

FY2025



Annual Highlights

Maryland Thurgood Marshall
State Law Library

Robert C. Murphy
Courts of Appeal Building



410.260.1430



lawlibrary@mdcourts.gov



mdcourts.gov/lawlib

Highlights

The State Law Library, Maryland's oldest law library, supports the research activities of the Maryland Judiciary. The Library's collection includes federal and state legal materials, Maryland state agency publications, and Maryland history and genealogy. The Library offers its services and collections to other government entities, the legal community, and the public.

These Library Highlights provide updates on Library collections, staffing, initiatives, and accomplishments through the 2025 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025).

Our Mission



The Library, a court-related agency of the Maryland Judiciary, serves the needs of Maryland's government and citizens by:

1

Building and preserving collections of legal information resources.

2

Promoting access to these collections

3

Creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information.



Library Staff

Administration

James G. Durham – Director

Catherine McGuire – Deputy Director

Collection Management

Jessica Mundy – Head of Collection Management

Jessie Bauer – Collection Management & Reference Librarian

Brian Hamilton – Reference & Digital Collections Librarian

Bruce Lord – Maryland Collections Librarian

Cindy Terry – Collection Management Specialist (to February 2025)

Reference Services

Julia Topper – Head of Reference Services

Audrey Dingler – Outreach Coordinator & Reference Librarian (from August 2024)

Joni Gordy – Reference Librarian (from February 2025)

Elizabeth Simmons – Reference Librarian

Rebecca Tucker – Library Assistant (from December 2024)

S. Hughston Vasil – Research & Instruction Librarian (to September 2024)

Technical Services

Jessie Tam – Head of Technical Services

Scott Ashlin – Technical Services Assistant

Debra Haines – Library Aide

Leigh Johnson – Library Acquisitions Specialist

Regan (Syd) Stephenson – Technical Services & Systems Librarian (from May 2025)

Web Content & Services

C. Leland Sampson – Head of Web Content & Services

Clifford Hoffman – Web Services Librarian

Joy Hollerbach – Reference Services Librarian

Library Committee

The governing board of the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library is the Library Committee. The Committee appoints the Director, develops rules for the Library, and may direct the Director to purchase new titles.

Appointed by the Court of Appeals, the Committee is composed of at least three members.

Maryland Code Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article, secs. 13-502, 13-503

Honorable Jonthan Biran, Chair, Justice, Supreme Court of Maryland

Honorable E. Gregory Wells, Chief Judge, Appellate Court of Maryland

Gregory Hilton, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Maryland

Judy K. Rupp, State Court Administrator

Lonni K. Summers, Esq., Assistant Professor, Legal Studies Institute,
Anne Arundel Community College

James G. Durham, Director, Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library



Building & Preserving Collections

The Library is charged with managing permanent access to legal materials, especially those pertaining to Maryland law. These materials include print and microform materials as well as significant digital content. The Library works independently and in partnership with Legal Information Archive (LIA) to collect and digitally preserve state government publications.

Collection Management

Staff completed a full inventory of Maryland House and Senate Journals in FY2025 and reorganized them for enhanced access. This collection provides records of proceedings of the Maryland General Assembly and are valuable resources for legislative history.

Digital Collection & Digitization

In FY2025, the Library expanded efforts to preserve and digitize legal resources. Staff began harvesting Differentiated Case Management (DCM) Plans from each circuit court, as required by Maryland Rule 16-302. To protect collections and improve access, 500 reels of *The Daily Record* (1929–2022) were sent to the Maryland State Archives for digitization. The Library also continued archiving key government webpages, including Executive Orders, Baltimore City Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports, and Public Information Act (PIA) documents.

The Library remains active in the Legal Information Archive (LIA), a consortium with Georgetown University, Harvard University, as well as the Virginia and Washington State law libraries. In FY2025, Reference & Digital Collections Librarian Brian Hamilton became a database administrator for the project.

Federal Government Documents Collection

The Thurgood Marshall State Law Library is a long-standing member of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). As a selective depository library, the Library receives and makes available certain classes of federal government publications and documents. In keeping with the FDLP move to a digital program, the Library is in the process of transitioning to the status of selective online depository. As part of this shift, Library staff joined in collaborative meetings with the federal collections departments of the Harford Community College Library and the University of Maryland College Park.

In April 2025, the Library hosted Scott Matheson, the Government Printing Office's Superintendent of Documents. The visit was an opportunity to exchange critical information about federal documents management and upcoming changes to the FDLP.



From left to right: Brian Hamilton, Scott Matheson, Catherine McGuire, and Jessica Mundy

"I can't express how much the information you provided will help me in my research process going forward."

Collection Review

The Library's comprehensive collection review in preparation for a future building move continued in FY2025. Staff conducted extensive research on each item and title to evaluate continued relevance, condition, and research value to our patrons. Titles determined to be no longer of service to the Library's needs are made available to other libraries for their own collection development.

The FY2025 review included the Library's extensive genealogy and history materials, narrowing the collection focus to Maryland-specific materials. Many titles removed from the collection have found new homes at the New York State Library, the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania and the Friends of Irish Research in Massachusetts.

The Library's non-law magazine collection has likewise found new homes in local libraries and museums around the state, including the Busch Annapolis Library and the Enoch Pratt Free Library's Central Branch. Materials can be readily accessed for research purposes at their new institutions.

Database Collection

The Proquest database, *Recent Baltimore Sun*, was added to the Library's digital newspaper collection. This database provides access to the *Sun* from 2008 to current day and is distinct from other access points as it includes high-quality reproductions of newspaper photographs in addition to article text.



Special Collections

A new bobblehead was added to the Library's extensive collection. Justice Elena Kagan joins Justice William Rehnquist, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, and Justice Antonin Scalia, among many others produced by *The Green Bag*, a satirical law journal. Justice Kagan is depicted standing in front of a crystal ball, a reference to an opinion she authored, explaining that "the courts below did not gaze into crystal balls, as the majority tries to suggest." *Rucho v. Common Cause*, 588 U.S. 684 (2019).

The Library collaborates with the Maryland State Archives regarding ongoing conservation efforts. Special Collections books were examined for detached covers or pages, loose bindings, torn or brittle pages or other signs of fragility. Those needing special care began moving to the Archives in batches for repair and maintenance. Some will be boxed in a new style of custom boxing that includes a window to the original spine of the book.



*A bobblehead image of
U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan*

Promoting Access

The Library connects patrons to its collections through the provision of information services, expansion of access to digital materials, and enhancing web-based information resources and tools. These efforts increase the Library's efficiency and make Maryland legal information and history readily accessible to researchers.

Hours of Service

Effective January 1, 2025, the Library implemented new hours of service. The Library is now open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., and is closed on weekends. The change ensures that more staff are available during the hours of highest library usage. The Library now has three staff who regularly work at the reference desk in the evenings.



Reference Activity

This reference summary presents information about direct interactions between reference staff and patrons, as when a patron contacts the Library with a request for legal information or research assistance. The summary does not discuss other ways in which patrons frequently interact with the Library, such as through websites or databases, use of the physical collections, or participation in Library education and outreach programs. Patrons often visit the Library and make use of Library resources and facilities without interacting with staff.

"I looked everywhere online for this information and couldn't find it. You all have really saved my day."

Reference Statistics

Statistical Snapshot (FY2025)

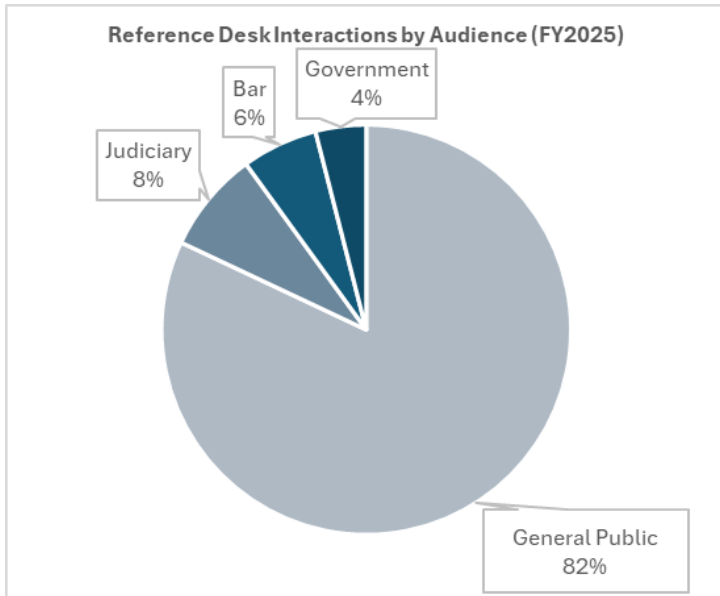
Total Reference Interactions:	7537
Total Research Minutes:	200590
Public Requests:	82%
Judiciary Requests:	8%
Email/Webform Requests:	63%
30+ min Requests:	26%
60+ min Requests:	10%

"I can't thank you enough or tell you the hours I've spent trying to get this form and failing until you helped me."

"I greatly appreciate all of your hard work and efforts in compiling all of this information to help me in meeting my deadline for amending my complaint."

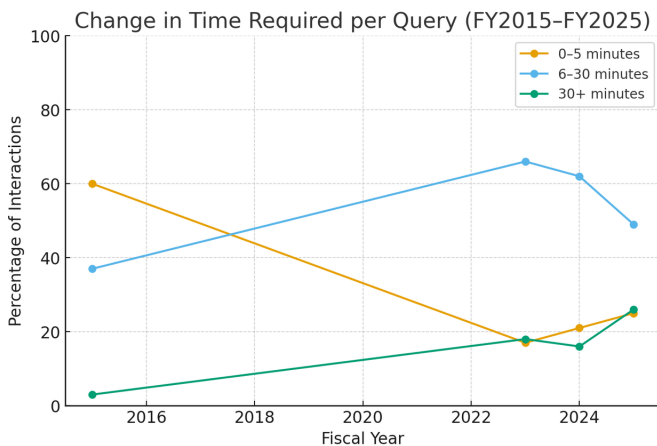
"Incarcerated individuals have very limited access to information which makes it easy for misinformation to spread. I really appreciate your help, this information will help me give my patrons more reliable information to base their decision on about whether to hire a lawyer."

MARYLAND THURGOOD MARSHALL STATE LAW LIBRARY
ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS FY2025



The majority of reference desk interactions involve the general public, at 82%. Interactions with Judiciary staff account for 8% of the total. As the Library grows its digital content and webinar trainings, Judiciary staff are increasingly able to access Library resources without direct reference desk contact. However, Judiciary staff often contact the Library with complex research requests, including requests for state and local legislative history and regulatory history.

"I feel much more informed and confident moving forward because of your guidance."



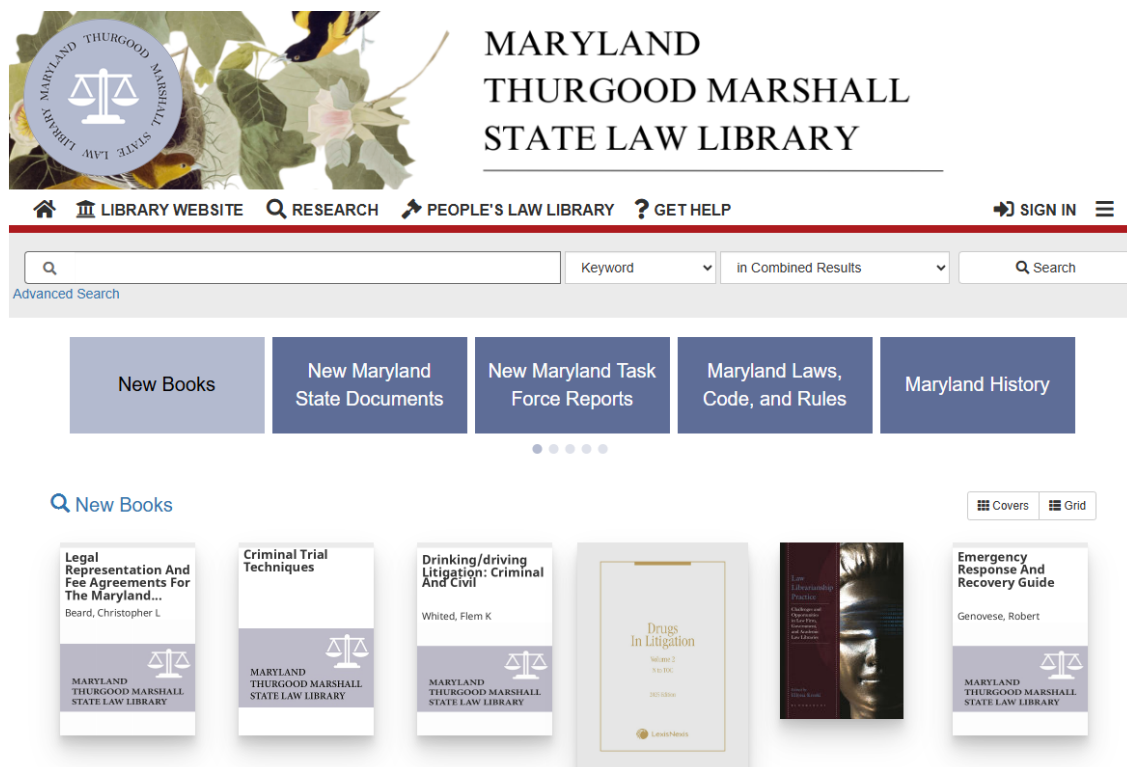
Over the past decade, the time required to appropriately address a patron query has increased significantly. In FY2015, 60% of reference interactions took 5 minutes or fewer to address and only 3% took longer than 30 minutes. In FY2025, 25% of interactions took 5 minutes or fewer, while 26% of interactions took longer than 30 minutes. Nearly 10% of reference interactions require at least an hour of staff time. Anecdotally, staff have seen a significant rise in the complexity of requests received from public patrons.

"This is far more than I was able to get on my own."

Aspen Discovery

In FY2025, the Library implemented Aspen Discovery as its new public catalog platform. Aspen provides users with a modern, mobile-responsive interface to search the Library's print materials, ebooks, and websites. By integrating these resources into a single, user-friendly search environment, the Library is making it easier for patrons to discover and begin using digital materials while also improving access to traditional print holdings.

The Aspen Discovery project was a collaborative effort across multiple Library departments, which continue to manage the system's maintenance and enhancements. While the new catalog is now the primary search tool for the public, the Library has retained its legacy catalog to support librarians at other institutions who continue to rely on it for their research and reference work. Aspen Discovery has been well received by Library patrons and exemplifies the Library's commitment to improving access to legal information.



The People's Law Library (PLL)



The People's Law Library, a project of the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library, gives Marylanders clear, reliable legal information on court procedures and issues such as housing, family, health, and life planning. In addition to nearly 500 articles, PLL connects visitors to Court Help Centers, the Library's Information Desk, legal service providers, and statewide legal clinics.

In FY2025, staff reviewed and updated 27% of PLL articles, focusing on employment, guardianship, education, and government benefits. New resources addressed emerging topics, including immigration policy changes, the Maryland Child Victims Act, and adoption record access.

PLL relies on Maryland attorneys who volunteer their expertise to review and improve content—ensuring resources remain practical and accurate for self-represented litigants.

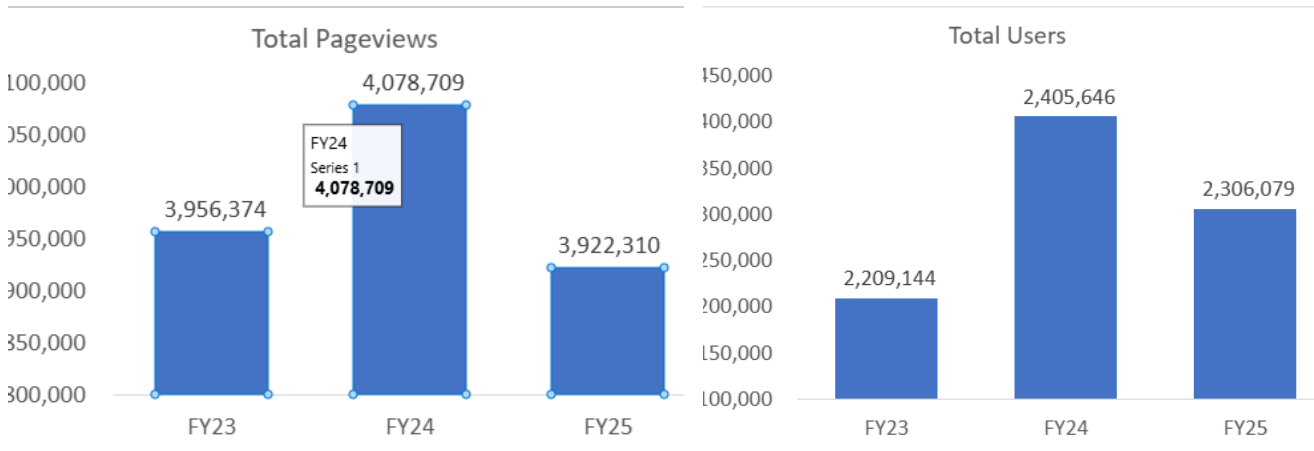
This year also marked the start of a major Drupal CMS upgrade. Alongside the migration, staff assessed site content with an eye toward how generative AI tools are reshaping online search. This work will guide future initiatives in Generative Engine Optimization, ensuring PLL remains visible and accessible.

Despite broader shifts in online search behavior, PLL site visits remained strong, declining only 4% from FY2024.

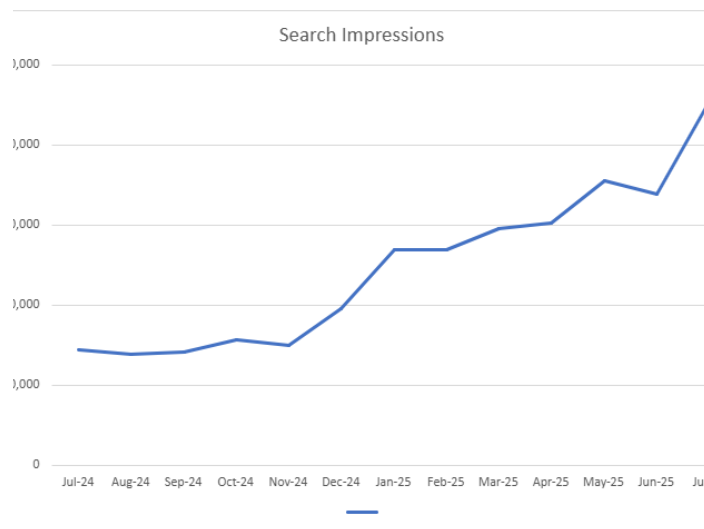
"I really appreciate your work of providing answers to people like me who are unsure of next steps."

MARYLAND THURGOOD MARSHALL STATE LAW LIBRARY
ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS FY2025

PLL Statistics



Most users reach PLL through Google searches. In FY2025, click-throughs from Google declined 7% as AI Overviews appeared more frequently in results. While PLL content often surfaced in these summaries, research shows users are less likely to click through from an AI Overview than from a standard link. Despite this trend, PLL’s search impressions more than doubled, rising from 7 million to 17 million per month.



PLL analytics suggest information-seeking habits are shifting. Traffic from ChatGPT grew from zero in July 2024 to 1,239 visits in July 2025, reflecting greater reliance on chatbots to summarize content rather than directing users to original sources. Because generative AI tools operate as “black boxes,” PLL cannot see how often its content is used within these summaries.

Creating Educational Opportunities

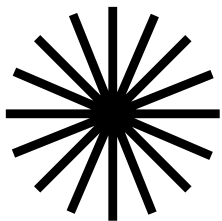
Enhancing the understanding of law and legal information is a powerful component of the Library's mission. To that end, the Library develops educational materials, programs, events, and exhibits for the Judiciary, the bar, the public, and specialized groups within the library community as a part of the Library's continuing in-reach and outreach initiatives.

In-Reach Education

The Library provides regular instructional sessions for the Judiciary, including orientations to collections and services for incoming law clerks and interns. Additionally, Library staff work in partnership with the Judicial College of Maryland to present informative and practical guidance on research methods and resources.

The Library's Digital Mini series partnership with the Maryland Judicial College continued in FY2025. The year's lineup featured sessions on Maryland Legislative Materials & Legislative History (Scanned Collections); Maryland Judicial Materials (Scanned Collections); VitalLaw; West Academic; Maryland Legislative Bill Files (Scanned Collections); and HeinOnline.

In addition to the Minis, the Library worked with the Maryland Judicial College to offer two webinars to Judiciary personnel: Research Resources for the Legal Professional; and Ghosthunting: Searching for Maryland Legislative History.



"Nice job explaining a web-based research tool that has many complicated features."

Outreach Education

The Library provides training upon request for non-Judiciary colleagues, partners, and stakeholders. These sessions extend mission impact into the wider community. In addition to the *Law on the Frontlines* project, addressed separately, Library staff presented:

- Selector School 2.0: Weeding the Collection You Have Built (2024 AALL Annual Conference)
- Generative AI: Revolutionizing Efficiencies for Law Librarians (2024 AALL Annual Conference)
- Generative AI Seminar (2024 Hawaii State Bar Association Convention)
- Tech Tips and Practical AI, Part 2: A Deep Breath and a Deeper Dive (2024 ABA Forum on Building Access to Justice for All)
- Generative AI for Law Librarians (January 2025, Law Library Association of Maryland)
- Practical AI and Automation Tools for Maryland Legal Nonprofits (2025 Partners for Justice Conference)
- Tech to Make You More Efficient: Leveraging Mainstream AI Tools in Your Organization or Practice (2025 MSBA Legal Summit and Annual Meeting)
- Advanced Legal Research, Guest Speaker: How Legal Research Databases Are Utilized at the Judiciary (University of Maryland School of Law)
- Keeping It Current: Updating Your Library's Legal Reference Guide (2025 MLA/DLA Annual Conference)
- Two Perspectives on Legal Reference Services (Northeast Ohio Regional Library System)

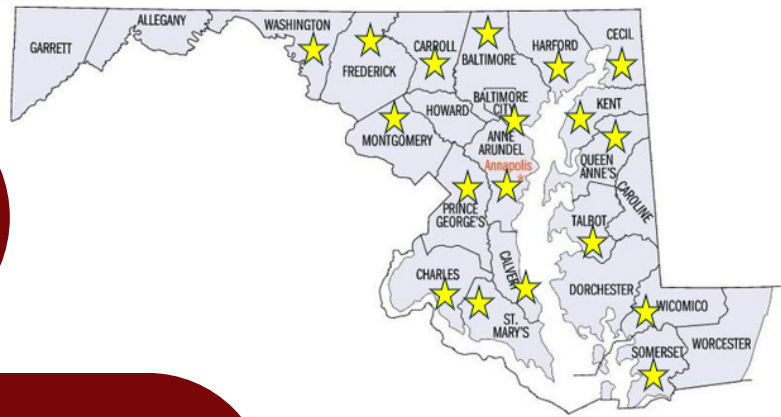


Joy Hollerbach and Audrey Dingler presenting at MLA/DLA

Law on the Frontlines: Legal Reference for Public Libraries

Now in its seventh year, the *Frontlines* project continues to provide valuable training to public library staff on legal resources and legal reference services. FY2025 sessions included the longstanding basics, Best Practices for Legal Reference (aka Basics I) and Foundations of Law for Public Library Reference (aka Basics II). In addition, the year included sessions focused on Landlord-Tenant Law and on Legal Forms.

There were 157 learners attending the six fiscal year sessions; and eighteen (18) of Maryland 24 county library systems were represented. In addition, learners included representation from county and state correctional libraries, community college programs, several university system libraries, and several state government agencies.



"Please continue to offer these on a regular basis and provide refresher courses since we don't get these questions often."

"Really appreciate your expertise. This is a complex area and having this class gave me a boost of resources to share with our customers."

"Thank you for putting on these webinars. I think I have taken nearly every one you have offered this year. It's fascinating and really prepares me for my time at the reference desk."

The Frontlines Workgroup continued addressing the multiple tasks required by the complexity of the project. Training began for new instructors; promotion of sessions was extended to better connect potential learners to the sessions; and the workgroup began an update of the Frontlines website content.

Tours & Visits

Library staff routinely conduct tours for new judges, law clerks, and judicial staff, with more formal tours arranged for students from various academic programs, including law schools, undergraduate and community college legal studies. Special focus is given to tours of the Special Collections Room, spotlighting the Audubon copperplate engravings.

In addition to these regular tours, in FY2025 the Library hosted tours for groups including the Prince George's County Law Links Program; Eastern Technical High School; the Towson High School Law & Public Policy Magnet Program; St John's College; visitors from the State Justice Institute; and a visiting group of British scholars. In all, the Library hosted twenty-seven (27) tours in FY2025 for a total of 205 visitors.

"Your team is extraordinarily helpful as always."



Staff Development

Library staff engage in diverse professional development opportunities to elevate service provision. Staff take advantage of development opportunities from internal library workshops, Judiciary-offered classes, vendor-sponsored events, professional conferences, and educational tours.

In-House Workshops

The Library launched a series of workshops to support the deeper learning of legal research methodology and reference provision. These Reference Continuing Education (RCE) workshops are designed and taught by Library staff for Library staff. FY2025 RCE workshops were provided on Legal Encyclopedias; Case Law Research; and Reference Interview Deep Dive. The workshops provide an introduction to legal research for onboarding new reference staff and serve as a refresher for seasoned reference providers.

Professional Conferences

Professional conferences are a crucial part of staff development for both education and networking. Library staff engage in conference programming as both learners and as presenters. In FY2025, the Library sent one or more staff to:

- AALL Annual Meeting and Conference, July 2024
- Maryland Court Help Provider Conference, October 2024
- Depository Library Council Virtual Meeting, October 2024
- Federal Depository Library Program Pre-Meeting and Conference, October 2024
- Online Electronic Resources and Libraries 20th Annual Library Conference, March 2025
- Maryland Partners for Justice, May 2025
- Maryland Library Association/Delaware Library Association Annual Conference, May 2025
- Teaching the Teachers – Conference for Law Librarians, May 2025

"This is exactly what I was looking for and it will help me finish my paper. Having the citation information included is also extremely helpful. You provide a wonderful service and your librarians are to be commended. "

Informational Tours

The Library actively seeks opportunities for staff to visit libraries, archives, government offices, and other entities whose missions overlap or augment our own. As with conferences, these visits enhance both educational development and networking for stronger partnerships. In FY2025, staff visited and toured:

- Annapolis District Court
- Department of Legislative Services
- Harford Community College Library
- Maryland State Archives
- McKeldin Library, University of Maryland College Park
- University of Baltimore Law Library

Development Courses & Classes

Throughout the fiscal year, Library staff seek opportunities to cultivate and reinforce knowledge and understanding of our field. The practice of librarianship is one of constant change; to continue providing outstanding stewardship and service, our staff expend significant effort to keep current in practices, management, and collections.

In addition to opportunities provided in the Library and through the Maryland Judicial College, staff connect with many other organizations for top-tier learning. FY2025 included online coursework from CALI, Library Juice Academy, and the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS); webinars from the National Center of State Courts, the Law Library of Congress, OCLC, the Conservation Center for Arts & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA), Library Works, Goucher College, and Johns Hopkins University; and professional development courses and webinars from AALL, the Maryland Library Association, and ALA Learning.

Staff took advantage of learning opportunities in the areas of cataloging, artificial intelligence (AI), preservation and conservation, technology security and privacy, collection development, digital resource management, professionalism and ethics, contract management and administration, grant funding, disciplinary and grievance processes, copyright, customer service, civics, business writing, legal research methodology, researching constitutional law, United Kingdom legal research resources, and more.

Professional Involvement

Library staff are active members of multiple professional associations and organizations, which provide opportunities for skills enhancement and leadership.

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)

Several Library staff are members of AALL. Within AALL, these staff participate in multiple Special Interest Groups and caucuses: Government Documents (GD-SIS); Government Law Libraries (GLL-SIS); Legal Information Services to the Public (LISP-SIS); Legal Innovation & Technology (LIT-SIS); Library System & Resource Discovery (LSRD-SIS); Professional Engagement, Growth & Advancement (PEGA-SIS); Research Instruction & Patron Services (RIPS-SIS); Technical Services (TS-SIS); Artificial Intelligence Caucus; Asian American Law Librarians Caucus (AALLc). Leadership and committee roles within the AALL network included:

James G. Durham

GLL-SIS Nominations Committee

GLL-SIS Grants Committee (Chair, Annual Grant Fundraiser)

Catherine McGuire

GLL-SIS Awards Committee (Chair)

LISP-SIS 50 State Toolkit Committee

Jessica Mundy

AALL Annual Meeting Grant Award Jury

GD-SIS Nominations Committee

GLL-SIS Membership and Mentoring Committee

C. Leland Sampson

GLL-SIS Awards Committee

Syd Stephenson

AALL Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Information Management Team Lead

LIT-SIS Annual Meeting Program Planning Committee (Chair)

Baseball Caucus (Chair)

Jessie Tam

TS-SIS (Vice Chair/Chair-Elect); LSRD/TS FROG Committee (Chair)

Other Professional Memberships

One or more staff are also members of many other organizations. In several organizations, Library staff hold leadership and committee positions:

- American Library Association
- Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM)
 - Jessica Mundy – President
 - Julia Topper – Board Member
 - Elizabeth Simmons – Grants Committee
 - Joy Hollerbach – Programming Committee
- Law Librarians' Society of Washington D.C. (LLSDC)
- Maryland Access to Justice Commission
 - C. Leland Sampson, Data & Legal Technology Committee
- Maryland Judicial Council
 - C. Leland Sampson – Artificial Intelligence Workgroup
- Maryland Legal Services AI Workgroup (Sponsored by MLSC)
- Maryland Purchasing Association (MPPA)
- Maryland Bar Association (MSBA)
 - C. Leland Sampson – Artificial Intelligence & Legal Technology Task Force (Co-Chair)
- Mid-America Law Library Consortium
 - Syd Stephenson – Website Redesign Committee
- NIGPT the Institute for Public Procurement
- Potomac Technical Processing Librarians
- Pro Bono Coordinating Council Committee (sponsored by the Pro Bono Resource Center)
- University of Maryland College of Information Advisory Board
- University of Oklahoma School of Library & Information Studies Alumni Board

Staff Publications

Joy Hollerbach, blog author, *RIPS Law Librarian Blog*, 2024-2025.

- Can A.I. be used for good? The intersection of A.I. and wellbeing, July 3, 2024
- Special treasures in the Special Collections Room, September 25, 2024
- Beyond the legal texts: How bold branding is bringing law libraries to life, October 29, 2024
- I don't know...now what?, December 9, 2024
- How to say no without saying no, February 19, 2025
- Wellness in the law library: taking care of yourself while helping others, May 15, 2025
- Teaching the Teachers Conference: a reflection from a public law librarian, June 20, 2025

Jessica Mundy and Charlie Amiot, *Maryland State Documents: A Bibliography of Legal and Law-Related Material*. Government Documents Special Interest Section, American Association of Law Libraries, William S. Hein & Co., 2024.

C. Leland Sampson, contributor, *An Overview of Ethical Considerations for Attorney Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Technologies*. Maryland State Bar Association, April 2025.

C. Leland Sampson, *Generative AI & Legal Research: A Mismatch?* *AALL Spectrum*, May/June 2025.

Syd Stephenson, *The Law Library Website in Law Librarianship Practice: Challenges and Opportunities in Law Firm, Government, and Academic Law Libraries*, Bloomsbury Academic, June 2025.

Notable Events

Retirement of Cindy Terry

The Library wished a happy retirement to Cindy Terry, who retired in April 2025 after forty (40) years of service with the Library. Cindy has worn many hats over her years with the Library - federal documents supervisor, interlibrary loan manager, keeper of all the keys, Special Collections Room HVAC expert handler, and many more. Cindy will be missed not for her job duties (though she excelled at those) but for the warmth and caring she brought to all her colleagues.



"We have the best law library of the many I have used. "