

Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors (CMCLLD)

FY2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) Report

Mission

Since its founding in 2008, the Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors has provided a forum for policy discussion, information exchange, and professional development for the state's court law library community. The Conference supports the mission of the Maryland Judiciary by providing advice and support to all Judiciary bodies in matters affecting court law libraries. Conference support addresses court law libraries standards, retention and disposal of court library resources, court library funding, service to the public, and access to justice through education and the provision of legal information.

Information about the Conference is provided at: <https://mdcourts.gov/lawlib/about-us/CMCCLD>.

Participation

Florence J. Barnes, Librarian, Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library
Tonya Baroudi, Director of Library Services, Prince George's County Public Law Library
Joan Bellistri, Director, Anne Arundel County Public Law Library
Joseph W. Bennett, Head Librarian, Library Company of the Baltimore Bar
Sandy Brewer, Law Librarian, Howard County Law Library
James G. Durham, Director, Thurgood Marshall State Law Library
Rebecca Littleton, Law Librarian/Court Reporter, Washington County Circuit Court
Catherine McGuire (Vice-Chair), Deputy Director, Thurgood Marshall State Law Library
Pamela Ortiz (ex officio), Director, Department of Access to Justice, Maryland Judiciary
Julee Snyder, Help Center & Legal Resource Coordinator, Charles County Public Law Library
Scott Stevens, Director, Baltimore County Circuit Court Law Library
Julia Viets (Chair), Director, Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library

Meetings

The Conference met three times through the fiscal year, on July 21, 2022; September 8, 2022; and January 19, 2023. In addition, the Conference hosted a statewide annual meeting of Maryland court law libraries on December 7th, 2022. Summaries of all meetings are provided on the [Conference webpage](#).

Discussion throughout the year addressed topics of importance to court libraries, including: chambers library standards; outreach to court staff such as incoming law clerks, staff attorneys, and court clerks; contract management for digital resources; space management; document sharing best practices; information brochures; kiosks for unstaffed court libraries; participating in the Access to Justice Self-Help Provider Conference; member presentations at the MSBA Annual Meeting, the Partners for Justice Conference, and the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Annual Meeting; and the activities of the Law on the Frontlines project.

The September 2022 meeting was held in person for the first time since the pandemic closures. The Conference met at the new Howard County Circuit Court building. In addition to standard discussions, members toured the new facility.

At the January 2023 meeting, members welcomed Rebecca Littleton to the Washington County Law Library & Help Center, and Katherine Baer, new Head of Reference Services at the Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library.

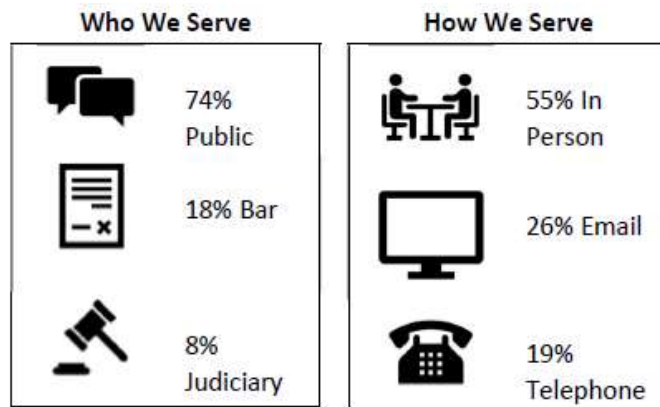
The Annual Meeting of Maryland Court Libraries was held December 7, 2022, at the Maryland Judicial Center. The first in-person meeting following pandemic restrictions, participants arrived from court libraries, court administration, the Access to Justice Department, and the Maryland Court Help Centers. Nancy Faulkner, Deputy State Court Administrator, provided the welcome address. The day's agenda included updates on the People's Law Library website, a review of the many helpful language tools available from the Court Interpreter Program of the Access to Justice Department, a guided discussion on partnerships between law libraries and access to justice partners, updates on the Frontlines project and the A2J court help videos, and a discussion on the collection and usage of reference statistics.

Conference Projects

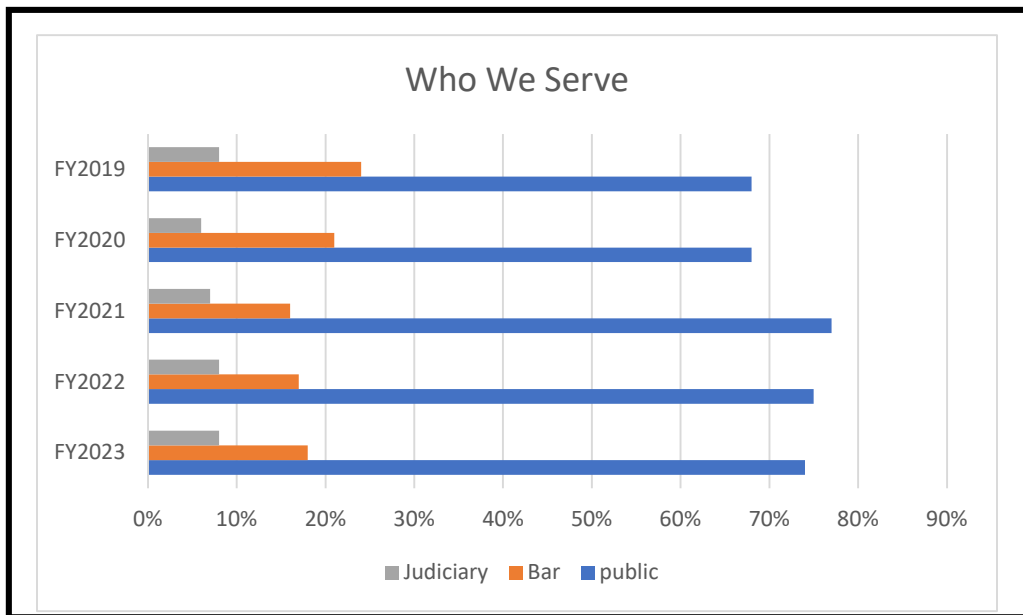
The Conference partners with the State Law Library, the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, and the Maryland Judiciary's Access to Justice Department, to provide training to public library staff in the provision of legal reference. The project, *Law on the Frontlines: Legal Reference for Public Libraries* (aka Frontlines Project), began in 2016. In FY2023, its sixth year of training classes, project participants provided nine webinars, including special topic sessions on Life & Health Planning and Landlord-Tenant law.

Conference Statistics

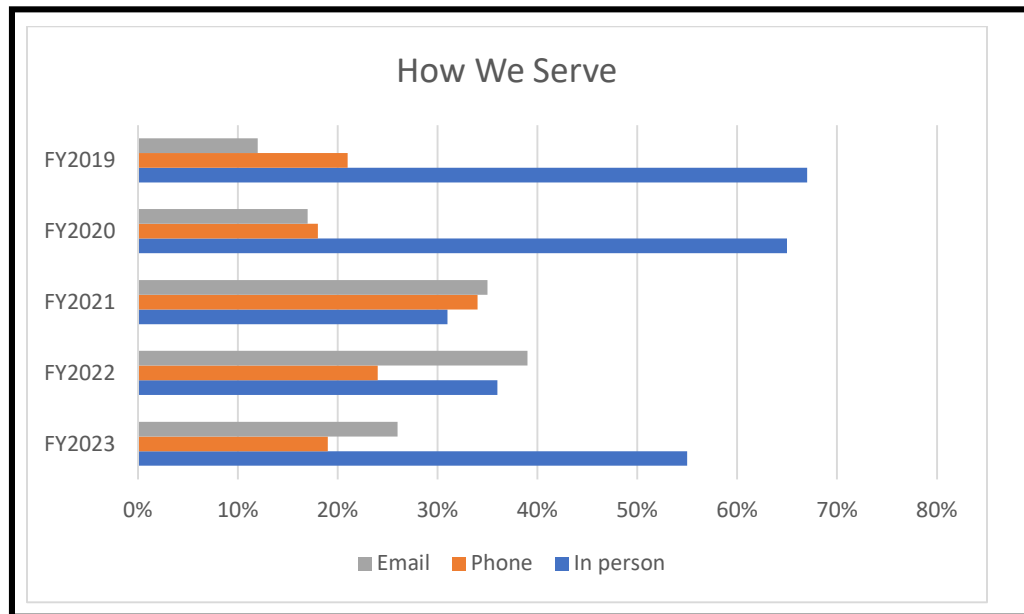
Maryland's court law libraries assist the Judiciary, law practitioners, and the general public. Assistance includes traditional legal reference and research guidance, referrals to legal assistance and social service organizations, technology navigation support, and more. Several law libraries are co-located with the local Help Center or Family Law Clinic (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, Howard, and Washington counties).



Conference libraries collect statistics in a standardized manner to demonstrate workload across the state. The public continues to be the largest group of patrons served. Most court law libraries (with the notable exception of the State Law Library) provide the largest volume of service to in-person patrons.

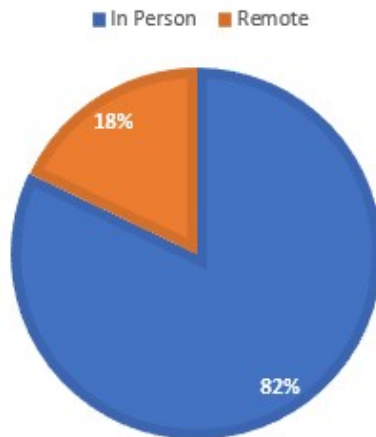
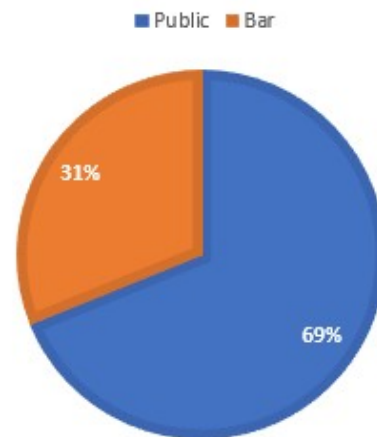


Across a five-year span, there is general consistency in the proportion of our patron populations.



After the lifting of pandemic restrictions, the proportion of patrons who visit the library for in-person assistance has surpassed pre-pandemic numbers.

Law libraries provide support for court e-filing. All Conference libraries have MDEC kiosks on site for the use of attorneys and the public to view and print case filings. Conference libraries also have public computer stations where case filings may be added to the MDEC system. Library staff assist with access and use of the MDEC kiosks.

MDEC ASSISTANCE FORMAT TYPE**MDEC ASSISTANCE PATRON TYPE**

Individual Library Connections

Connecting to Resources

- The Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library added content to the library's legal databases to provide broader access to national titles.
- The Anne Arundel County Public Law Library cataloged a significant portion of the collection of historic volumes.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library added content to the library's legal databases to provide broader access to national titles.
- Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library upgraded its LexisNexis public access database to Lexis+.
- The Prince George's County Law Library increased its collection of legal resources for non-attorneys by adding to its online catalog, links to electronic versions of Nolo publications provided by the Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library.
- The Prince George's County Law Library, in cooperation with the Circuit Court's Family Division, began providing magistrates with *Fader's Maryland Family Law* and other legal resources.
- The Thurgood Marshall State Law Library commenced a full collection review in preparation for an anticipated building move.

Connecting to Information

- The Anne Arundel County Public Law Library revised Library FAQs and Family Law Packets as handouts with QR codes. The QR codes were incorporated into a Family Law Poster for use in the Family Court Help Center.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library, with the assistance of the Access to Justice Department, completed an update of the Self-Help Computer Center kiosk interface, adding the ability to convert forms from English to Spanish.

Connecting to the Community

- The Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library provided a walking tour to a group of Carroll County Public Library staff, with an overview of the resources and services of the Law Library.
- Joan Bellistri, Director of the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library, as chair of the AALL Government Law Libraries (GLL) Best Practices for Access to Justice Committee, worked with the Self-Represented Litigation Network's Law Librarians Working Group (SRLN-LLWG) to create a national *Survey of Law Library Service to the SRL*. The survey will update a 2019 survey and collect information on the effect of the pandemic on law library service to the SRL.
- The Charles County Public Law Library & Legal Resource Center created a local law clerk onboarding information session to introduce new local law clerks to the array of resources available in the law library and online.
- Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library provided tours of the library to the Montgomery County Community College's paralegal program. It also provided an interactive training for incoming law clerks and individualized trainings in Westlaw, research tips, and legislative training to court staff like law clerks and judges.
- Montgomery County started *Just Ask*, a newsletter that is sent bimonthly to courthouse staff to inform them about library resources, services, and ways the library can assist court staff in their roles and the public that visit the courthouse. Each newsletter contains interactive activities to teach court staff about the library.

Connecting to the Future

- The Anne Arundel County Public Law Library will move to new space on the main floor of the courthouse. The move will again co-locate the library and the Family Court Help Center, positioning the library to better serve the court, attorneys, and the public. The library will create displays of information, form checklists, and online curated information to more efficiently connect Family Court Help Center visitors to information pertinent to their issues.
- The Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library will add a standalone laptop and printer for library patrons needing to use their own flash drives to create, edit, and print documents for court hearings, same-day ADR, or for their legal research project.
- The Charles County Public Law Library will review print and electronic resources in judges' chambers and courtrooms and create a Charles County Core Collection for chambers and courtrooms. The library will also review the library collection and survey the local bar association to determine any resource needs for addition to the collection.
- The Prince George's County Law Library plans a Westlaw legal research refresher course for courthouse Westlaw users. The library plans to continue successful programs such as the

National Library Week Book Drive and the monthly contribution to the Prince George's County Bar Association *NewsJournal*.

- The Prince George's County Law Library is scheduled to undergo a major renovation in FY2024. As such, the physical space is being examined to improve accessibility and safety. The collection will be evaluated for more intuitive access and the reflect the needs of library users.
- Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library added a third Zoom Room that is equipped with a computer and equipment that allows pro se litigants to join remote court proceedings. This year, the law library also equipped each of their three Zoom rooms with Zoom resources binders.
- The Thurgood Marshall State Law Library will continue review of the full collection in preparation for an impending move.
- The Thurgood Marshall State Law Library will move forward with scanning and digitization projects to enhance the availability of digital material.

Individual annual reporting of many member libraries is available on each library's website. A Directory of Maryland Court Law Libraries is provided at mdcourts.gov/ccll.