

MLSC Outreach Series Questionnaire Data Report 2026

Empowering Communities Through Awareness and Advocacy

Prepared by: Micronesian Legal Services Corporation, Pohnpei Office

Foreword

It is my honor to present this report on information gathered from the 2026 Community Outreach Series.

Access to justice begins when people understand their rights and know where to seek assistance when needed. The 2026 Community Outreach Series was built around that principle. Guided by the theme, *Empowering Communities Through Awareness and Advocacy*, this outreach series sought to bring information and essential public services directly to the communities around Pohnpei. MLSC and its partner agencies created opportunities for people to learn about available services, ask questions, and share real concerns affecting their personal lives.

On behalf of the MLSC Pohnpei Office, I extend my sincerest appreciation to all partner agencies, the eleventh Pohnpei Legislature, municipal governments, and everyone who contributed their time and effort to this undertaking. Most especially, I thank the members of the communities who attended, shared their experiences, and completed the questionnaires reflected in this report. Their participation made this series possible and gave purpose to the work documented in the pages that follow.

It is my hope that the findings presented here will guide future outreach events and contribute to making our island of Pohnpei a more informed, accessible, and just place for all.



Benedict "Rudson" Robert

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About the 2026 Outreach Series

From February through June 2026, the Micronesian Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) Pohnpei Office worked with several government agencies to conduct a community outreach series in five municipalities across Pohnpei. This event was funded by the Eleventh Pohnpei Legislature.

The purpose of the series was to bring information and services closer to the communities they are intended to serve. At each event, community members were able to learn about the roles and services of the participating agencies and better understand where to seek assistance with legal, health, land, Social Security, and other government-related matters.

The outreach events were held on the following dates:

- U Municipality: February 27, 2026
- Sokehs Municipality: March 27, 2026
- Kitti Municipality: April 30, 2026
- Nett Municipality: May 29, 2026
- Madolenihmw Municipality: June 25, 2026

The outreach series was conducted in collaboration with: Micronesian Legal Services Corporation, Pohnpei State Attorney General's Office, Pohnpei State Department of Health Services, FSM Social Security Administration, FSM Public Defender's Office, Pohnpei State Court of Land Tenure, and Pohnpei State Department of Land.

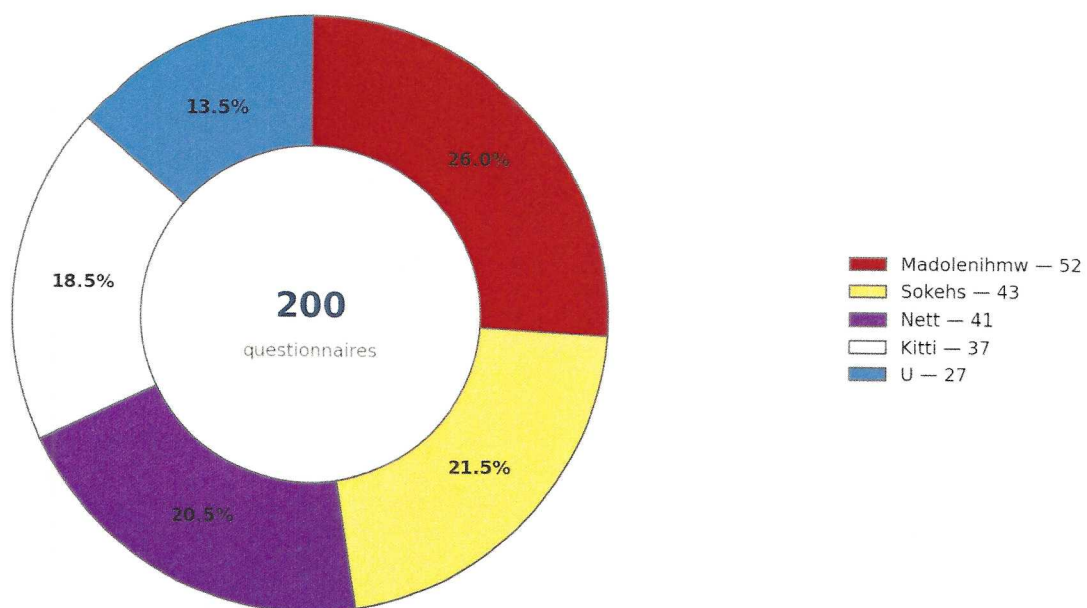
Participants at each outreach event were invited to complete a questionnaire about their understanding of available services, the legal concerns affecting their communities, the barriers they had experienced when seeking assistance, and the topics they believed should be prioritized in future outreach efforts.

This report is based on 200 questionnaires completed by participants across the five outreach events. Each questionnaire question is presented before the corresponding chart or table. Some questions allowed participants to select more than one answer; therefore, the total number of selections may exceed the number of completed questionnaires. "N/A" indicates that a participant did not answer that particular question, even though the participant may have completed the remaining questions in the questionnaire. It should not be interpreted as a separate substantive response.

The information presented in this report is based on those responses and is intended to help better understand community needs and guide future outreach efforts.

Questionnaires by Municipality

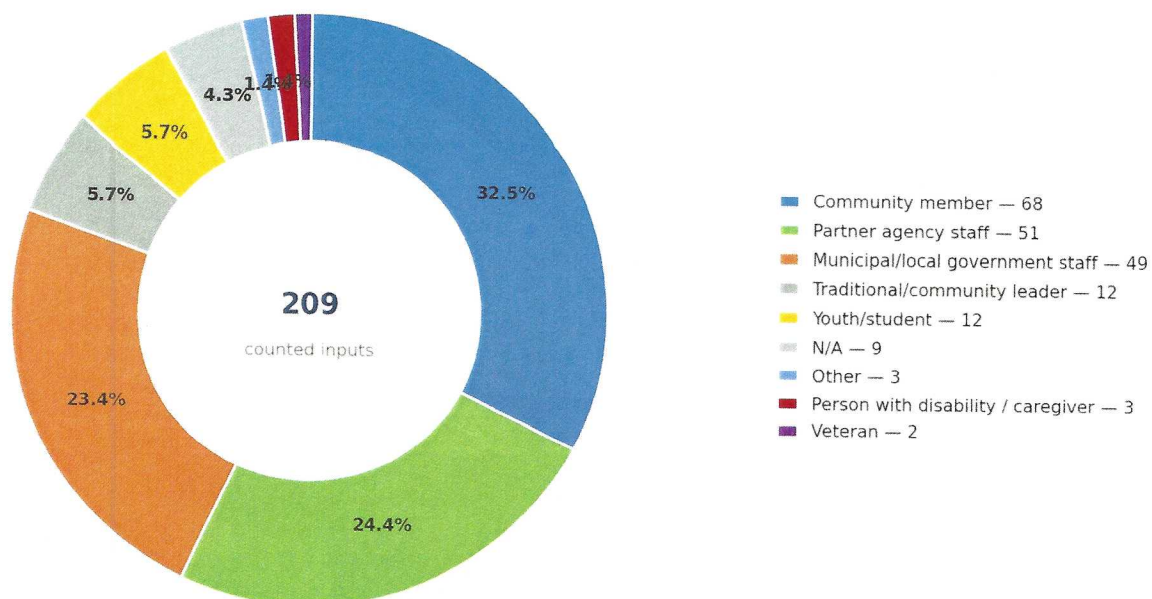
Questionnaires by Municipality



Municipality	Questionnaires	Percentage
Madolenihmw	52	26.0%
Sokehs	43	21.5%
Nett	41	20.5%
Kitti	37	18.5%
U	27	13.5%

What best describes you?

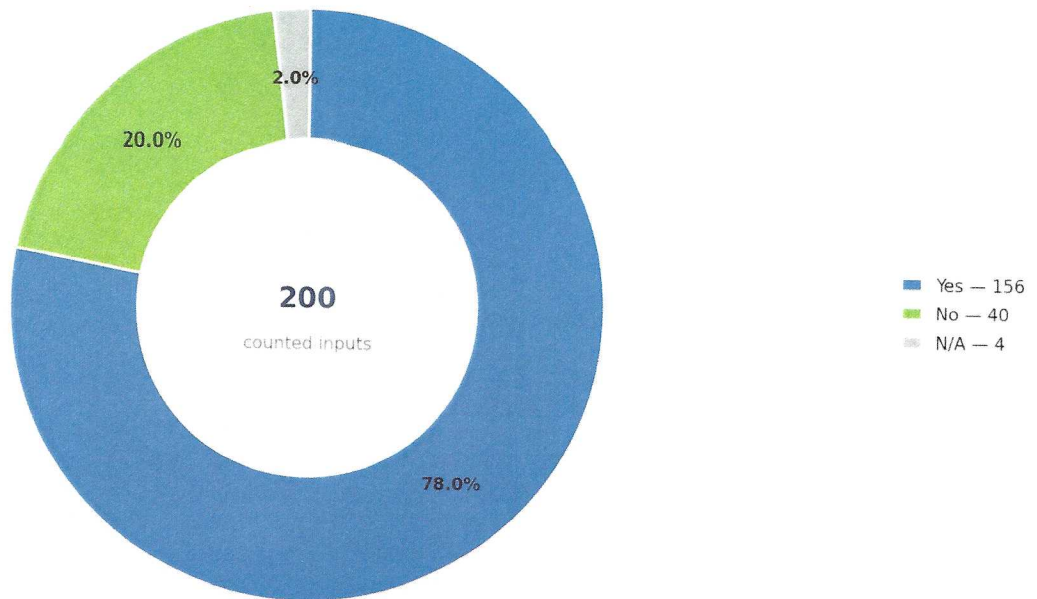
Respondent Type



Respondent type	Entries	Percentage
Community member	68	32.5%
Partner agency staff	51	24.4%
Municipal/local government staff	49	23.4%
Traditional/community leader	12	5.7%
Youth/student	12	5.7%
N/A	9	4.3%
Other	3	1.4%
Person with disability / caregiver	3	1.4%
Veteran	2	1.0%

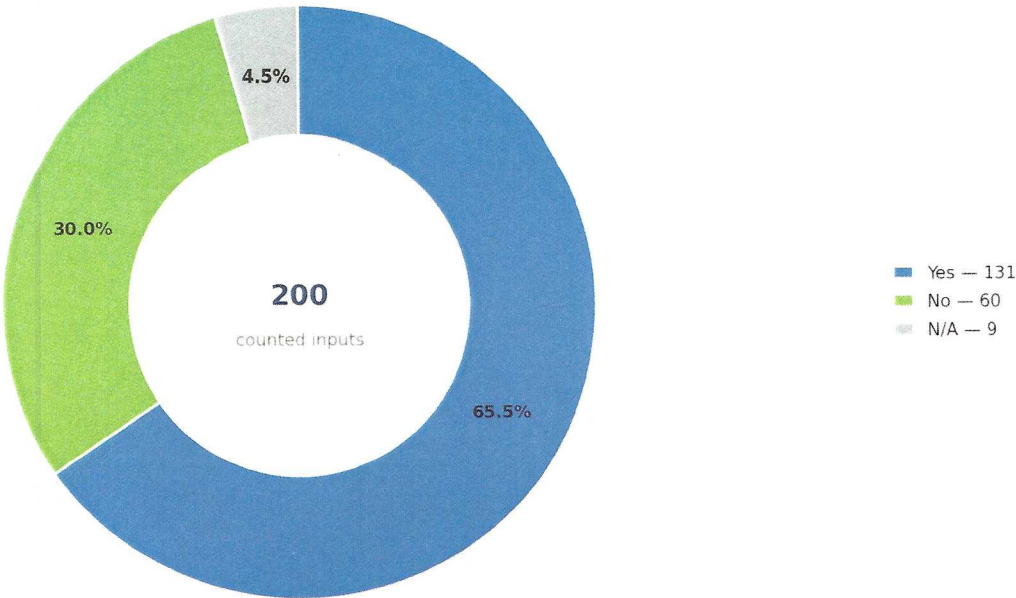
Is this your first time attending an MLSC Outreach?

First Time Attending an MLSC Outreach



Response	Questionnaires	Percentage
Yes	156	78.0%
No	40	20.0%
N/A	4	2.0%

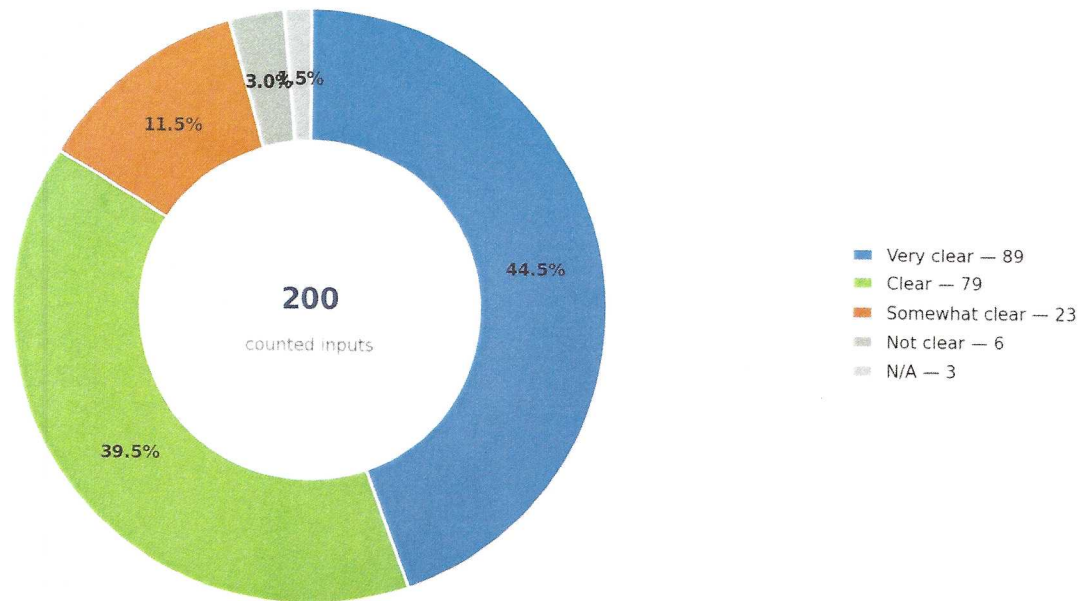
Before today, did you know MLSC provides free civil legal services?
Prior Knowledge of Free MLSC Civil Legal Services



Response	Questionnaires	Percentage
Yes	131	65.5%
No	60	30.0%
N/A	9	4.5%

After today, how clear is your understanding of MLSC's services?

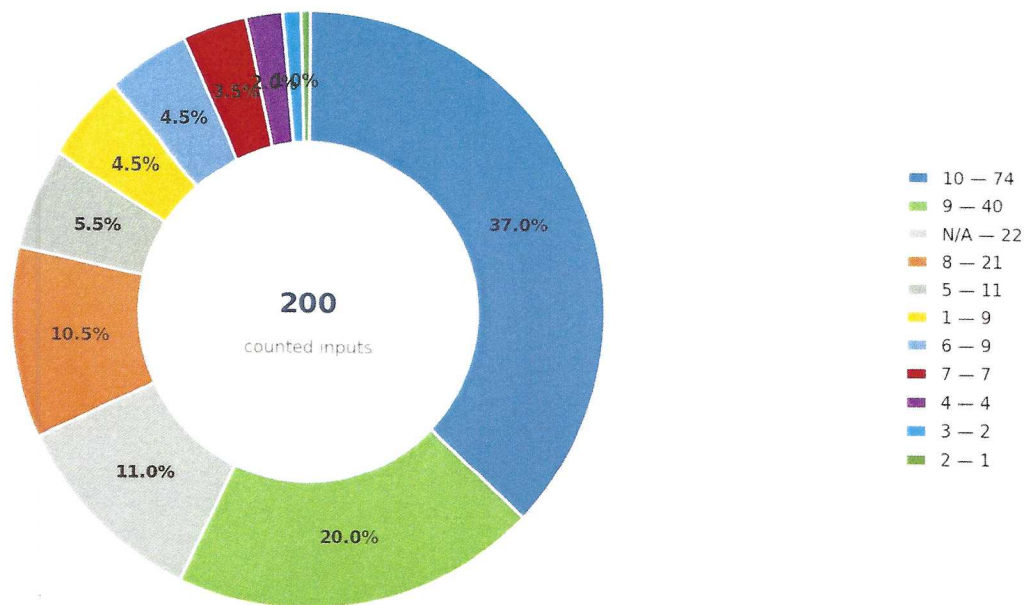
Understanding of MLSC Services After the Outreach



Response	Questionnaires	Percentage
Very clear	89	44.5%
Clear	79	39.5%
Somewhat clear	23	11.5%
Not clear	6	3.0%
N/A	3	1.5%

Overall Event Rating (10 being the highest, 1 being the lowest)

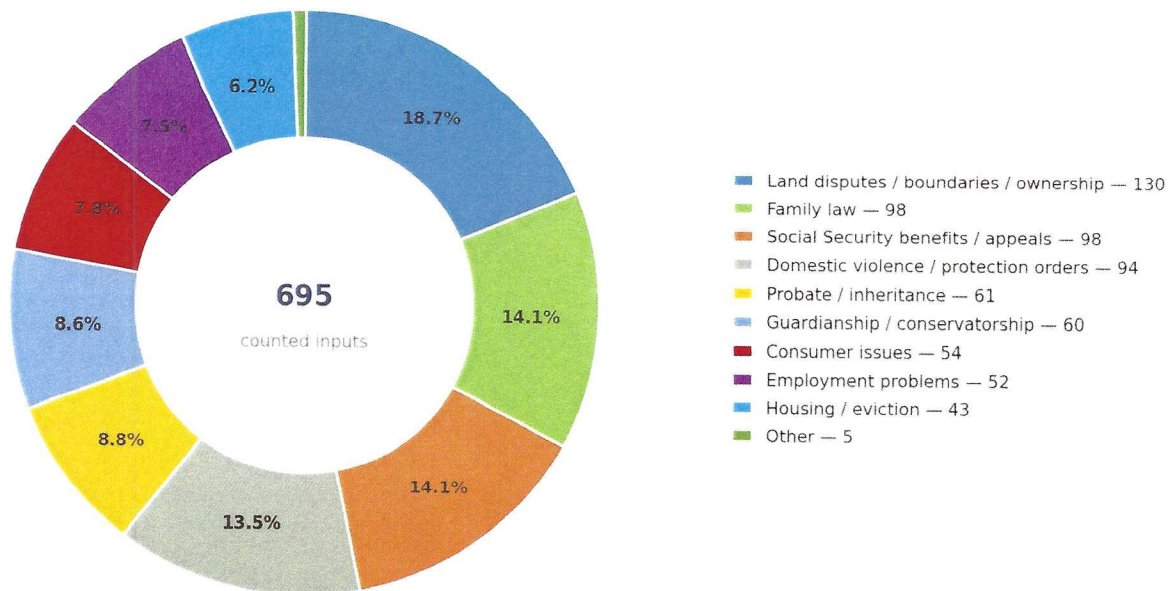
Overall Event Rating



Rating	Questionnaires	Percentage
10	74	37.0%
9	40	20.0%
N/A	22	11.0%
8	21	10.5%
5	11	5.5%
1	9	4.5%
6	9	4.5%
7	7	3.5%
4	4	2.0%
3	2	1.0%
2	1	0.5%

What Legal Issues Does Your Community Need the Most Help With? (Multiple Choice)

Legal Issues Communities Need the Most Help With



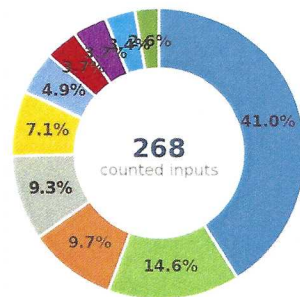
Legal issue	Selections	Percentage
Land disputes / boundaries / ownership	130	18.7%
Family law	98	14.1%
Social Security benefits / appeals	98	14.1%
Domestic violence / protection orders	94	13.5%
Probate / inheritance	61	8.8%
Guardianship / conservatorship	60	8.6%
Consumer issues	54	7.8%
Employment problems	52	7.5%
Housing / eviction	43	6.2%
Other	5	0.7%

Legal Issues Communities Need the Most Help With (Municipality Breakdown) The table below reports the exact number of recorded selections or coded mentions in each municipality.

Category	Nett	Sokehs	Kitti	Madolenihmw	U	Total
Land disputes / boundaries / ownership	28	33	27	32	10	130
Family law	16	26	17	26	13	98
Social Security benefits / appeals	16	25	18	23	16	98
Domestic violence / protection orders	17	24	11	27	15	94
Probate / inheritance	10	21	10	17	3	61
Guardianship / conservatorship	8	17	8	15	12	60
Consumer issues	8	12	11	12	11	54
Employment problems	8	15	6	14	9	52
Housing / eviction	9	12	5	7	10	43
Other	2	1	0	2	0	5

What Top Two (2) Legal Issues/Challenges Does Your Community Need the Most Help With? (Write-in Responses)

Top Legal Challenges Identified in Write-In Responses



- Land disputes, boundaries, ownership, or land matters — 110
- Social Security benefits or appeals — 39
- Domestic violence or domestic issues — 26
- Family law, custody, support, marriage, or adoption — 25
- Employment or unemployment — 19
- Other themes — 13
- Access to legal help or lack of legal understanding — 10
- Consumer, debt, collection, or financial issues — 10
- Probate, inheritance, or heirship — 9
- Crime, public safety, traffic, theft, or substance-related issues — 7

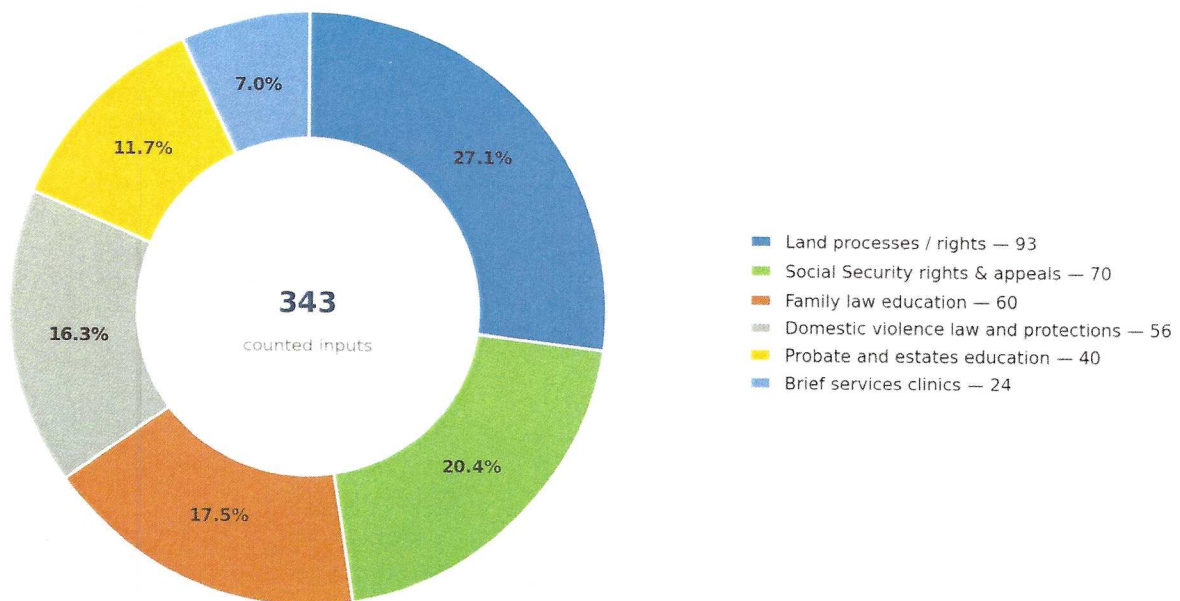
Legal challenge theme	Mentions	Percentage
Land disputes, boundaries, ownership, or land matters	110	41.0%
Social Security benefits or appeals	39	14.6%
Domestic violence or domestic issues	26	9.7%
Family law, custody, support, marriage, or adoption	25	9.3%
Employment or unemployment	19	7.1%
Access to legal help or lack of legal understanding	10	3.7%
Consumer, debt, collection, or financial issues	10	3.7%
Probate, inheritance, or heirship	9	3.4%
Crime, public safety, traffic, theft, or substance-related issues	7	2.6%
Infrastructure or public services	4	1.5%
Government, traditional, or community-administration matters	3	1.1%
Guardianship or conservatorship	2	0.7%
Human rights or equality	2	0.7%
General court, civil, or criminal matters	1	0.4%
Housing	1	0.4%

Top Legal Challenges Identified in Write-In Response (Municipality Breakdown)

Category	Nett	Sokehs	Kitti	Madolenihmw	U	Total
Land disputes/boundaries/ownership	21	28	21	27	13	110
Social Security	8	6	9	11	5	39
Domestic violence/domestic issues	5	7	4	8	2	26
Family law	6	8	4	6	1	25
Employment/unemployment	5	3	3	8	0	19
Access to legal help/legal understanding	2	1	4	2	1	10
Consumer/financial issues	3	2	2	3	0	10
Probate/inheritance/heirship	0	2	3	3	1	9
Crime/public safety/substance issues	1	2	1	1	2	7
Infrastructure/public services	1	1	1	1	0	4
Government/traditional/community matters	1	2	0	0	0	3
Guardianship/conservatorship	1	1	0	0	0	2
Human rights/equality	0	1	0	0	1	2
General court/civil/criminal matters	0	0	0	0	1	1
Housing	0	0	0	1	0	1

What Outreach Topics Should MLSC Prioritize Next?

Outreach Topics MLSC Should Prioritize Next

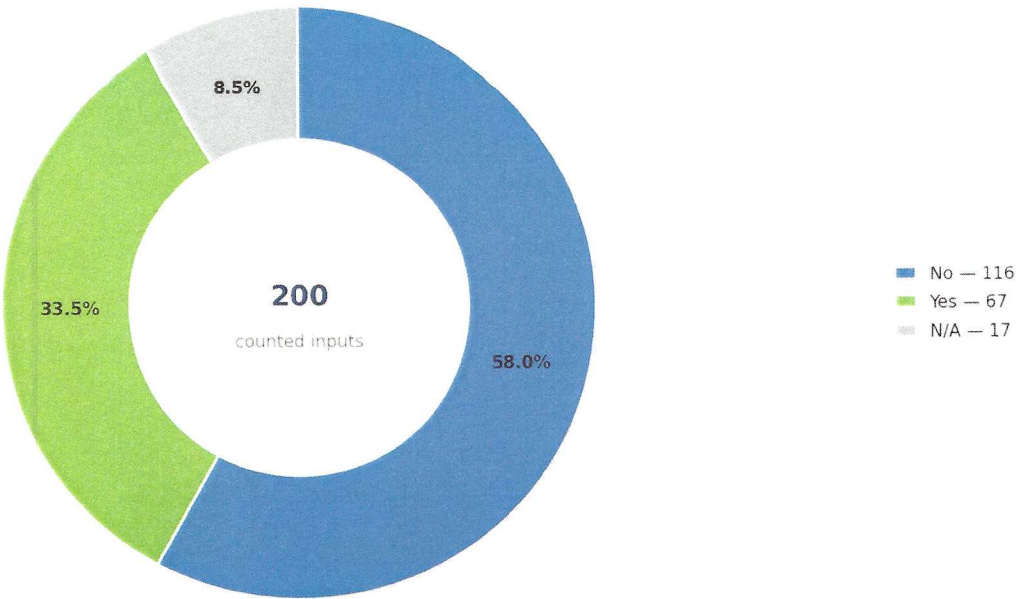


Priority outreach topic	Selections	Percentage
Land processes / rights	93	27.1%
Social Security rights & appeals	70	20.4%
Family law education	60	17.5%
Domestic violence law and protections	56	16.3%
Probate and estates education	40	11.7%
Brief services clinics	24	7.0%

Municipality breakdown (counts)

Category	Nett	Sokehs	Kitti	Madolenihmw	U	Total
Land processes / rights	22	22	19	22	8	93
Social Security rights & appeals	11	18	14	17	10	70
Family law education	15	18	10	11	6	60
Domestic violence law and protections	10	12	7	18	9	56
Probate and estates education	6	10	5	12	7	40
Brief services clinics	4	5	4	5	6	24

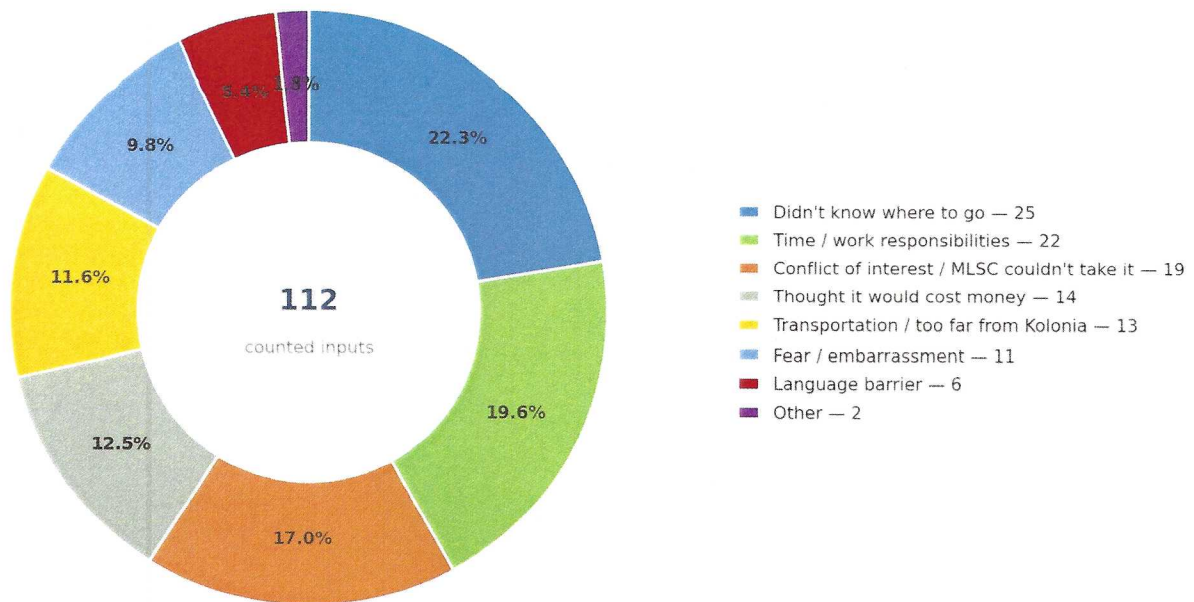
Have you ever needed legal help but did not receive it?
Needed Legal Help but Did Not Receive It



Response	Questionnaires	Percentage
No	116	58.0%
Yes	67	33.5%
N/A	17	8.5%

If yes, what was the reason?

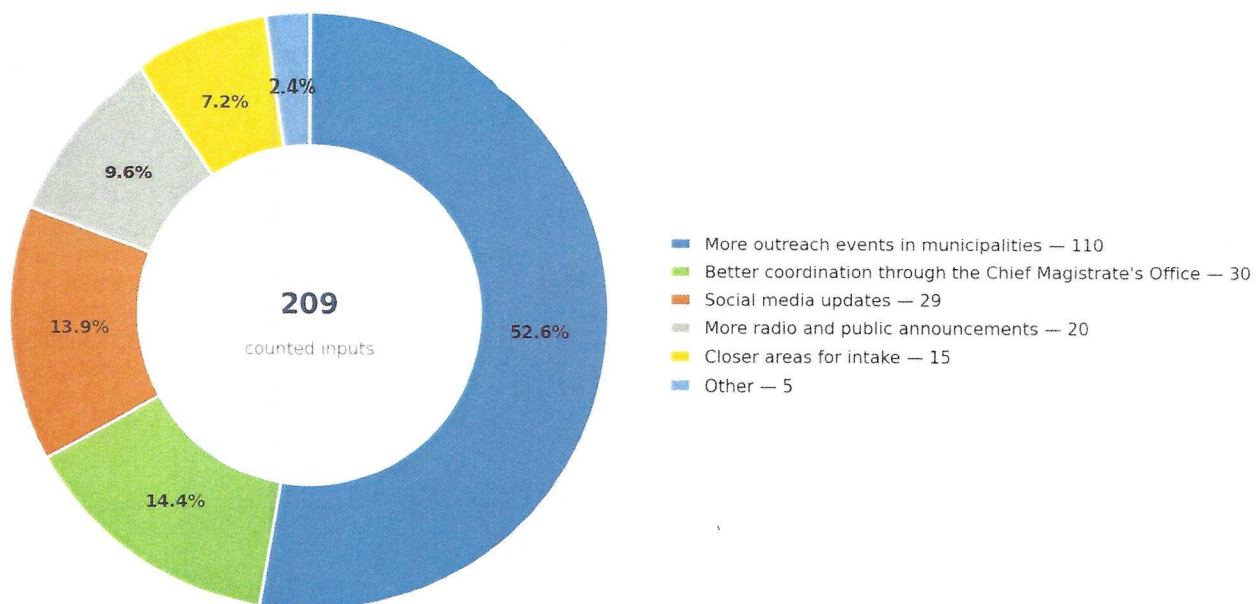
Reasons Legal Help Was Not Obtained



Reason	Selections	Percentage
Didn't know where to go	25	22.3%
Time / work responsibilities	22	19.6%
Conflict of interest / MLSC couldn't take it	19	17.0%
Thought it would cost money	14	12.5%
Transportation / too far from Kolonia	13	11.6%
Fear / embarrassment	11	9.8%
Language barrier	6	5.4%
Other	2	1.8%

What is the best way for MLSC to improve access to your community?

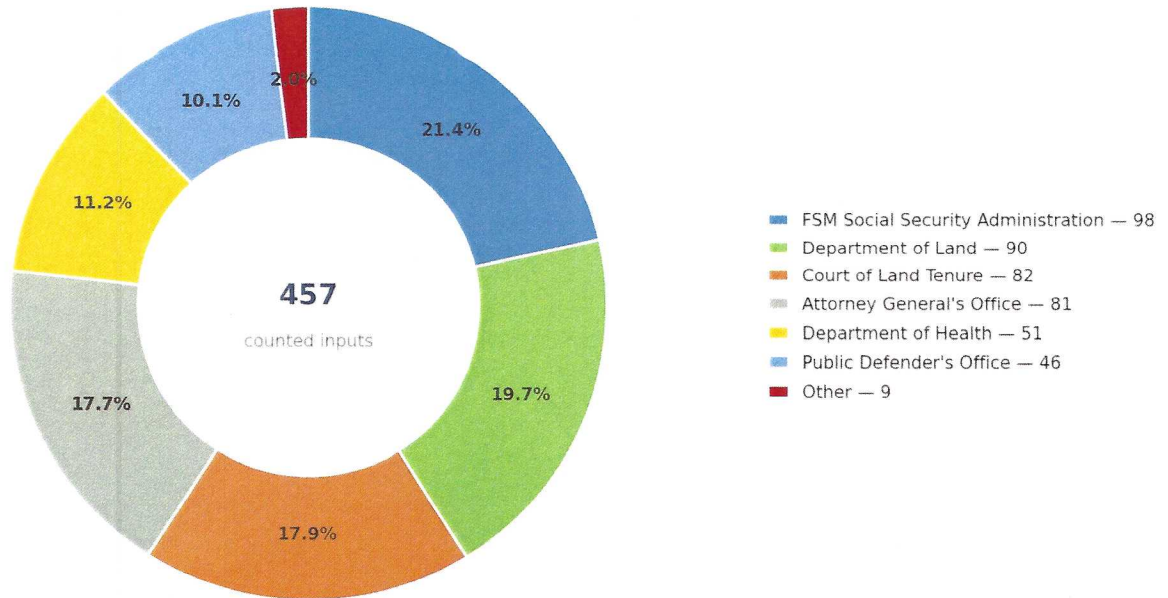
Best Ways for MLSC to Improve Access



Access improvement	Selections	Percentage
More outreach events in municipalities	110	52.6%
Better coordination through the Chief Magistrate's Office	30	14.4%
Social media updates	29	13.9%
More radio and public announcements	20	9.6%
Closer areas for intake	15	7.2%
Other	5	2.4%

Which agency presentation helped you understand services better? Which agency are you looking forward to?

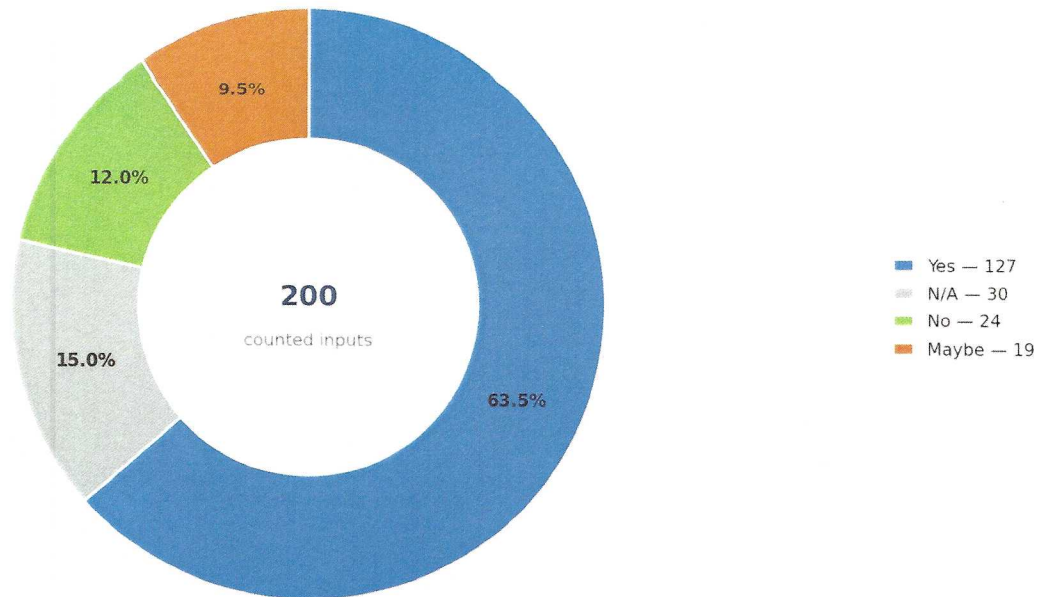
Agency Presentations or Services of Interest



Agency	Selections	Percentage
FSM Social Security Administration	98	21.4%
Department of Land	90	19.7%
Court of Land Tenure	82	17.9%
Attorney General's Office	81	17.7%
Department of Health	51	11.2%
Public Defender's Office	46	10.1%
Other	9	2.0%

Would you attend another outreach like this?

Willingness to Attend Another Outreach



Response	Questionnaires	Percentage
Yes	127	63.5%
N/A	30	15.0%
No	24	12.0%
Maybe	19	9.5%

Common Comments on How MLSC and Partner Agencies Can Improve Next Outreach Events.

Overall, the dominant feedback from the community was highly positive, indicating that no immediate improvements are required. However, among the participants who did offer constructive input, the suggestions focused on the following specific areas for improvement:

1. The community suggested increasing public awareness and collaborating to boost community turnout.
2. Attendees recommended thoroughly reviewing the scheduling, venue setups, and session timings prior to future events.
3. Community members expressed a desire for more frequent outreach initiatives directly within their local areas.
4. Participants requested that future presentations be conducted in the Pohnpeian language to ensure the information is clear and accessible to everyone.
5. Residents strongly recommended expanding the program's reach by conducting outreach events in the outer islands of Pohnpei.

Key Findings at a Glance

The most significant findings from the 200 gathered questionnaires include:

- Most participants were new to MLSC outreach. Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported that this was their first time attending an MLSC outreach event.
- Participants reported a stronger understanding of MLSC's services. After the outreach, 84% of respondents described their understanding of MLSC's services as either clear or very clear.
- Land matters were the most frequently identified legal need. Land disputes, boundaries, and ownership received the highest number of selections among the listed legal issues. Land-related concerns also accounted for 41% of the challenges identified in written responses.
- Social Security concerns emerged as a major community need. Social Security benefits and appeals received 98 selections, tying with family law as the second most frequently identified legal issue, behind land matters. Social Security rights and appeals also ranked second among the topics participants wanted prioritized in future outreach.
- The FSM Social Security Administration generated particularly strong interest. It received the highest number of selections in the question concerning agency presentations that participants were looking forward to.
- A significant number of participants had previously gone without legal assistance. Thirty-three and a half percent of respondents reported that they had needed legal help in the past but did not receive it.
- Lack of information remained a major barrier. Among participants who explained why they had not received assistance, the most common reason was that they did not know where to go. Work and time responsibilities, conflicts of interest, concerns about cost, and transportation were also frequently identified.
- Communities want services brought closer to them. More outreach events in the municipalities was the most frequently selected recommendation for improving access, accounting for 52.6% of all selections for that question.
- Participants expressed strong interest in continued outreach. Sixty-three and a half percent indicated that they would attend another outreach event, while an additional 9.5% responded that they might attend.

Conclusion and Acknowledgments

The 2026 Community Outreach Series confirmed that bringing information and services directly into the municipalities is both effective and necessary. In closing, MLSC extends its sincere appreciation to:

- The partner agencies for contributing their time and expertise throughout the outreach series, namely the following departments and agencies:
 - Pohnpei State Attorney General's Office;
 - Pohnpei State Department of Health Services;
 - FSM Social Security Administration;
 - FSM Public Defender's Office;
 - Pohnpei State Court of Land Tenure; and
 - Pohnpei State Department of Land.
- The municipal governments and officials of U, Sokehs, Kitti, Nett, and Madolenihmw for hosting the outreach events and assisting with coordination.
- The Eleventh Pohnpei Legislature for the generous funding and support, making this outreach event possible.
- The people of Pohnpei who attended, participated in discussions, sought assistance, and completed the questionnaires reflected in this report.

The continued work goes beyond this report. The lessons gathered from each municipality provide a clearer understanding of where attention is needed and where services can be improved. MLSC will carry those lessons forward as it continues working with its partners to respond more effectively to the needs of the people of Pohnpei.

We close this report with appreciation to everyone who contributed to the success of the series and with a renewed commitment to ensuring that the progress made through these outreach events continues beyond them.