Illinois: the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, the Northern Illinois Synod and the Central/Southern Illinois Synod.

LSSI is affiliated with:

- Lutheran Services in America
- United Way
- Corporation for National and Community Service
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Illinois Balanced and Restorative Justice Initiative
- Illinois Housing Development Authority

LSSI is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA), Better Business Bureau-Wise Giving Alliance and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

## **10. How can I help LSSI?**

- You can donate on-line at [LSSI.org](http://LSSI.org).
- You can mail a gift to LSSI, 1001 E. Touhy, Des Plaines, IL 60018
- You can prayerfully remember LSSI's ministry in your will and estate plans. Please visit [www.LSSI.giftplans.org](http://www.LSSI.giftplans.org)
- You can give us your email address and subscribe to our bi-weekly email message, *Good Works*.
- Thrivent members can direct their Thrivent Choice® dollars to LSSI.
- Thrivent members can form Action Teams to raise money for LSSI's programs and clients.
- You can advocate on LSSI's behalf with your pastor, congregation council, social ministry committee and stewardship staff.
- You can follow LSSI on Facebook and share our posts with your friends.
- You can pray for LSSI and all those we serve on your behalf.