

Legal Services May Discontinue Unless \$38,000 Come from State

(Exclusive to the TUNDRA TIMES)

Legal Services, a federal program of assisting people of a low income bracket by furnishing them with attorneys in civil cases, may be in danger of becoming nonexistent unless this group can acquire \$38,000 from the State of Alaska in order to supplement existing salaries of

the attorneys.

This statement was made by Mr. William Jacobs, Director of Legal Services, at the Board of Directors' meeting here in Juneau this past week.

Legal Services, which has been in existence in the State for the past two years, has had many difficulties from the beginning.

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The program did not become a reality for 14 months after its inception due to the very low salaries that were offered.

It was only through actions of the State of supplementing the federal salaries that they were able to hire attorneys at a scale comparable to the salaries earned by attorneys in the private sector.

The State did not request a supplement this year from the Legislature as the regional office in San Francisco for Legal Services finally did realize the low salaries they were giving and this led to an opening whereby Legal Services in Alaska could request additional moneys for salaries.

However, since then there has been a general cut back in spending in federal programs and the likelihood of additional moneys for salaries looks bleak.

If Legal Services in Alaska cannot acquire the additional moneys from the regional office the Board has decided to request the State and the Legislature make the additional appropriation.

They indicated that they should receive a reply on their request from San Francisco within a month.

In addition to attorneys being retained at Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau, they have seven law students working for them through the Vista program at Kotzebue, Nome, Bethel and Ft. Yukon.