FY2023
ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

Maryland Thurgood Marshall State Law Library

Maryland's First Legal Resource

📍 Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building
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Annapolis, MD 21401

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✉️ lawlibrary@mdcourts.gov

📅	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
	Tuesday, Thursday	8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
	Saturday	9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Profile

The Thurgood Marshall 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.

Mission

The Thurgood Marshall State Law Library, a unit of the Maryland Judiciary, serves the needs of Maryland's government and citizens by building and preserving collections of legal information resources, promoting access to these collections and creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information.

Highlights

These Library Highlights provide updates on State Law Library services, collections, initiatives, staffing, and accomplishments throughout the year.

Library Staff

Administration

James Durham, Director
Catherine McGuire, Deputy Director

Collection Management

Jessica Mundy, Head of Collection Management
Brian Hamilton, Reference & Digital Collections Librarian (from May 2023)
Bruce Lord, Maryland Collections Librarian
Julia Roberts, Collection Management & Reference Librarian
Cindy Terry, Collection Management Specialist
Ed Wisenbaler, Federal Documents Assistant (through January 2023)

Reference Services

Katherine Baer, Head of Reference Services (from January 2023)

Elizabeth Simmons, Reference Librarian

S. Hughston Vasil, Research & Instructional Librarian

Technical Services

Jessie Tam, Head of Technical Services
Scott Ashlin, Technical Services Assistant
Debra Haines, Library Aide
Leigh Johnson, Library Acquisitions Specialist

Web Content & Services

C. Leland Sampson, Head of Web Content & Services
Clifford Hoffman, Web Services Librarian (from October 2022)
Joy Hollerbach, Reference Services Librarian (from April 2023)
Chi Song, Web Services Librarian (to September 2022)

Volunteers

J. Jeffrey Ross (to May 2023)

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Library Committee

July 2022–June 2023

Building & Preserving Collections

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

Acquisitions

The Collection Development Committee assessed print titles from our former library maintenance agreement (LMA) with Thomson Reuters, considering patron needs, Maryland case cites, and citations from other secondary sources.

Similarly, the Committee reviewed print and digital titles from our contract with LexisNexis, enhancing our digital library collection to over 1,000 titles. This expanded collection includes crucial references like the Maryland Annotated Code, legal treatises, and multi-volume sets, now accessible digitally to Judiciary employees for convenient off-site reference.

Collection Management

To prepare for the Library's impending move, a comprehensive review of its entire collection has commenced, involving multiple staff members. Tasks in FY2023 encompassed evaluating general genealogy materials, eliminating unused print topical and regional reporters (except for Atlantic Reporter), discarding non-Maryland state codes in print (while retaining those from neighboring states), and binding softbound Maryland Rules for permanent retention.

Building & Preserving Collections

Local Materials

The Library's ongoing effort to grow its local materials collection includes nearly complete county and municipal comprehensive plans. Although this project is projected to finalize in FY2024, regular reviews will ensure ongoing updates for a comprehensive collection.

Federal Documents

As part of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), the State Law Library regularly receives federal documents from the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO).

Following the recommendations of the recent Feasibility Report by the GPO Director's Task Force, advocating for a shift to a digital FDLP, the State Law Library is transitioning its federal government documents collection predominately to digital format. This change aligns with space considerations and the evolving need for digital access.

To ensure an effective transition, the Library reviewed and updated its Federal Documents Item Selection Profile. This revised profile maintains publications from agencies that complement the law collection, focusing on entities like the Department of Justice, U.S. Sentencing Commission, U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Libraries, and specific departments concerning Maryland, its counties, and the Chesapeake Bay.

Staff have begun reviewing current holdings, removing print items that no longer fit the selection criteria. Before discarding print copies in favor of digital versions, staff verify that the catalog record contains a Persistent Uniform Resource Locator (PURL), ensuring a stable online link to the federal information provided by the GPO.

Building & Preserving Collections

Databases

The LexisNexis Digital Library now encompasses all Lexis publications available in print, providing public access within the Library. This expanded collection includes essential Maryland legal treatises like Modern Maryland Civil Procedure and Fader's Maryland Family Law, along with federal treatises such as Moore's Federal Practice, as well as relevant resources for neighboring states.

Additionally, access to the NewspaperArchive database has been extended to the entire Judiciary, previously limited only within the Library. This improved access to historical newspapers aids in researching the professional careers of Maryland judges and locating details pertinent to legislative enactments.

Furthermore, the HeinOnline subscription now includes the Voting Rights and Election Law database. This valuable resource offers comprehensive insights into the electoral process, encompassing historical and contemporary content updated on a monthly basis.

Special Collections Room

Library staff inventoried correspondence of the first Maryland State Librarian, David Ridgely, who served in this role from 1827-1842. This correspondence detailed acquisitions and the library's role in distributing publications to state government offices.

A bobblehead of Justice Sonia Sotomayor was added to the Special Collections Room. This bobblehead joins the library's collection of more than twenty U.S. Supreme Court bobbleheads, which are distributed by The Green Bag, a legal journal.
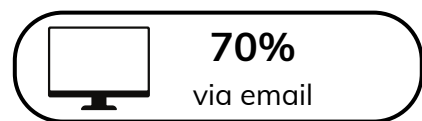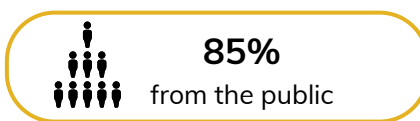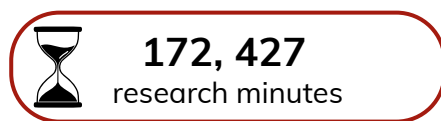
Promoting Access

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 and available to researchers.

Reference Activity

The Library assists a diverse range of patrons (mainly from or inquiring about Maryland law) by offering support through email, telephone, in-person visits, and standard mail.

In FY2022, a new reference management system (RMS) streamlined processes, altering how interaction statistics are collected. FY2023 marks the first full year using this system, causing variations in statistical reporting. Despite differences in reported numbers, the workload for reference staff remained consistently high compared to the previous fiscal year.

In FY2023, the majority of requests—85%—came from the general public, continuing an upward trend from FY2013 when they constituted 50% of total requests. Email remained the primary mode of contact, representing 70% of all reference activity. For an in-depth analysis, the Library offers the FY2023 Reference Summary and Statistics Analysis.

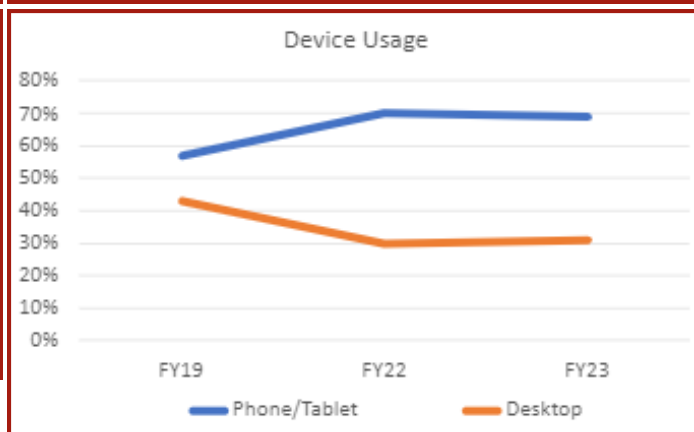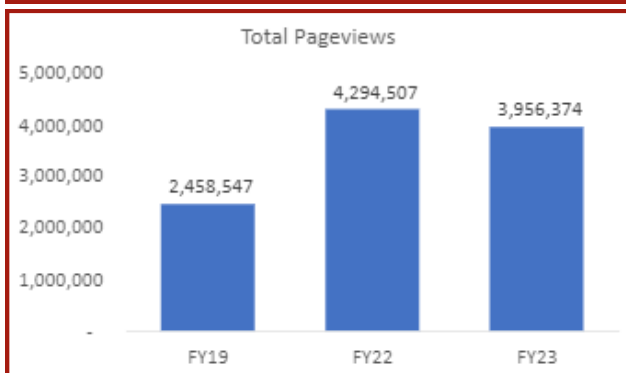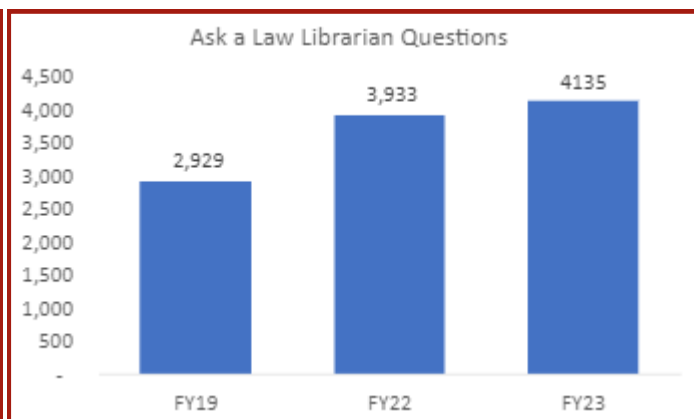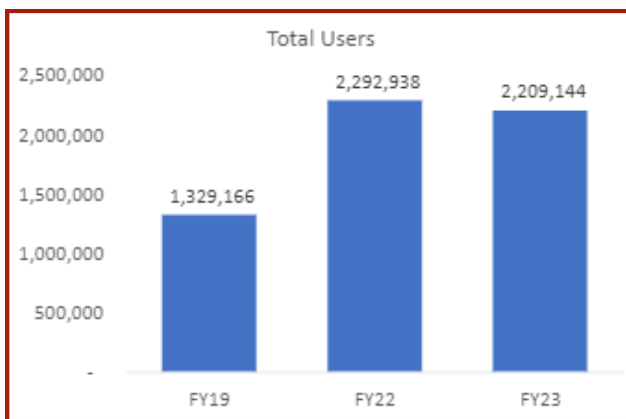| **172, 427** research minutes	**85%** from the public	**70%** via email

Promoting Access

The People's Law Library

The Maryland People's Law Library saw significant upgrades, revamping nearly half of its articles to offer clearer legal insights and more extensive resources. With one article on recreational marijuana attracting nearly 100,000 views, it demonstrated considerable public interest.

To improve accessibility, the Library added Court Help Videos to over 100 articles and broadened its multilingual content, particularly in Spanish, which made up almost 90% of views. The high demand for non-English resources, accessed over 330,000 times in the 2023 fiscal year, underscored the need for diverse legal information. Alongside these changes, services like "Ask a Law Librarian" and the Legal Services Directory were heavily used, assisting over 4,000 users initially and over 75,000 users accessing the directory and clinic calendar. The Library's shift to Drupal 10 ensures continued functionality, solidifying its position as a reliable aid for self-represented litigants in Maryland.

Total Users

	FY19	FY22	FY23
	1,329,166	2,292,938	2,209,144

Ask a Law Librarian Questions

	FY19	FY22	FY23
	2,929	3,933	4135

Total Pageviews

	FY19	FY22	FY23
	2,458,547	4,294,507	3,956,374

Device Usage

Phone/Tablet — Desktop

Promoting Access

Digitization Projects

The Collection Management Team, collaborating with the Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure, identified about 40 missing titles for digitization, covering historic local circuit court and Maryland Judicial Circuit Rules, along with Court of Appeals Rules dating from 1898 to 1969. Scanned using top-quality imaging, these materials aim for the best digital preservation. Post-scanning, Maryland State Archives staff returned the titles, with many added and cataloged into our Scanned Collections, benefiting Judiciary staff in Maryland Rules historical research.

Furthermore, the Department of Legislative Services Library supplied the State Law Library with all legislative bill files from the 2009 Legislative Session in CD format, encompassing House Bills 1 - 1580, House Joint Resolutions 1 - 9, Senate Bills 1 - 1073, and Senate Joint Resolutions 1 - 12. Through the FTP Client to Server process, these 2009 files joined our Scanned Collections, resulting in a comprehensive array from 2003 - 2009 and a partial set from 1990 - 2002.

County and Municipal Codes | Judicial Conference Proceedings | Judiciary Administrative Orders | Legislative Bill Files | Legislative Council Materials | Maryland Historic Rules

Task Force Reports | Rules Committee Materials | Transactions of the Md State Bar Association

Creating Education Opportunities

Enhancing 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 (both independently and in partnership with allied organizations) for the Judiciary, the bar, the public, and specialized groups within the library community.

Skills Training for Judiciary Staff

Building on the previous year's success, FY2023 saw the continuation of the Digital Resource Minis—a series of concise, online sessions spotlighting individual digital resources offered by the Library. This year's lineup featured sessions on HeinOnline, Lexis Digital, Task Force Reports, West Academic, VitalLaw, Maryland Legislative Bill Files, and EBSCO's Criminal Justice Abstracts.

In addition to the Minis, the Library provided in-person and webinar training through the Judicial College:
- Online Research: Westlaw
- Senior Judges Technology Day
- Independent Internet Research
- Orphans Court Judges Training
- Resources for Self-Represented Litigants
- MDEC File and Serve User Support, Prince George's Circuit Court Law Library

Skills Training Outside of the Judiciary

Library staff provided training for non-Judiciary colleagues, partners, and stakeholders:
- Law on the Frontlines: Libraries as Partners in Access to Justice, Maryland Partners for Justice Conference
- Finding Maryland Legal Forms, Maryland Library Association Annual Conference
- Access to Justice - Language Access, Towson University
- 30 Tech Tips: Using Software, Hardware, Data and AI to Get a Running Start at Home, on the Road, or in the Office, Maryland State Bar Association Legal Summit and Annual Meeting
- Bringing the Law Library to the Community: Access to Justice with Remote Services, American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting and Conference, Denver 2022

Creating Education Opportunities

Staff Development

In FY2023, Library staff engaged in diverse professional development opportunities to elevate service provision. This involved attending critical trainings to enhance skills across various areas.

Staff attended regular annual meetings and conferences such as: the Federal Depository Library Conference and Regional Depository Meeting, the Maryland Court Help Provider Conference, the Maryland State Publications Depository and Distribution Program Meeting, and the American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting & Conference. In addition, several staff attended the Judicial College's Judicial Leadership Conference.

To stay current with developments in resources and information services, staff professional education included:

Civics Series & Maryland Circuit Court Rules (Maryland Judiciary College)	Integrating Doctrine & Diversity: Responding to Classroom Controversy (National Network of Law School Officers)
Civl Legal Issues of Natural Disasters (WebJunction	Thinking Outside the Box When Boxing (NEDCC)
Balancing Patron Groups (AALL)	U.S. Copyright Law in the Library: A Beginner's Guide (American Library Association)
Customer Support During Challenging Interactions (Maryland Judicial College)	Researching Indigenous People in the Collections of the Maryland State Archives (Maryland State Archives)
Orientation to the Law Library Collections (Law Library of Congress)	The Importance of Language: How to Use Inclusive Communications to Advance Equity in the Administration of Justice (National Center for State Courts)
Legal Research Institute (Law Librarians' Society of the District of Columbia)	Land Records Seminar
Ethics and Sustainability for Digital Curation (Library Juice Academy)	Digital Literacy Summit (University of Maryland College and Information Studies and University of Maryland Extension)

To stay current with developments in technology, staff attended sessions on GEARS, RefTracker, Westlaw, RDA, MDEC File & Serve, and Sierra.

Creating Education Opportunities

Tours & Visits

Library staff conduct routine 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 FY2023, beyond these regular tours, the Library hosted tours for diverse groups such as staff from the Maryland State Archives, St. John's College Library, students from Dr. Henry Wise Jr. High School and Eastern Technical High School's Law and Public Policy Management Magnet Program, and a delegation of law students from the French Consulate in Washington D.C. Additionally, State Law Library staff actively engaged with local librarians and archivists, visiting and touring institutions like the Maryland State Archives, St. John's College Library, Anne Arundel County Public Law Library, Howard County Public Law Library, and Charles County Public Law Library to foster stronger community relationships.

Law on the Frontlines: Legal Information for Public Libraries

In 2022, Frontlines Lab sessions were introduced. Lab sessions are structured to provide necessary practice in using the resources taught through Frontlines courses. In Labs sessions, law librarians facilitate investigation into real-world questions using reliable resources of legal information. The goal is to provide the time, restricted in the usual webinars, for learners to get hands-on experience while law librarian facilitators are present to provide guidance and suggestions. Lab sessions were offered throughout FY2023

Building on partnerships and involvements formed among stakeholders, the Frontlines Workgroup was loosely established in 2022. As the fiscal year progressed, the Workgroup moved towards further structuring and organization of activity. Subgroups were formed to address key elements of the Frontlines project, including updating webinar and website content, design of tip sheets, and exploration of options for asynchronous learning.

FY2023 included several familiar webinars in addition to new Labs, including Basic I: Best Practices for Legal Reference; Basic II: Foundations of Law for Public Library Reference; Frontlines Topic: Life and Health Planning; and Frontlines Topic: Landlord and Tenant.

Creating Education Opportunities

Professional Involvment

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

Eight staff of the Library are members of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) and 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); Library System & Resource Discovery (LSRD-SIS); Professional Engagement, Growth & Advancement (PEGA-SIS); Research Instruction & Patron Services (RIPS-SIS); Technical Services (TS-SIS); Asian American Law Librarians Caucus (AALLc).

Leadership activities within the AALL network include:

- James Durham, GLL-SIS Nominations Committee (member)
- Catherine McGuire, LISP-SIS, Education Committee (chair); Toolkit Committee (member)
- Jessie Tam, LSRD-SIS, Joint LSRD/TS-SIS Funding Research Opportunities Grant (FROG) Committee (chair); TS-SIS (executive board)

One or more staff are also members of many other organizations, including participation as committee members and in leadership positions.

- Law Librarians Society of the Washington DC (LLSDC)
- Law Library Association of Maryland (LLAM)
  - Jessica Mundy (Executive Board); Elizabeth Simmons, Grants Committee; Hughston Vasil, Programming Committee
- Maryland Access to Justice Commission
  - Leland Sampson, Data & Legal Technology Committee
- Maryland Legal Services AI Workgroup (Sponsored by MLSC)
- Maryland Public Purchasing Association (MPPA)
- Maryland Pro Bono Coordinating Council (PBCC)
- Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA)
- NIGP The Institute for Public Procurement
- Potomac Technical Processing Librarians
- Pro Bono Coordinating Council Committee (Sponsored by PBRC)
- Society for Human Resource Management
- University of Maryland College of Information Studies Advisory Board

Patron Feedback

"The library is a great place for me to do my studies and to work on schoolwork. I'm thrilled with the amount of different law books which helps me to further my learning of Maryland law. The library gave me personal knowledge of the types of books that I need to study. I want to say thank you to the staff for their help. They help me understand the computers with Westlaw and the ability to save information to my disk."

"The judge I clerked for 45 years ago told me that the State Law Library was an indispensable resource for anyone who wanted to be a good lawyer. He was right."

"It's fantastic that this service is available to the general public. Vital to any non-lawyer preparing a civil case. Thank you."

"Thanks for making it possible to research legal and federal laws without having to contact a lawyer."

"Thank you so much for sending me a copy of the marriage law dated back to 1957. This was extremely helpful to me and exactly what I was looking for. I tried finding this exact information online but could not and very happy I was able to receive the information requested. Thank you so very much for your assistance. Have a wonderful day."