

# RESOURCES FOR SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS IN THE MARYLAND COURTS

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2018

ACCESS TO JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

CONFERENCE OF MARYLAND COURT LAW LIBRARY DIRECTORS

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY SERVICES

MARYLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Figures.....	i
Introduction .....	1
Self-Help Centers.....	1
Law Libraries.....	2
Other Resources.....	3
Programs.....	4
The Maryland Courts Self-Help Center (MCSHC).....	4
Family Law Self-Help Centers (FLSHCs).....	11
District Court Self-Help Resource Centers (DCSHRCs).....	14
Day of Court Representation Programs.....	21
Law Libraries.....	22
The People’s Law Library.....	25
Videos.....	28
Webinars.....	30
Maryland Law Help App.....	32
Form Finders.....	33
Family Law Notebook Project.....	34
Family Law For the People.....	34
Written Aids for SRLs.....	34
Improvements and Achievements.....	36
Self-Help Centers.....	36
Law Libraries.....	41
Future Initiatives.....	42
Fiscal Year 2018 Program Costs.....	44
Appendix.....	46



## TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1. MCSHC — Total Served by Fiscal Year .....	5
Figure 2. MCSHC — Total Served via Phone, Chat & Email — FY12 – FY18 .....	5
Figure 3. MCSHC — Total Served via Phone — FY18.....	6
Figure 4. MCSHC — Total Served via Chat — FY18.....	6
Figure 5. MCSHC — Evening Phone and Chat Volume by Month - FY17 and FY18.....	7
Figure 6. MCSHC — Case Types Phone — FY18.....	7
Figure 7. MCSHC — Case Types Chat — FY18.....	8
Figure 8. MCSHC — Education Phone — FY18 .....	8
Figure 9. MCSHC — Education Chat — FY18 .....	9
Figure 10. MCSHC — Language — Phone—FY18 .....	9
Figure 11. MCSHC — Income — FY18.....	10
Figure 12. FLSHC — Percentage of Cases with Unrepresented Litigants — Any Stage FY14 - FY18 .....	11
Figure 13. FLSHC — Persons Served by County—FY18.....	12
Figure 14. FLSHC — Total Persons Served by Fiscal Year—FY12 – FY18 .....	12
Figure 15. FLSHC — Case Types—FY18.....	13
Figure 16. FLSHC — Income — FY18.....	13
Figure 17. FLSHC — Language—FY18 .....	14
Figure 18. DCSHRC — Volume by Center – FY18.....	14
Figure 19. DCSHRC — Case Types All Centers – FY18.....	15
Figure 20. DCSHRC — Baltimore City Case Types – FY18 .....	16
Figure 21. DCSHRC — Glen Burnie Case Types—FY18 .....	16
Figure 22. DCSHRC — Upper Marlboro Case Types—FY18 .....	17
Figure 23. DCSHRC — Monthly Volume by Location — FY18.....	18
Figure 24. DCSHRC —Salisbury Case Types — FY18 .....	19
Figure 25. DCSHRC — Average Engagement Length of Time for Services—FY18.....	19
Figure 26. DCSHRC — Language — FY18 .....	20
Figure 27. DCSHRC — Ksenia Boitsova delivers remote ASL Laptops to staff at the Calvert County Circuit Court .....	20
Figure 28. CMCLLD — Average Number of Questions Per Day—FY18.....	22
Figure 29. CMCLLD — Types of Assistance Provided —FY18 .....	23
Figure 30. CMCLLD — Web Hits—FY18 (Not including PLL).....	23
Figure 31. CMCLLD — Users—FY18 .....	24
Figure 32. CMCLLD — Question Types—FY18 .....	24

Figure 33. Number of Litigants Assisted via Lawyer in the Library Programs—FY18.....	25
Figure 34. PLL — Content Development.....	26
Figure 35. PLL Devices Used to Access the Site .....	27
Figure 36. PLL – Demographics Age .....	27
Figure 37. FY18 Video Library .....	29
Figure 38. Videos — Number of Views—FY18.....	29
Figure 39. FY18 Live Webinar Topics .....	30
Figure 40. Live Webinar Topics – FY18 .....	31
Figure 41. FY18 On-Demand Webinar Topics — FY18.....	31
Figure 42. On-Demand Webinar Views – FY18.....	31
Figure 43. Maryland Law Help App. <a href="http://MarylandLawHelp.mobapp.at">http://MarylandLawHelp.mobapp.at</a> .....	32
Figure 44. App Downloads — FY18.....	33
Figure 45. Forms Finder Web Page.....	33
Figure 46. Referral Pad.....	35
Figure 47. Bench Card .....	36
Figure 48. Bus Shelter in Baltimore City with Self-Help Center Advertising .....	37
Figure 49. Screenshot of Online Kent County Community Newspaper with Self-Help Center Advertising .....	38
Figure 50. Baltimore City Rent Court Brochure .....	39
Figure 51. Video Page with Chat Button.....	39
Figure 52. Self-Help Center Flyers.....	40
Figure 53. Law on the Frontlines Webpage .....	42

## INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Judiciary is committed to providing all Marylanders fair, effective, and efficient access to justice. Each year, significant resources are devoted to programs that assist the increasing number of self-represented litigants who come before Maryland's courts. Our programs and services include self-help centers, law libraries, online videos for the self-represented, online classes, form finders, tip sheets, the Maryland Law Help app, and more. These programs form a spectrum of resources to aid the self-represented, ranging from basic substantive and procedural information to day of court representation.

Maryland ranks fourth in the nation for access to justice, according to the 2016 Justice Index<sup>1</sup> and the Judiciary continues to respond to changing community needs. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, the Judiciary made significant investments in new resources for self-represented litigants. We enhanced, modernized, and fine-tuned self-help service delivery systems, with the goal of improving accessibility for self-represented litigants. Staff focused on filling gaps in service areas and connecting litigants to resources via outreach and promotion so litigants can identify the resources that best meet their needs.

## SELF-HELP CENTERS

The Maryland Courts' network of self-help centers expanded in FY18.

**THE MARYLAND COURTS SELF-HELP CENTER (MCSHC)** assists self-represented litigants remotely, via phone, live chat, and email. Attorneys help with all civil case types including housing and foreclosure, family law, consumer, domestic violence, and expungement. MCSHC is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. and serves all self-represented individuals, regardless of income. In FY18, MCSHC was staffed by attorneys and support staff employed by the Maryland Center for Legal Assistance (MCLA), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Maryland Legal Aid.

**FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTERS (FLSHCs)** provide walk-in assistance to self-represented litigants in family law matters throughout Maryland. Family Law self-help centers are staffed by a combination of contractual providers, pro bono attorneys, and court employees. The Department of Juvenile and Family Services, a division of the Administrative

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<sup>1</sup> See Justice Index Findings 2016. <https://justiceindex.org/2016-findings/findings/#site-navigation>

Office of the Courts, provides jurisdictional grants to local circuit courts to cover FLSHC operating costs.

**DISTRICT COURT SELF-HELP RESOURCE CENTERS (DCSHRCs)** provide walk-in assistance in civil District Court matters, including landlord and tenant, small claims, return of property, expungement, and domestic violence. All self-represented individuals may use the DCSHRCs, regardless of income. In FY18, the DCSHRCs were operated via a contract with MCLA. The Judiciary's fourth DCSHRC opened in Baltimore City in July 2017, and plans are underway for additional expansion.

**FREDERICK SELF-HELP CENTER.** In FY18, planning began for the newest walk-in self-help center, which opened in July 2018 in Frederick, Maryland. The District and Circuit Courts are located in the same building in Frederick, and the self-help center serves litigants with all civil matters from foreclosure and divorce to landlord and tenant. Plans are underway to expand existing FLSHCs to serve litigants with additional civil case types.

## LAW LIBRARIES

Maryland court law libraries provide access to legal information, offer educational opportunities, and operate programs that provide legal help to the public. They are an important part of the spectrum of resources for self-represented litigants. Maryland's nine staffed law libraries are in the following circuit court jurisdictions:

- Anne Arundel County
- Baltimore City
- Baltimore County
- Carroll County
- Charles County
- Howard County
- Montgomery County
- Prince George's County

The Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors (CMCLLD) includes directors of the eight staffed libraries, plus the Maryland State Law Library.

## OTHER RESOURCES

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### VIDEOS

In FY14, the Judiciary launched the *My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland* series of legal videos for unrepresented litigants with five videos, each running between 5-10 minutes. The video library helps self-represented litigants unravel complex legal principles and procedures.

The library grew to 21 titles by FY17, adding a variety of substantive and procedural topics in videos that ranged from 8-15 minutes each. Videos are available at [mdcourts.gov/videos](http://mdcourts.gov/videos) and on the Judiciary's YouTube channel.

In FY18, new videos added to the Judiciary's online library covered guardianship, rent court, and court interpreters. Videos include tip sheets, transcripts in English and Spanish, forms, and additional resources associated with each topic. Videos are closed captioned in English and Spanish.

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### DAY OF COURT PROGRAMS

In FY18, the Access to Justice Department awarded grants to several non-profit legal service providers who operate programs that enhance access to legal representation in civil case types in district and circuit courts. These programs include:

**LIMITED SCOPE REPRESENTATION.** Programs engage members of the private bar through pro bono service or on a reduced-fee basis and provide access to a lawyer for a limited scope as defined by the Maryland Rules.

**VOLUNTEER LAWYER OF THE DAY.** Programs provide access to a pro bono lawyer on the day of court for case types where representation is appropriate, including consumer and rent court matters.

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### WEBINARS

Attorneys at the MCSHC began offering online classes (webinars) for self-represented litigants in FY16. Staff identify topic areas based on frequently asked substantive and procedural questions. In FY18, the Judiciary offered two live webinar topics, and three topics have been recorded and are available on-demand. Live webinars are presented on the last Wednesday of each month.

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## MARYLAND LAW HELP APP

The Maryland Law Help app, launched in FY16, and brings together the myriad of web-enabled resources from the Maryland Courts in one convenient place. Litigants may access the Maryland Code and Rules, click to chat with an attorney at a self-help center, access the People's Law Library for legal information, or watch a video from the video library. The app is available, at no cost to users, via the Apple Store and Google Play.

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## FORM FINDERS

Forms are an easy-to-use resource for individuals who need to file papers without the help of a lawyer. The Judiciary offers form finder tools to help individuals identify which forms they need to file.

The **FAMILY LAW FORM FINDER** assists individuals who are unsure about which form they need to file in domestic cases. Users are prompted to answer a series of plain language questions about their situation. The form finder covers divorce, custody, visitation, child support, alimony, name change, and contempt. In FY18, there were 37,175 hits on the Family Law form finder.

The **DISTRICT COURT FORM FINDER** helps users identify which District Court form they need. It covers landlord and tenant matters, return of property (replevin and detinue), peace and protective orders, and small claims. In FY18, there were 10,773 hits on the District Court Form Finder.

## PROGRAMS

### THE MARYLAND COURTS SELF-HELP CENTER (MCSHC)

Remote self-help center services eliminate barriers to accessing civil legal help, particularly for individuals who may not be able to access a walk-in center due to location or disability.

Demand for service via phone and live chat continues to climb. In FY18, there was a 28% increase over FY17. Demand for service via telephone remains the highest of the three remote services; however, the number of litigants served via chat also increased by 29% in FY18.

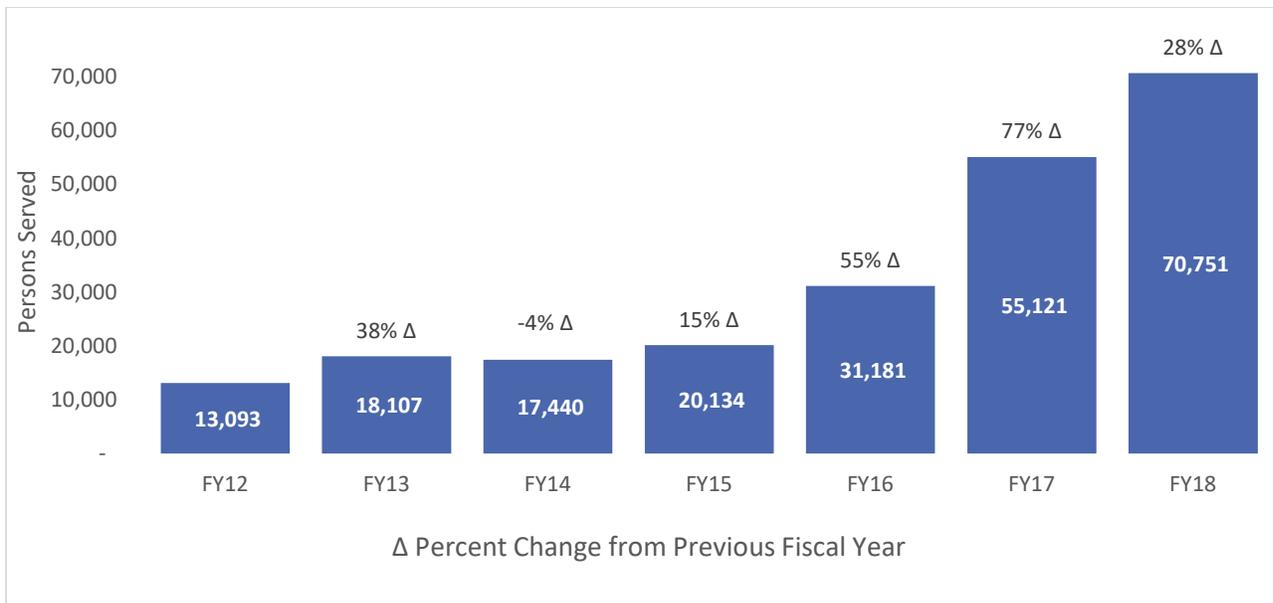


Figure 1. MCSHC — Total Served by Fiscal Year

Open Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 8:00 p.m., the MCSHC aids litigants with all civil case types from landlord and tenant to divorce, custody, foreclosure, and expungement.

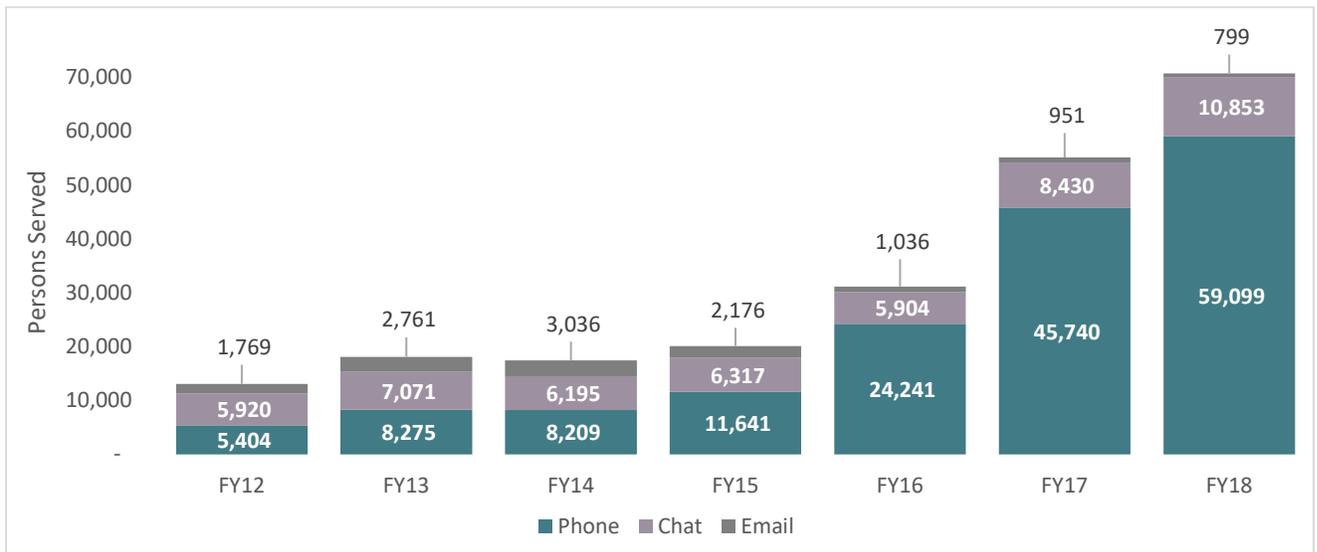


Figure 2. MCSHC — Total Served via Phone, Chat & Email — FY12 – FY18

In FY18, attorneys at the MCSHC assisted an average of 4,925 litigants per month via phone, a 29% increase over FY17. The number of chat users also increased in FY18.

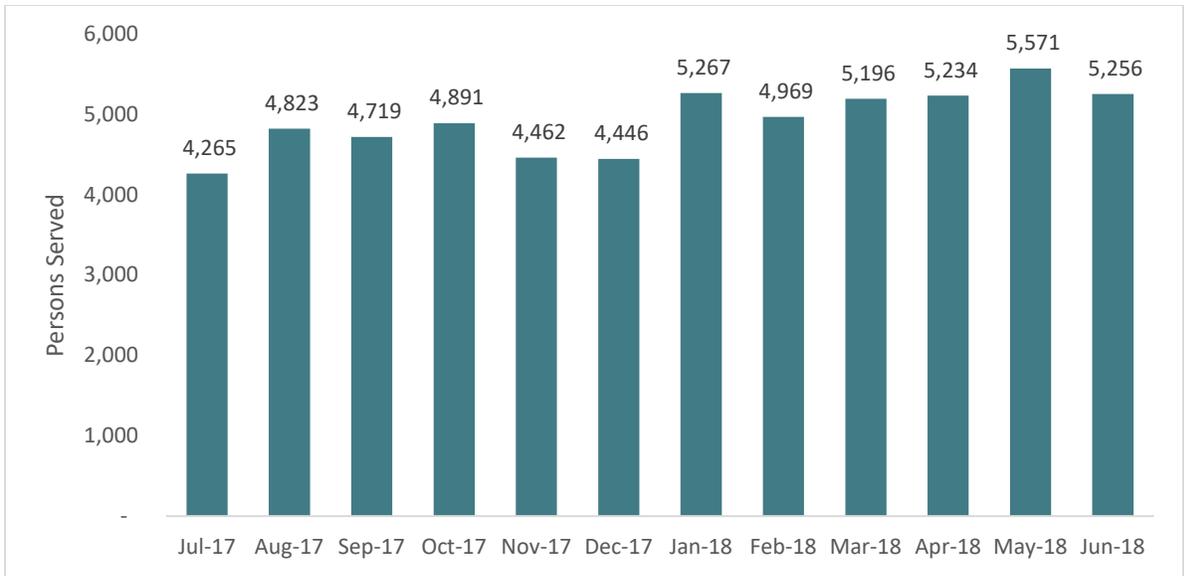


Figure 3. MCSHC — Total Served via Phone — FY18

In FY18, Access to Justice Department staff added the chat button to several web pages, including circuit court websites and the Judiciary’s new video pages.

Increased prevalence of the chat button may have contributed to the increase in monthly chat volume that occurred in FY18. Staff assisted a total of 10,853 litigants via chat this year, a 29% increase over FY17.

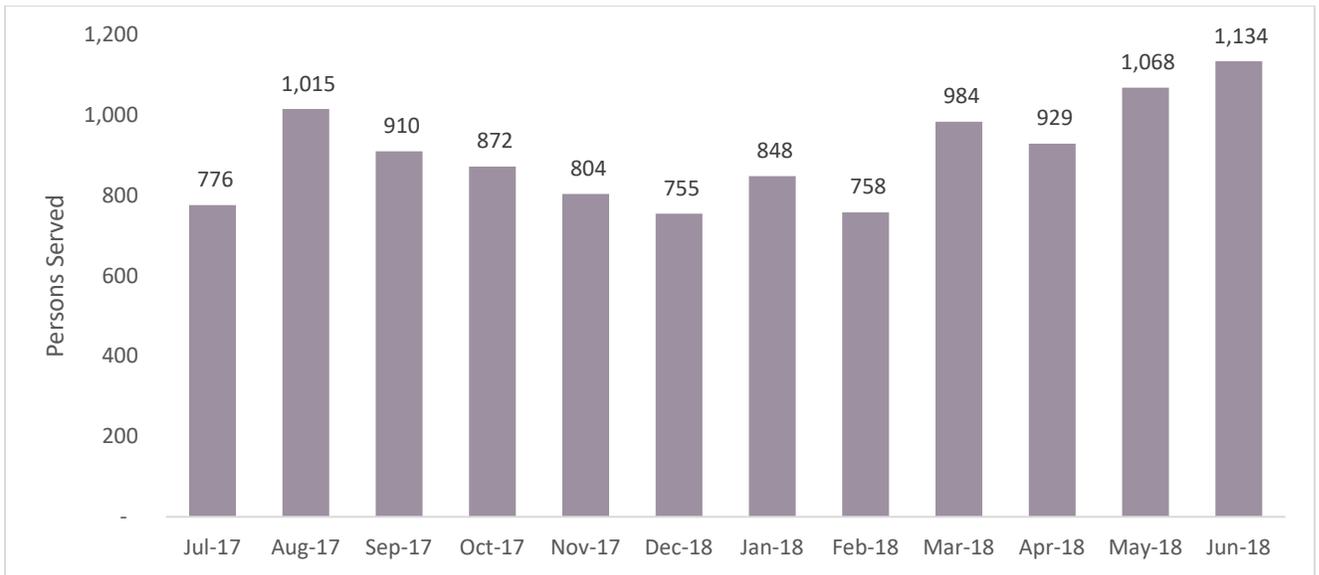


Figure 4. MCSHC — Total Served via Chat — FY18

Remote services are provided weekdays until 8:00 p.m. The Access to Justice Department evaluates the value of offering extended hours by monitoring hourly call and chat data. Demand for service between 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. has increased by 43% over FY17.



Figure 5. MCSHC — Evening Phone and Chat Volume by Month - FY17 and FY18

MCSHC attorneys provide remote assistance for self-represented litigants in all civil case types, including foreclosure, housing, family law, landlord and tenant, small claims, and more.

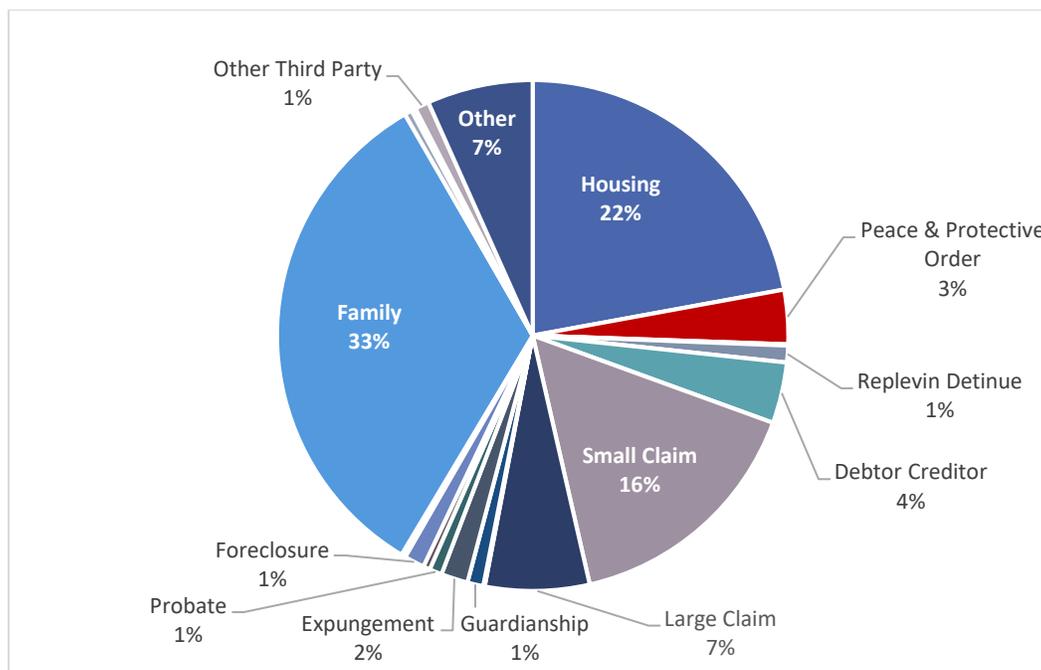


Figure 6. MCSHC — Case Types Phone — FY18

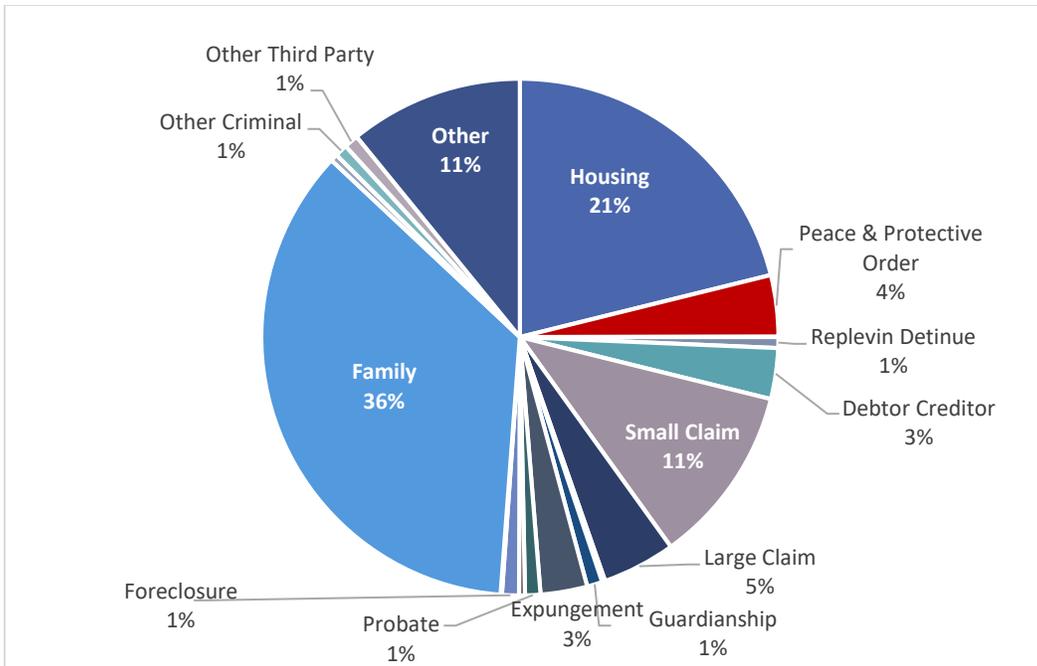


Figure 7. MCSHC — Case Types Chat — FY18

In FY18, the average phone call lasted 9 minutes and 16 seconds. Chats took an average of 17 minutes and 29 seconds. MCSHC attorneys may serve up to four litigants at a time via chat.

MCSHC attorneys assisted litigants from all 23 Maryland counties and Baltimore City. Most MCSHC users are women between the ages of 30 and 49. Chat users report slightly higher levels of education than phone users.

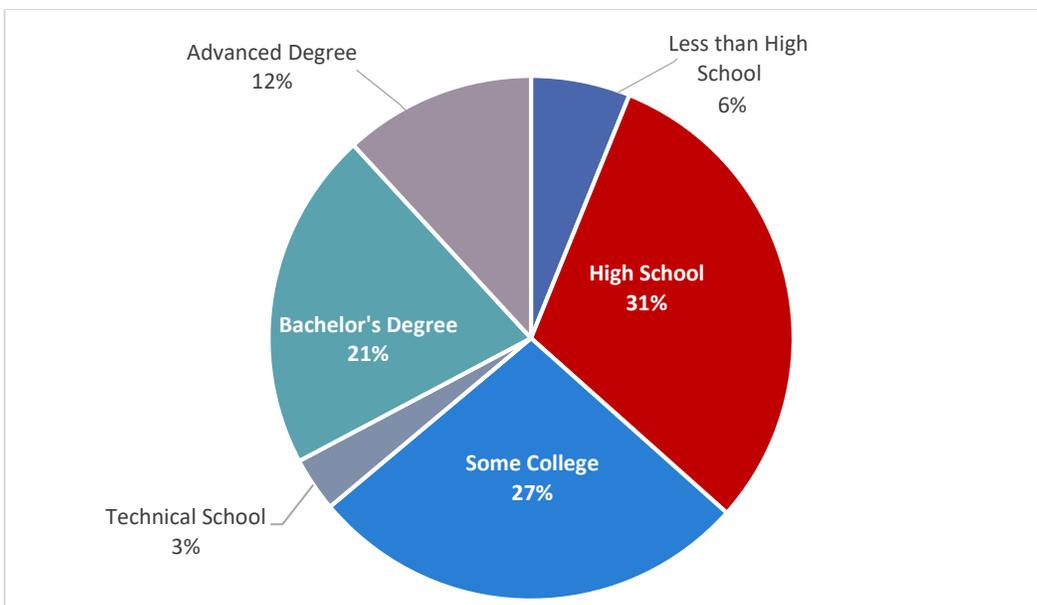


Figure 8. MCSHC — Education Phone — FY18

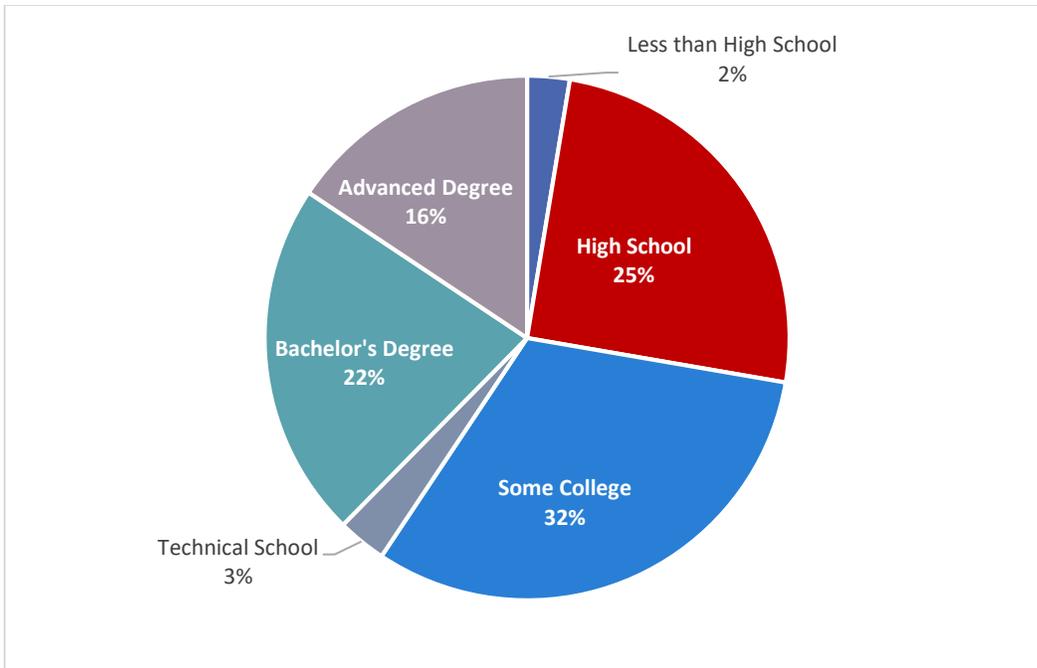


Figure 9. MCSHC — Education Chat — FY18

MCSHC attorneys assist self-represented litigants with limited English proficiency (LEP) via Language Line, a telephonic interpretation vendor that provides interpreter services in more than 240 languages.

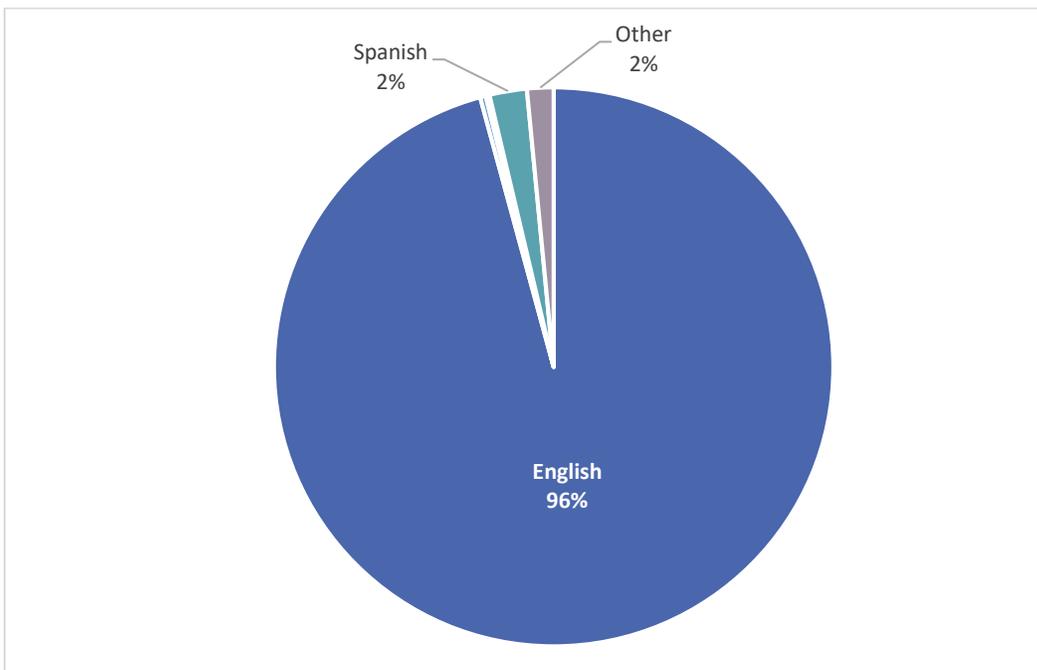


Figure 10. MCSHC — Language — Phone—FY18

Staff continue to use the Spanish language queue on the telephone, which launched in FY16 after Access to Justice Department staff evaluated data indicating that 50% of LEP callers spoke Spanish. Callers are directed in Spanish to press 4 to hear menu options in Spanish, and attorneys know in advance to connect with Language Line. Remote services help the public access civil legal help.

Most individuals who receive MCSHC services report a low or moderate income.

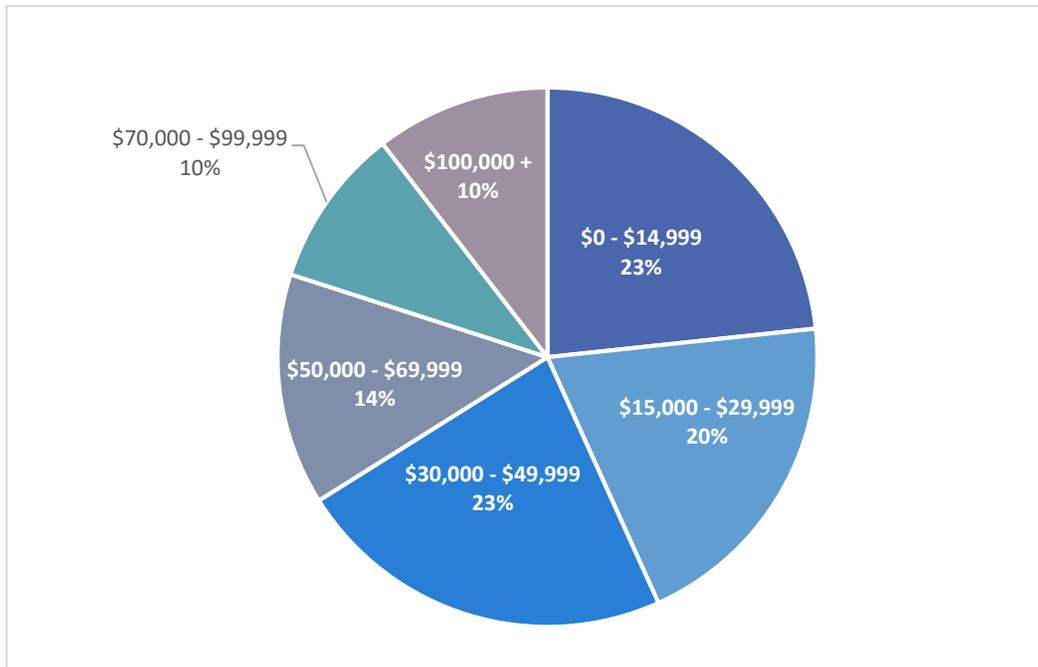


Figure 11. MCSHC — Income — FY18

In FY18, a family of four qualified for free legal services under the Maryland Legal Services Corporation’s (“MLSC”) income eligibility guidelines if they earned an annual household income of \$55,019 or less. (See MLSC Client Income Eligibility Guidelines at <https://www.mlsc.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/2018-MLSC-Income-Guidelines-Final.pdf>) 66% of MCSHC users report an annual household income of \$49,999 or less.

Users rate the live chat service favorably. After completion of services, users are prompted to take a brief survey. 90% of chat users say they would recommend the service to a friend. Many comments are positive:

“I got the answers I needed quickly to know exactly what I need to do.”

“It helps decipher which forms to file and helps me with feeling I am responding correctly to the proceedings.”

“She took her time to help me fill out a court form and was very helpful to make me understand what I was answering.”

“It seems like a good service for people who cannot navigate the internet or comprehend legal jargon.”

## FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTERS (FLSHCs)

FLSHCs help litigants without counsel in family law matters, in every Maryland county and Baltimore City.

In FY18, 81% of family law cases had at least one litigant who was unrepresented at the time of answer. The highest number of cases having one or more litigants without counsel at answer was Prince George’s County at 93%. Garrett, Queen Anne’s, and Worcester counties have consistently reported fewer than 50% of cases had one or more litigants without counsel at this stage.

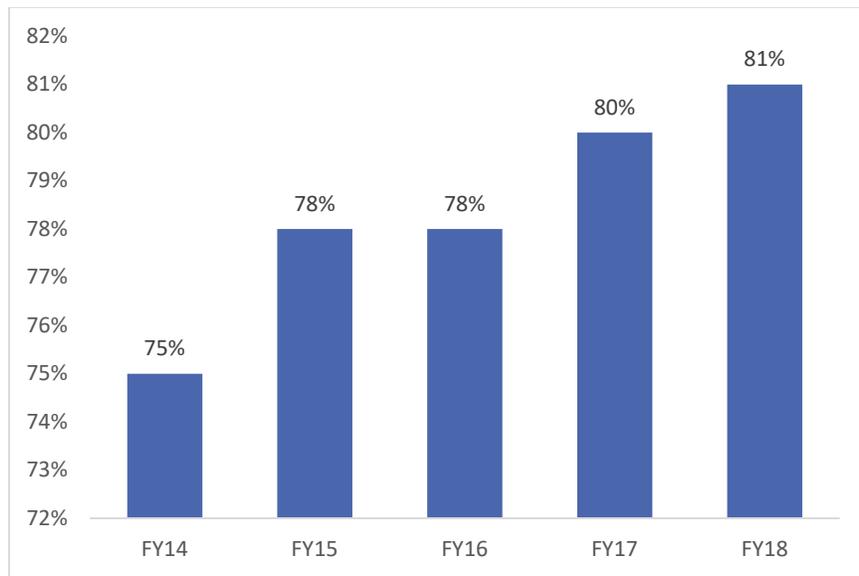


Figure 12. FLSHC — Percentage of Cases with Unrepresented Litigants — Any Stage FY14 - FY18

The level of assistance provided at FLSHCs varies throughout the state. Most FLSHCs are full-time and are staffed by attorneys. Others have more limited hours and are staffed by paralegals, working under attorney supervision. Some jurisdictions use family services coordinators to provide help to litigants without counsel.

Many unrepresented litigants seek assistance with forms, court process, and procedure. In FY18, 52,772 individuals received help at FLSHCs across all 24 jurisdictions in Maryland.

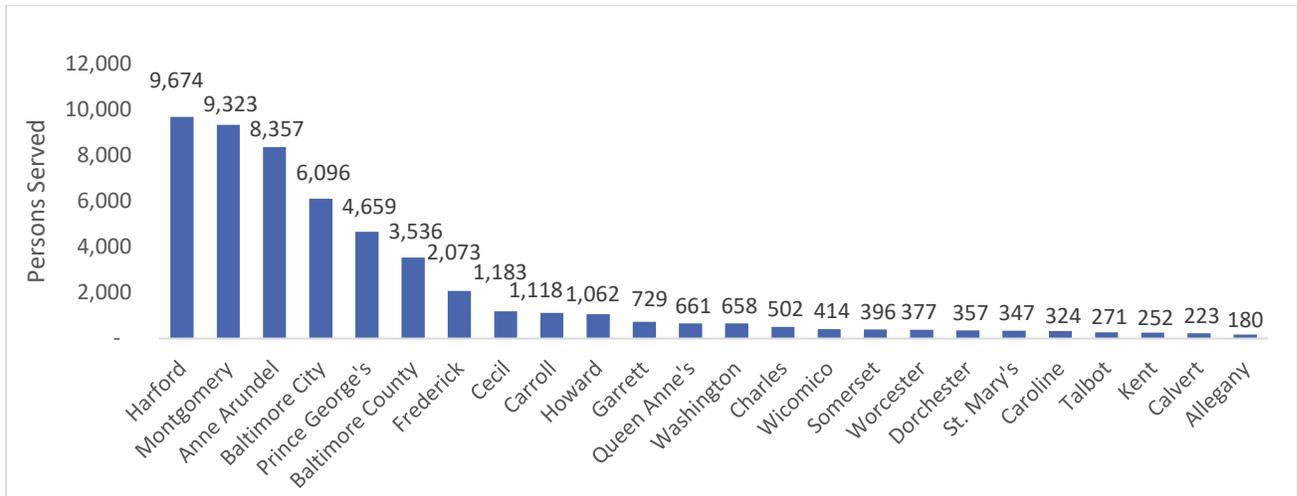


Figure 13. FLSHC—Persons Served by County—FY18

Most FLSHCs help walk-in litigants only, but some provide remote help on the phone.

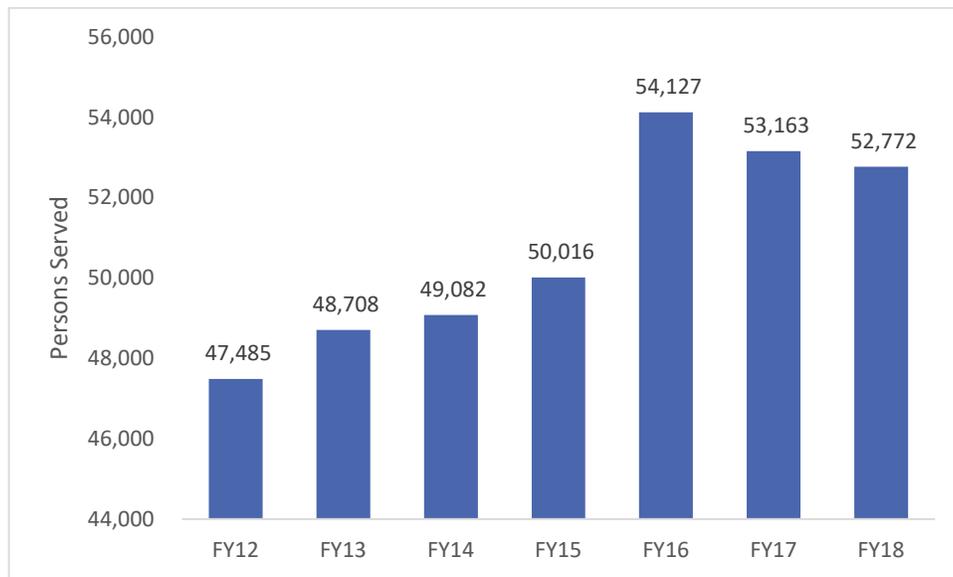


Figure 14. FLSHC—Total Persons Served by Fiscal Year—FY12 – FY18

FLSHCs help litigants with a wide variety of legal issues. The most common was custody and visitation at 44%. Divorce was the next most common at 29%, followed by child support at 17%. The top two reasons litigants sought assistance at the self-help centers were to find out how to start a case and how to prepare court forms.

FLSHCs provide assistance with custody, divorce, child support, visitation, domestic violence, name change, alimony, paternity, guardianship for adults and children, adoption, and juvenile expungement.

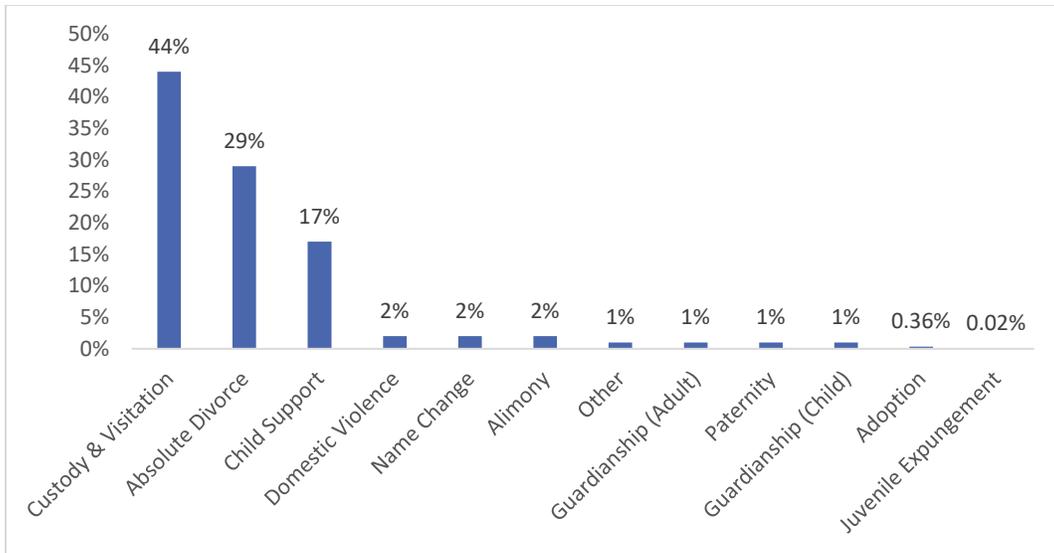


Figure 15. FLSHC—Case Types—FY18

Much like the MCSHC, most individuals who seek help at FLSHCs report a low or moderate income. More than 78% of FLSHC users report an annual income of less than \$50,000, which renders a family of four eligible for low-cost legal help under the MLSC guidelines.

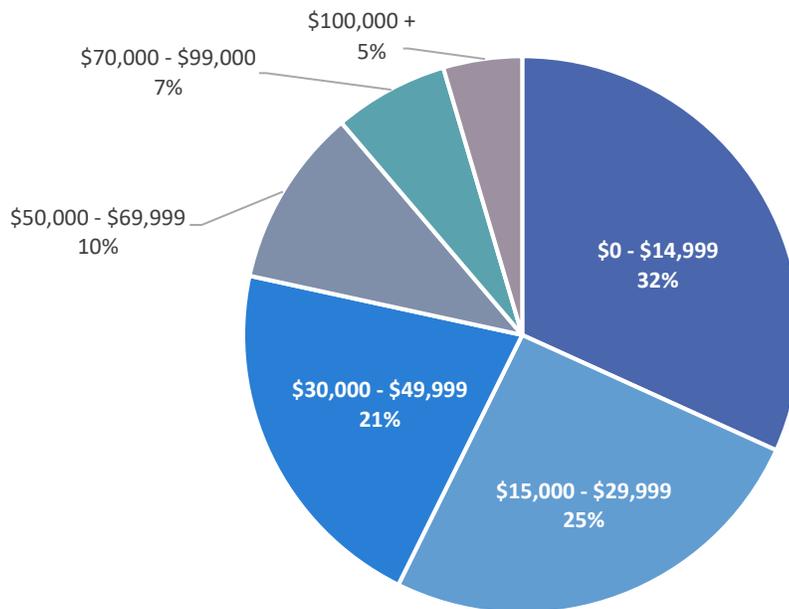


Figure 16. FLSHC—Income—FY18

In FY18, 10% of FLSHC users spoke Spanish and another 4% identified as not primary English speakers.

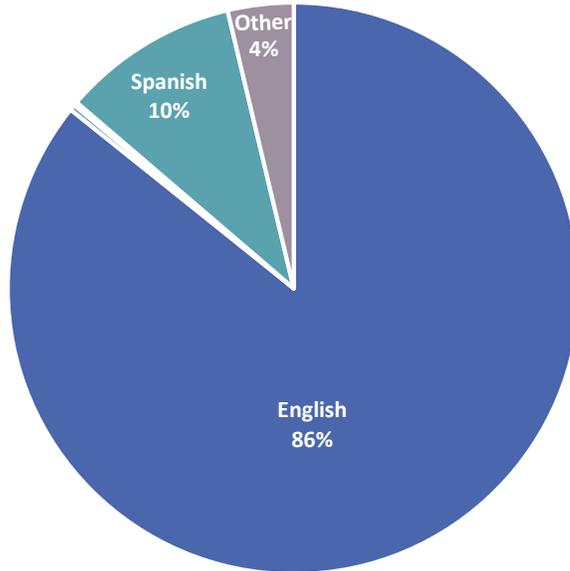


Figure 17. FLSHC—Language—FY18

## DISTRICT COURT SELF-HELP RESOURCE CENTERS (DCSHRCs)

In FY18, four DCSHRCs, located in Baltimore City, Glen Burnie, Salisbury, and Upper Marlboro, served more than 20,000 unrepresented Marylanders with their civil legal matters.

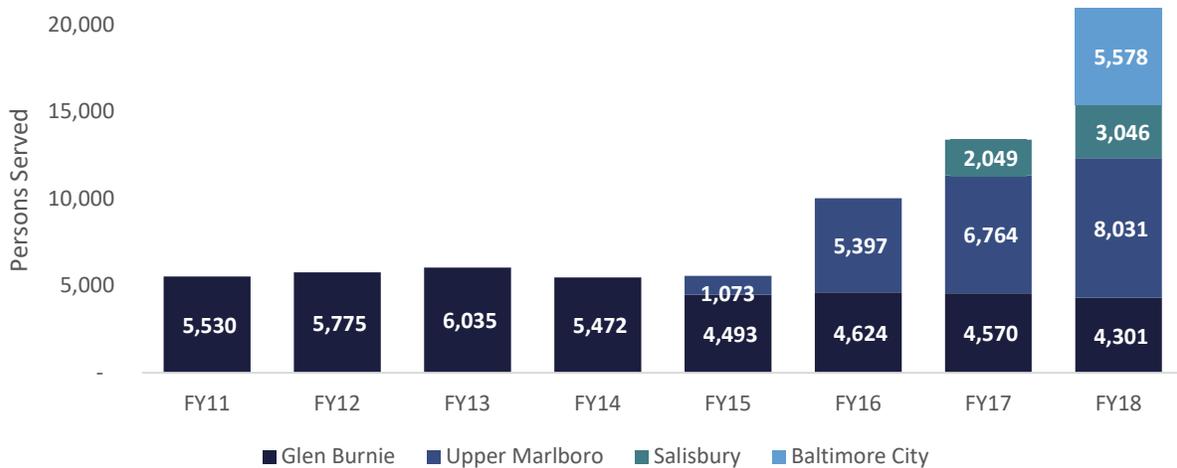


Figure 18. DCSHRC – Volume by Center – FY18

Topics included landlord and tenant, small claims, return of property, expungement, and domestic violence matters. In FY18, the most common case type was housing, followed by small and large claims.

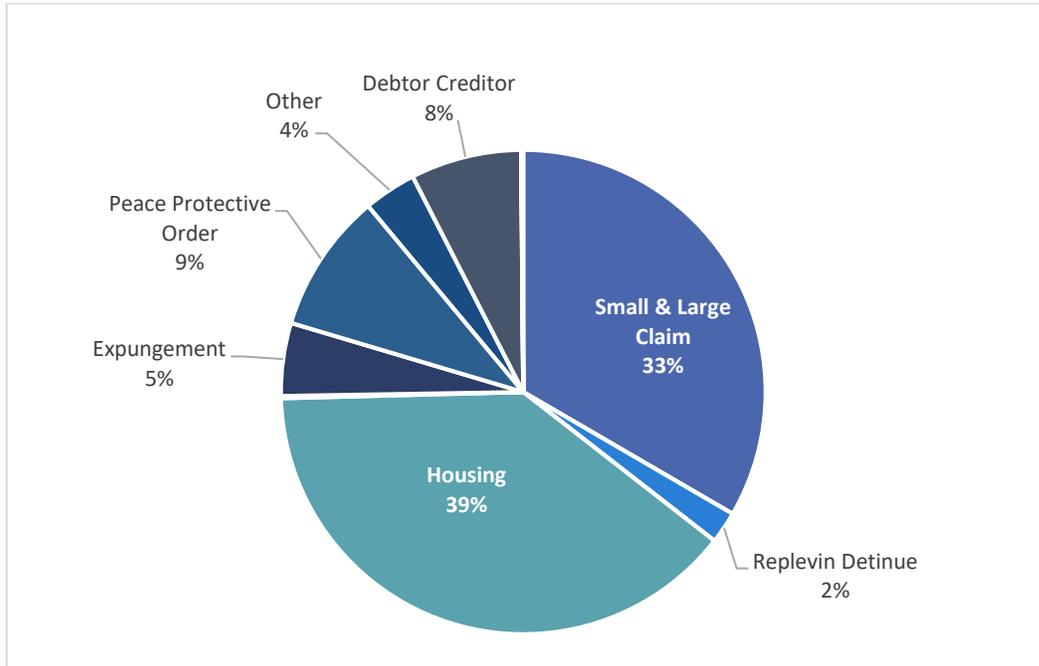


Figure 19. DCSHRC – Case Types All Centers – FY18

The newest DCSHRC opened in Baltimore City in July 2017, and a grand opening celebration was held in September 2017. The event was attended by state delegates, judges, city council members, and staff from nonprofit organizations. The event received significant media coverage by local affiliates WYPR and WBAL, as well as the *MSBA Bar Journal*. The Associated Press provided national coverage of the grand opening.

In FY18, three staff attorneys, a supervising attorney, and an administrative assistant helped more than 5,500 unrepresented litigants at the Baltimore City DCSHRC. In that location, 69% of demand is for housing matters, including failure to pay rent, tenant holding over, and breach of lease.

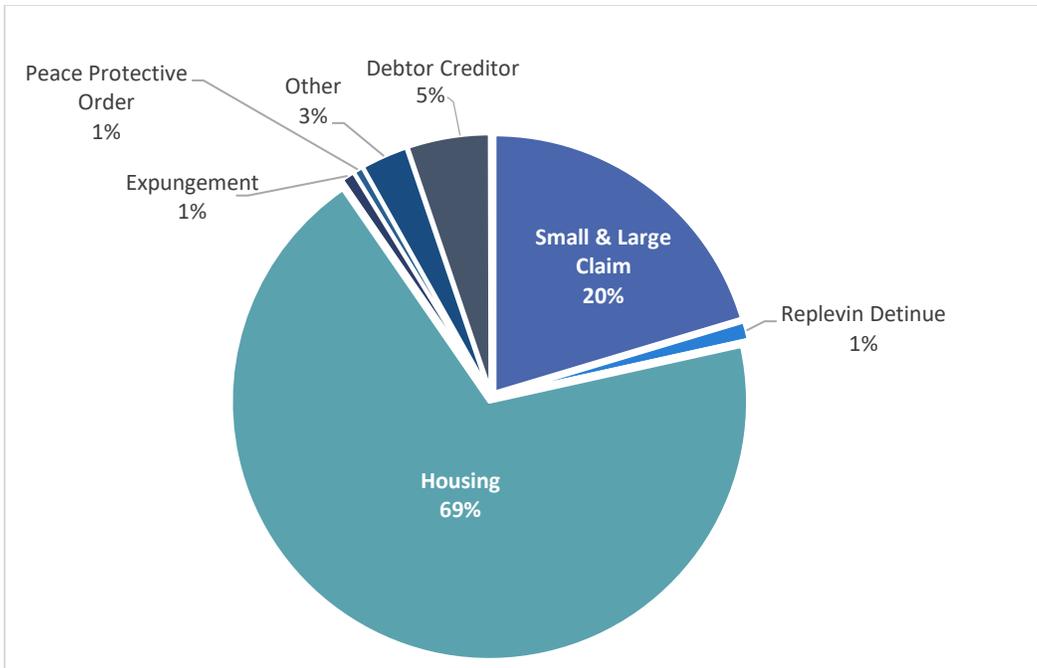


Figure 20. DCSHRC – Baltimore City Case Types – FY18

The Glen Burnie DCSHRC served 4,301 self-represented litigants in FY18. This center, which launched in December 2009, is staffed by three attorneys and an administrative assistant.

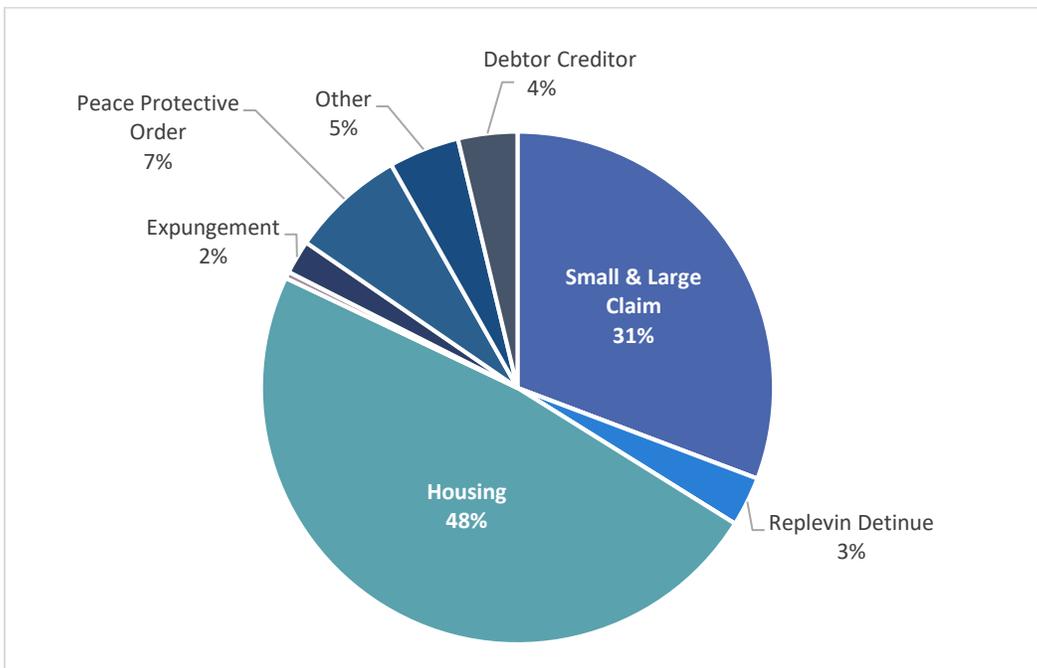


Figure 21. DCSHRC—Glen Burnie Case Types—FY18

Attorneys in Glen Burnie began advising litigants on expungement and sealing of criminal records in January 2017. In FY18, 2% of litigants were assisted with expungement matters.

The Upper Marlboro DCSHRC, which opened in 2015, remains the highest volume DCSHRC. There are two District Court locations in Prince George’s County, one in Upper Marlboro and one in Hyattsville. The Upper Marlboro location does not hear landlord and tenant matters. If these cases were heard in Upper Marlboro, the demand for self-help services would be even higher.

In FY18, half of users at the Upper Marlboro DCSHRC received assistance with small and large claims.

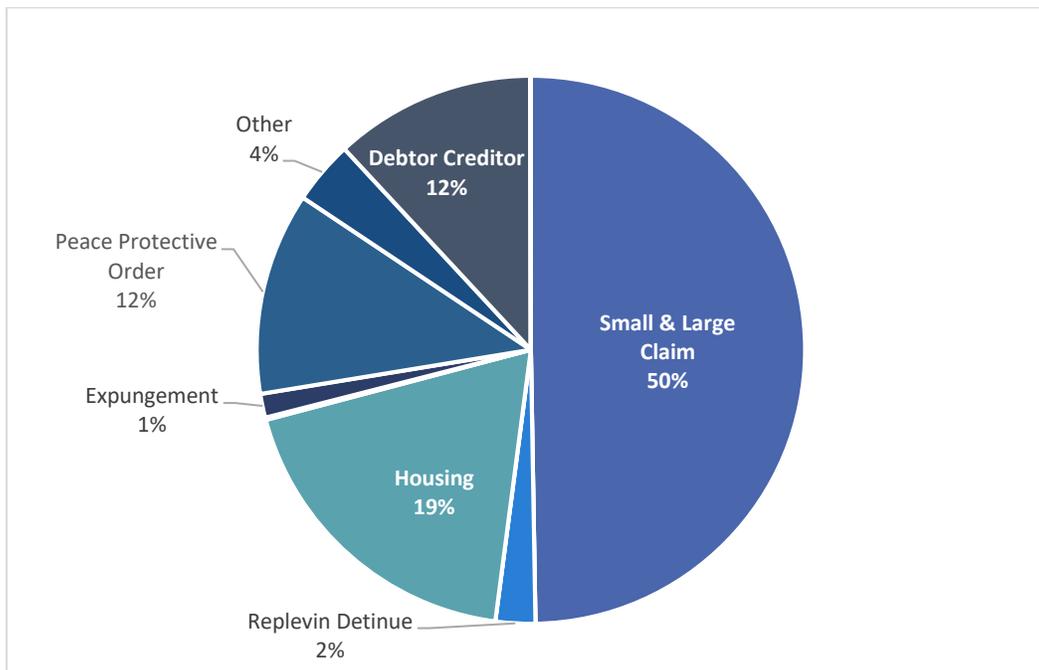


Figure 22. DCSHRC—Upper Marlboro Case Types—FY18

Staffed by three attorneys and an administrative assistant, the Upper Marlboro DCSHRC assisted 8,031 litigants in FY18, an increase of 49% in two years. In October 2017, the Upper Marlboro DCSHRC assisted a record-breaking 803 litigants, the highest number of walk-in visitors in one month.

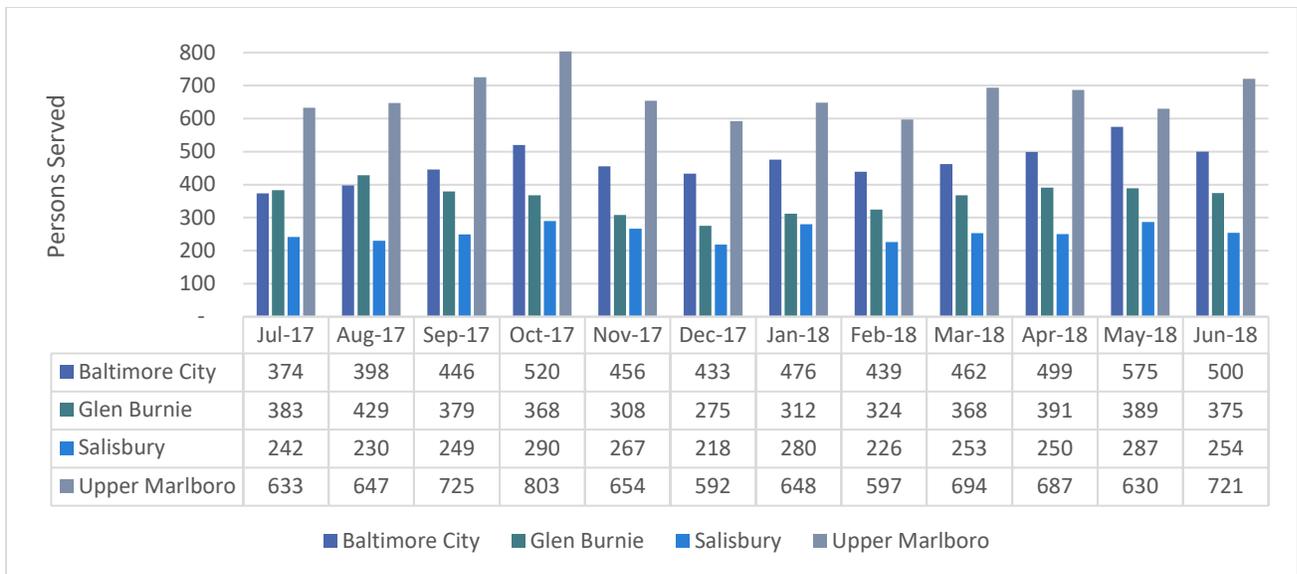


Figure 23. DCSHRC — Monthly Volume by Location — FY18

In FY18, the Upper Marlboro location assisted visitors with expungement matters via a pro bono program, called *Justice for Lunch*. DCSHRC staff have partnered with the local Standing Committee on Pro Bono, the Office of the Public Defender, and Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County on this project. *Justice for Lunch* connects litigants at the DCSHRC with pro bono attorneys who provide legal advice and procedural information, and help with forms in expungement matters.

On the Eastern Shore, the Salisbury DCSHRC serves unrepresented litigants with landlord and tenant, small claims, return of property, domestic violence and expungement matters. In FY18, the Salisbury location assisted 3,046 litigants, a 49% increase over FY17.

Staffed by two attorneys and an administrative assistant, the Salisbury location’s most frequent case types are expungement and housing matters. Peace and protective order matters are a close second, followed by small and large claims.

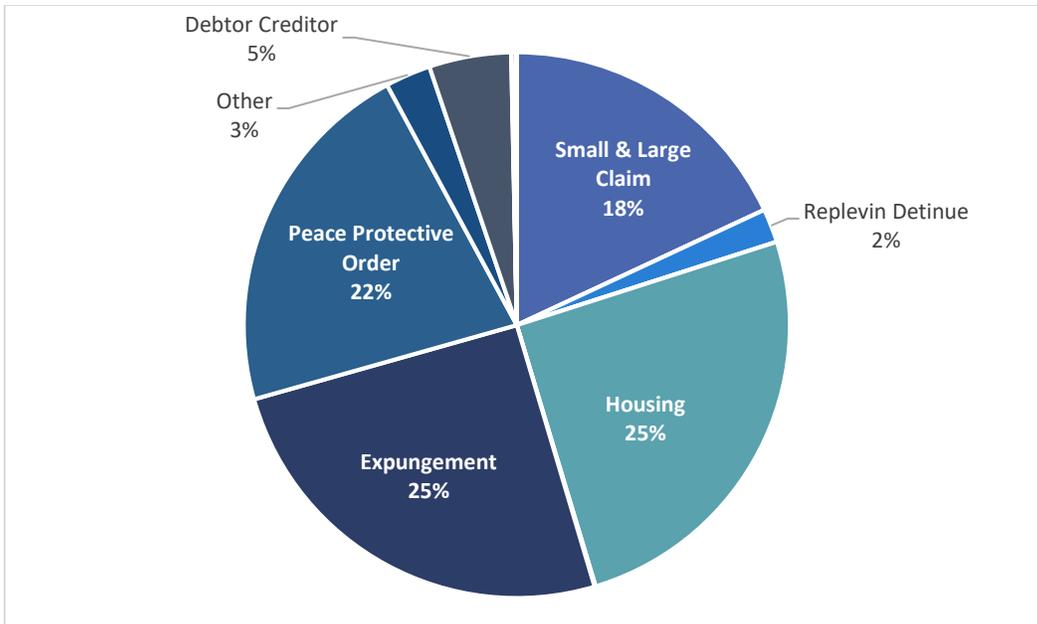


Figure 24. DCSHRC—Salisbury Case Types — FY18

A typical service at a DCSHRC took 16 - 30 minutes in FY18.

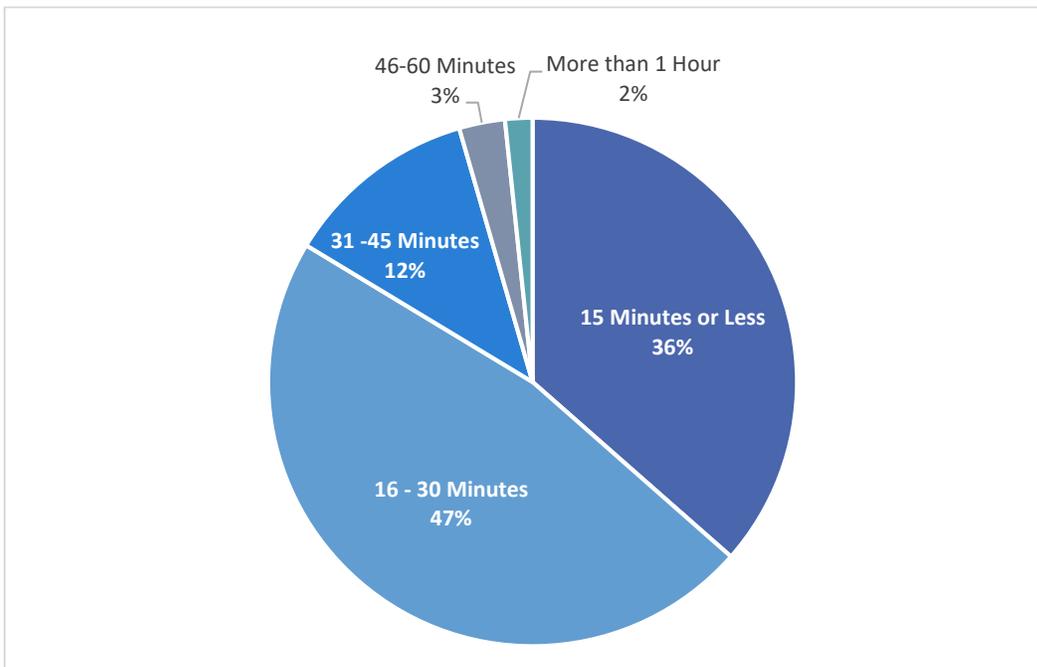


Figure 25. DCSHRC—Average Engagement Length of Time for Services—FY18

The demographics of DCSHRC users have not changed significantly since 2009. In FY18, 58% of DCSHRC users were women and 41% were between the ages of 30 and 49.

The four DCSHRCs use Language Line to assist litigants who speak languages other than English.

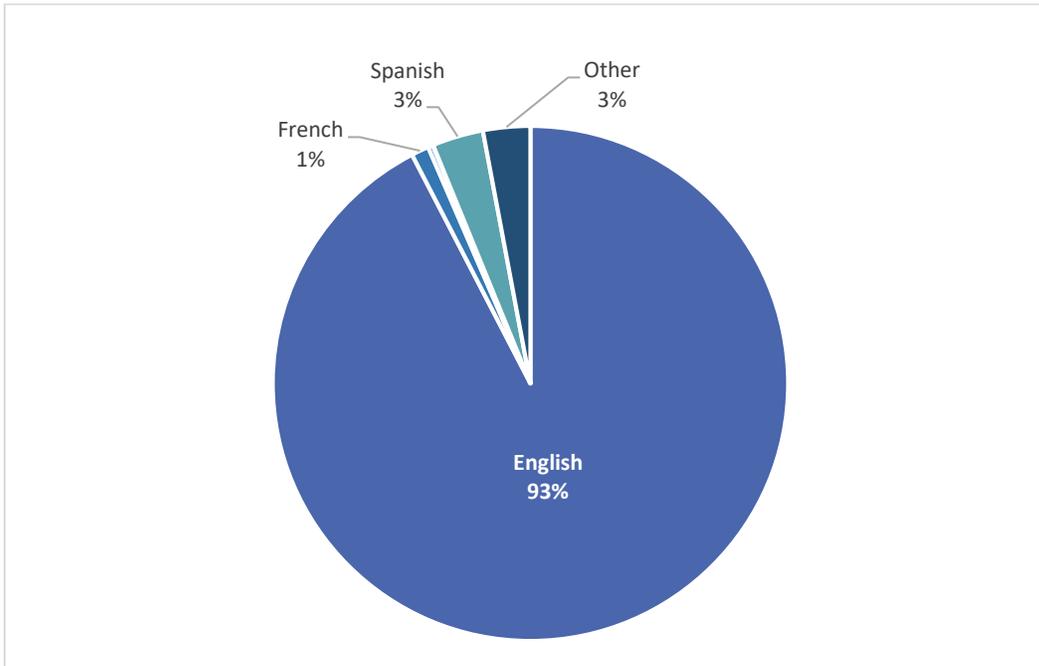


Figure 26. DCSHRC — Language — FY18

In FY18, all four DCSHRCs received laptops with software to provide remote American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation services for litigants who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

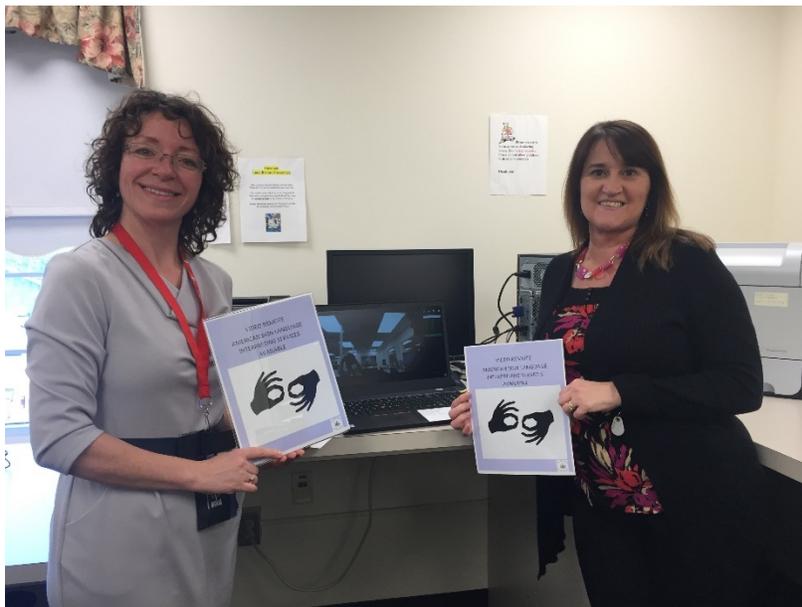


Figure 27. DCSHRC — Ksenia Boitsova delivers remote ASL Laptops to staff at the Calvert County Circuit Court

## DAY OF COURT REPRESENTATION PROGRAMS

In FY18, the Judiciary provided grants to several programs that provide day of court representation to individuals with consumer and rent court matters in Baltimore City and Prince George's County.

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### CONSUMER PROTECTION PROJECT

In FY18, the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) and Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC) were each awarded a 12-month grant to provide day of court representation to defendants in consumer debt collection matters in District Court. The program operates Tuesday and Wednesday mornings in Baltimore City at the Fayette Street location, and three Fridays per month in Prince George's County.

In FY18, the program provided day of court representation to 854 consumers. The program engaged 52 pro bono attorneys, who logged 793 hours of volunteer service.

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### TENANT VOLUNTEER LAWYER OF THE DAY PROGRAM

PBRC was awarded a 16-month grant, beginning in March of 2017 (FY17) to provide day of court representation to tenants in rent court matters in Baltimore City District Court. During the 16-month period, PBRC or its pro bono attorneys represented 346 tenants in day of court proceedings. The program engaged 31 pro bono attorneys who logged 480 hours of volunteer service.

The program currently operates Tuesday – Friday mornings in Baltimore City.

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### JUSTICE REFERRALS

In FY18, Civil Justice, Inc. was awarded a grant to match private attorneys providing limited scope services at a reduced fee, with low or moderate-income clients. In FY18, the program connected 41 clients with limited scope services. Throughout the grant period, Civil Justice promoted limited scope representation in Maryland by developing a menu of services for the public and a supply of trained attorneys willing to provide legal help at affordable prices. Civil Justice worked with other programs, including the MCSHC, to encourage referrals to the program through phone intake or via an online tool [www.justicereferrals.org](http://www.justicereferrals.org). In FY19, Civil Justice plans to focus on direct client contact, and expects to train 75 new attorneys, screen 1,500 potential clients, and double the number of litigants receiving representation through the program.

## LAW LIBRARIES

Law libraries serve self-represented litigants by helping them locate legal information, resources, and local referrals.

In FY18, the nine staffed law libraries, including the Maryland State Law Library, assisted 100,229 visitors with 52,290 questions, an average of 213 questions per day.

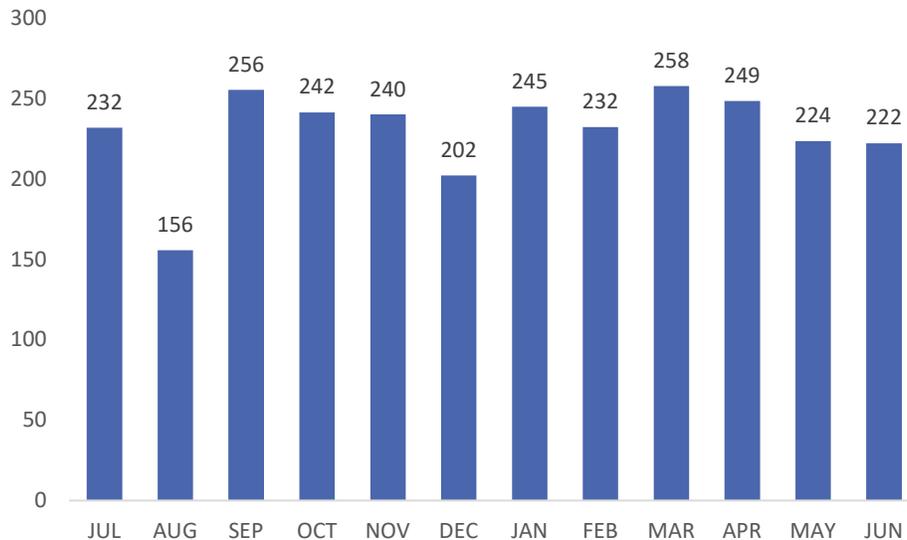


Figure 28. CMCLLD—Average Number of Questions Per Day—FY18

Patron inquiries range from brief directional questions to lengthy research queries. Examples include:

- What is Maryland law on allowing posting of door-to-door flyers? Is it trespassing to put door hangers on residential neighborhoods?
- I am about to start driving for [a car service company], I am trying to find out if it is legal or not to video record inside of my vehicle. I am looking to install a dash cam that would record the inside and outside of my vehicle for safety reasons. I also have stickers to place on my windows to let customers know of this recording. There will be NO audio recording at all. Can you possibly help me with this information or tell me exactly where to go to find out?
- How do I collect medical costs from my child's other parent as outlined in our divorce agreement?
- How can I find a form for a standard month-to-month lease in Maryland?

Court libraries have special collections for non-attorneys, including NOLO books, online databases, and forms. Librarians guide users to online resources, sample forms, and print material, and they help litigants identify print, electronic, and human resources that are most useful to them. Libraries can provide examples of forms, an overview of the legal issue, and copies of the Maryland Code and Rules.

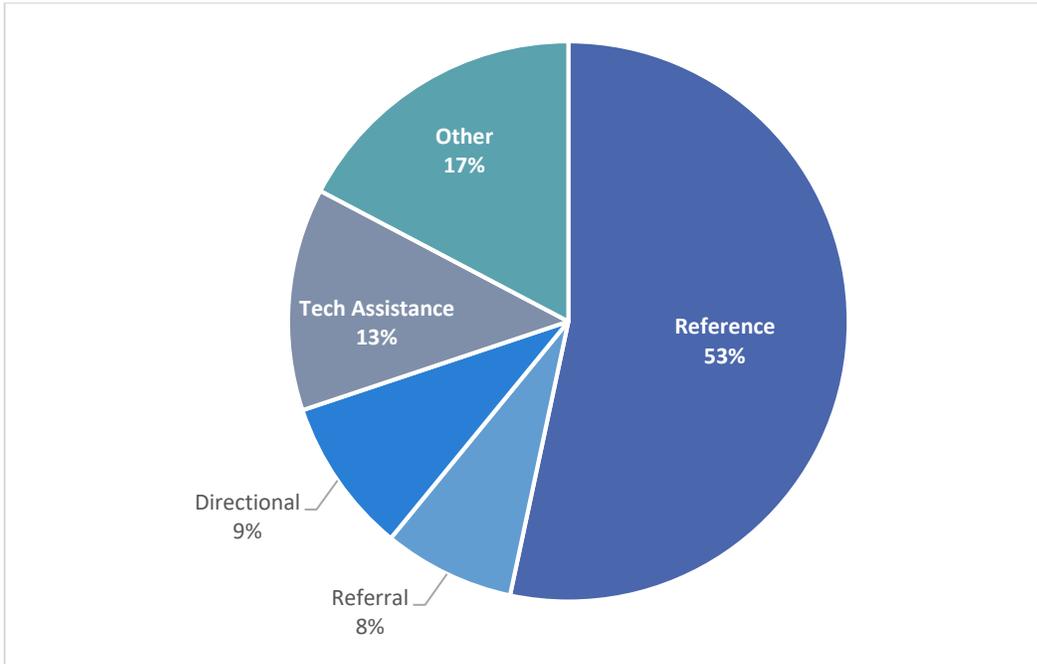


Figure 29. CMCLLD—Types of Assistance Provided —FY18

Together, the nine staffed law libraries had more than 209,000 web hits, not including the People’s Law Library (PLL), and 208,000 catalog searches.

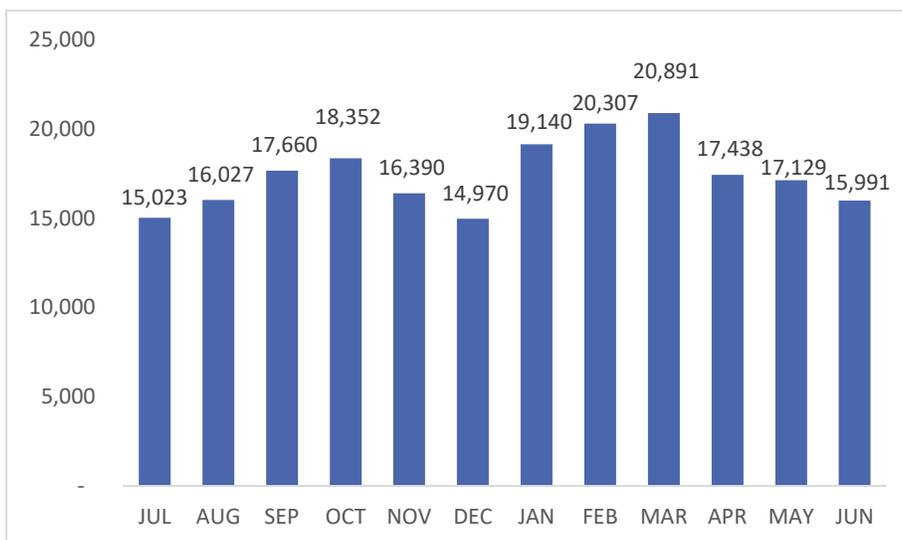


Figure 30. CMCLLD—Web Hits—FY18 (Not including PLL)

Most law library users are non-attorneys and use the library in-person. In FY18, the Charles County Law Library saw a 50% increase in users who were non-attorneys.

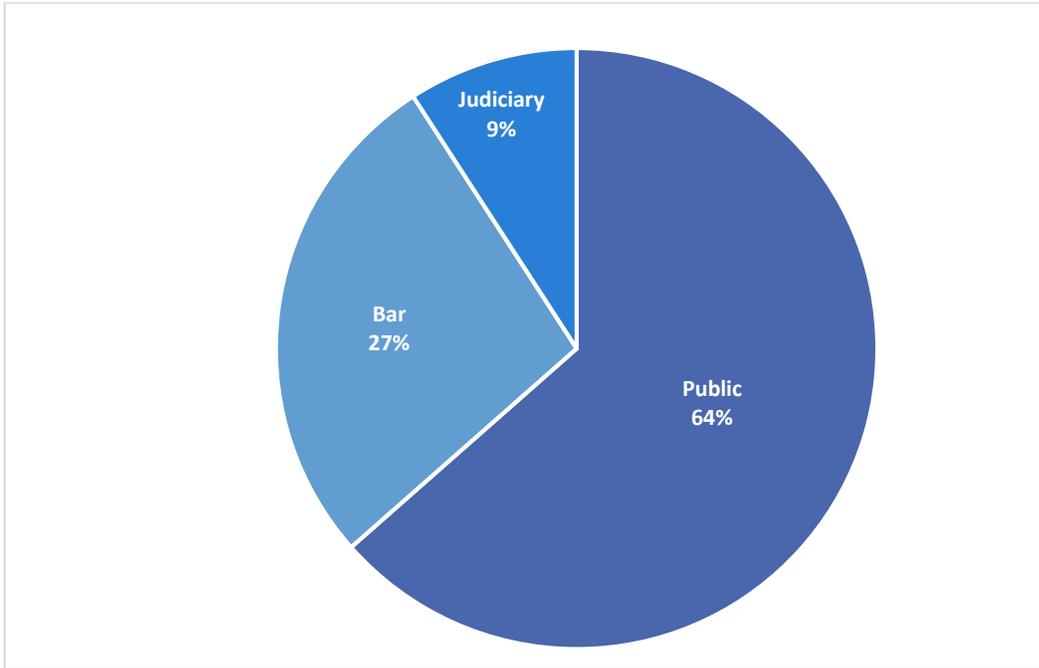


Figure 31. CMCLLD—Users—FY18

Most questions concern civil legal matters.

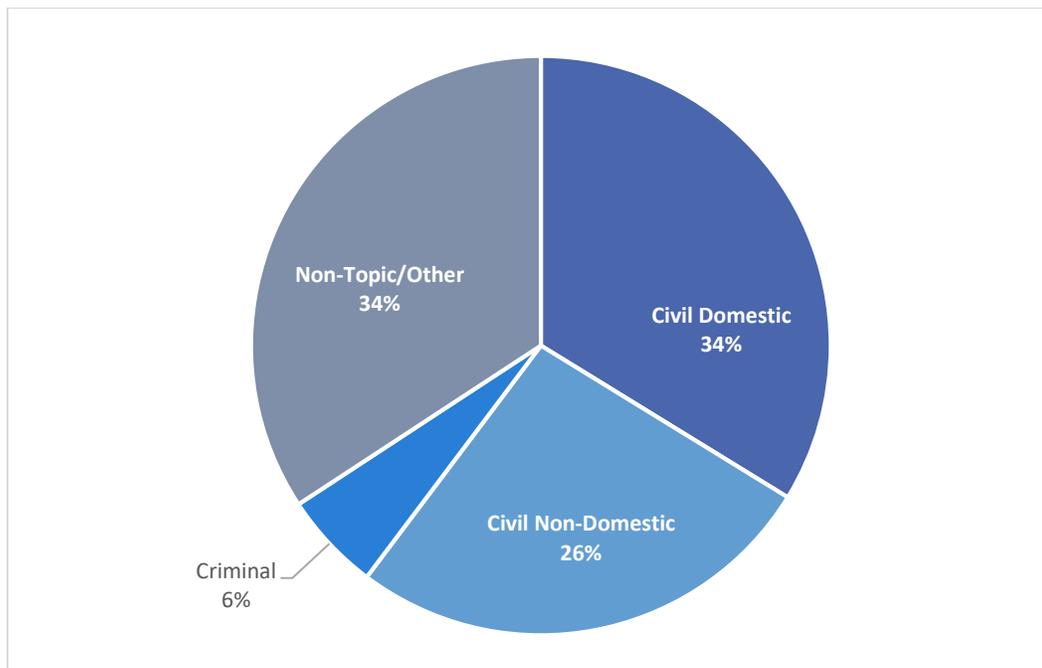


Figure 32. CMCLLD—Question Types—FY18

Law libraries and self-help centers make many cross referrals. A litigant may get advice from a self-help center about which pleading to file, then visit a law library to obtain a sample pleading. Likewise, litigants may visit a law library to research a legal issue, then visit a self-help center to get help applying the facts of their case to the law. Law librarians help litigants connect with the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center, where they can get immediate help via phone and chat.

Libraries offer additional services by providing clinical programs, including *Lawyer in the Library* and the *Foreclosure Brief Advice Clinic*. These programs engage members of the local bar who provide brief advice to litigants in the library. The Anne Arundel County Public Law Library also coordinates a legal clinic at the annual *Anne Arundel County Homeless Resource Day*. In FY18, lawyers served more than 1,600 self-represented litigants at library-based self-help clinics.

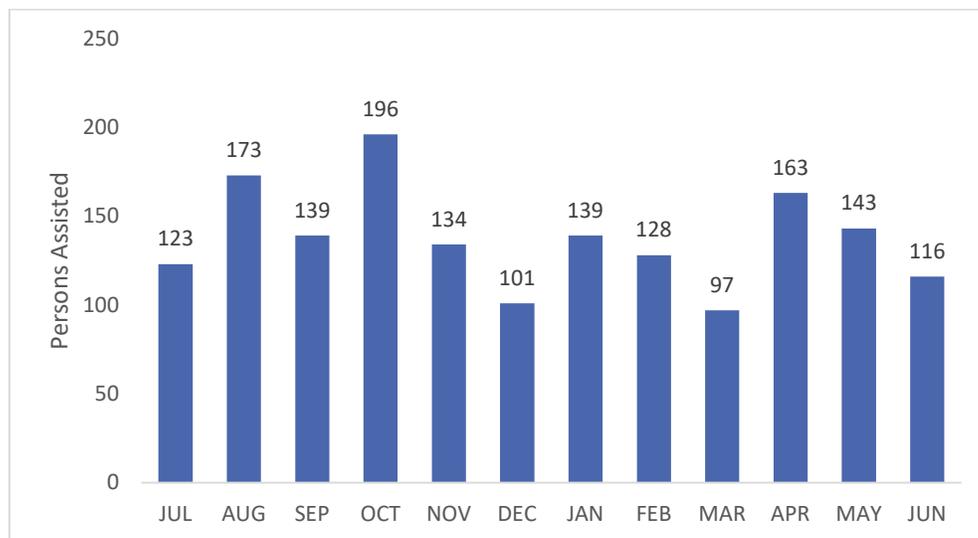


Figure 33. Number of Litigants Assisted via Lawyer in the Library Programs—FY18

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## THE PEOPLE’S LAW LIBRARY

The People’s Law Library (PLL), a legal information and self-help website managed by the Maryland State Law Library, continued to add new content and update existing content in FY18. New pages were added on popular topics such as expungement, sealing or shielding court records, and immigration. There are now nearly 500 English and almost 200 Spanish articles on the site.

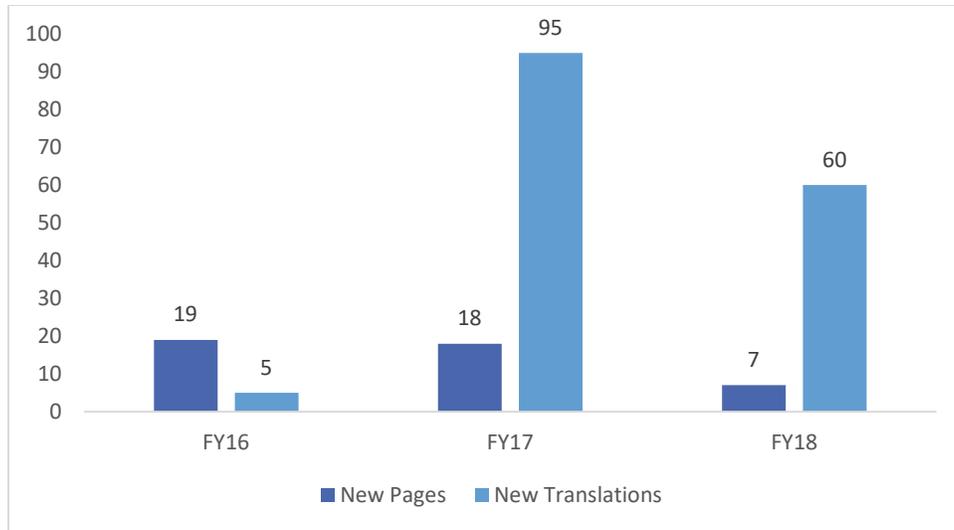


Figure 34. PLL – Content Development

Much of FY18 was spent working towards a technology upgrade and full redesign of the site to align design and functionality with current user expectations. The mobile web did not exist when PLL was founded, more than 20 years ago. Mobile support was added in FY14, but the site was hard to read, and it was difficult to discover features and content.

The original PLL, which featured informational articles on substantive legal topics, expanded over time to include the “How do I...?” series of procedural articles, the Legal Services Directory, the Legal Clinic Calendar, and content in languages other than English. The technology upgrade and redesign was aimed at increasing engagement and user confidence in the resources provided.

The three main goals of the redesign were to:

1. Increase site accessibility, readability, and aesthetics by featuring less clutter, larger font sizes, and bold colors.
2. Improve functionality by prominently featuring the search function and including collapsible menus to help users more quickly find the topics and articles of interest.
3. Connect users with people who can help by integrating features such as the Maryland State Law Library’s “Ask a Law Librarian” button, where users can click to ask questions directly, and the MCSHC live chat button, which allows users to click to chat with an attorney at the MCSHC.

In FY18, most visitors accessed PLL via mobile devices, including phones and tablets. As the percentage of mobile users is expected to increase, the site redesign focused on delivering the best user experience on a small screen.

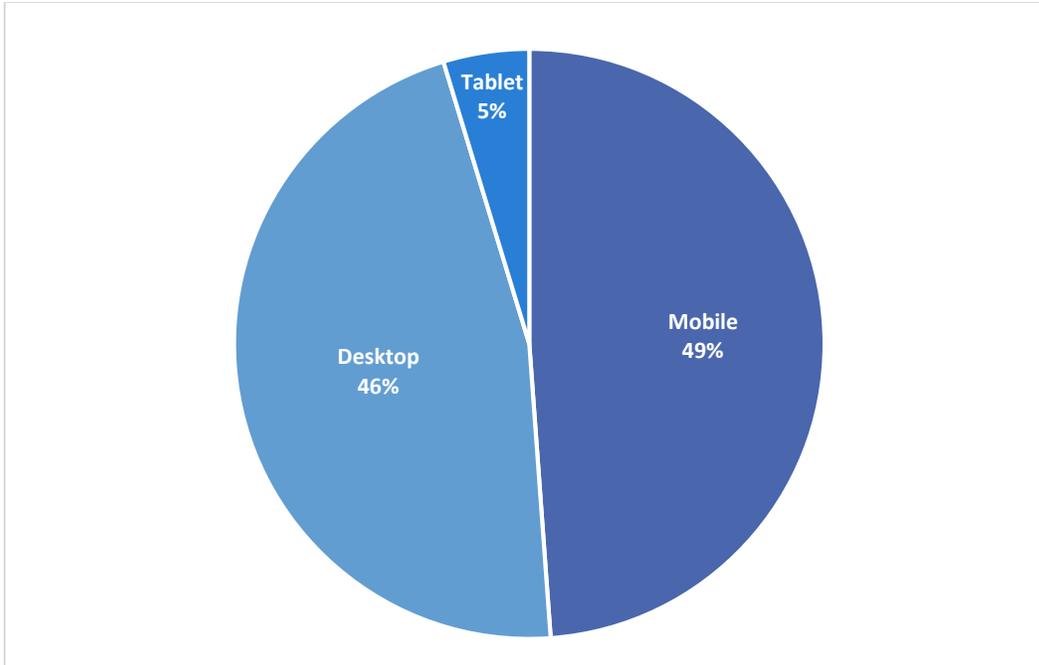


Figure 35. PLL Devices Used to Access the Site

In FY18, the highest percentage of PLL users were women between the ages of 25 and 34.

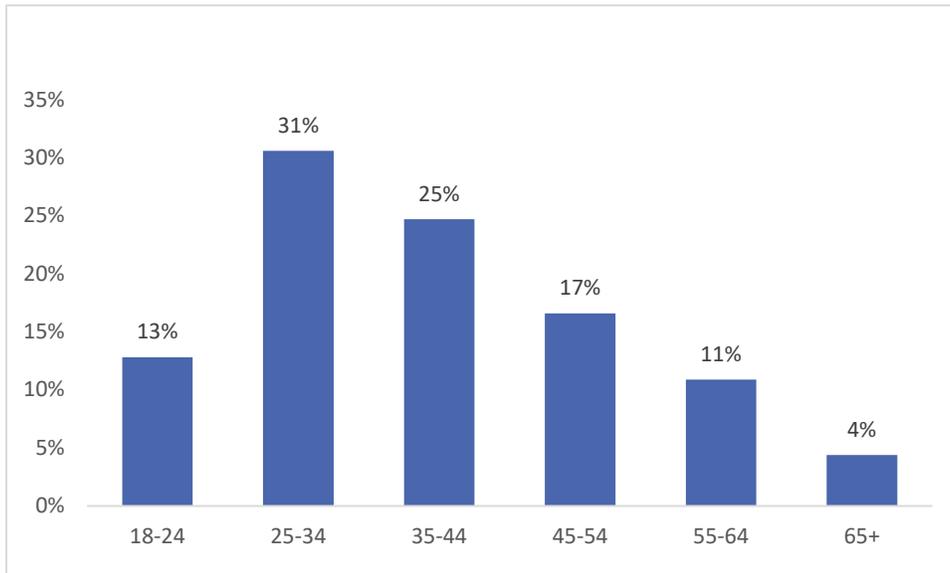
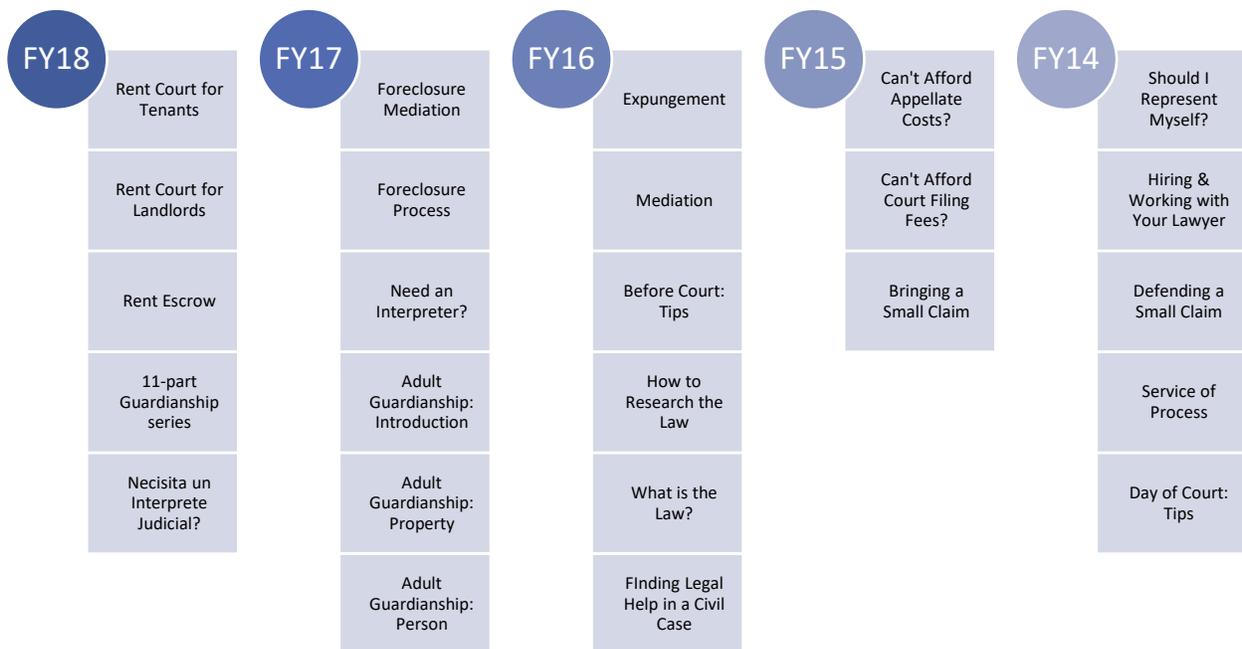


Figure 36. PLL – Demographics Age

## VIDEOS

In FY18, the Judiciary’s online video library grew to 35 titles, including an 11-part series on guardianship produced in collaboration with the Department of Juvenile and Family Services. This series marked a shift from motion graphic desktop publishing to the production of a live-action series of shorter videos. Videos in the guardianship series, for example, range from one minute (*Signs of Self-Neglect*) to nine minutes (*Orientation Program*).



The library also added the first video fully narrated in Spanish, *Necisita un Interprete Judicial?* (Need a Court Interpreter?).

In FY18, the Access to Justice Department collaborated with the Government Relations and Public Affairs Division to redesign the online video library to be more visually appealing to self-represented litigants, to incorporate web optimization tools, and to apply strategically-placed links on all Legal Help web pages. As a result, the online video library had more than double the number of views from the previous year. In FY18, online users viewed the *My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland* series of videos 33,204 times. In FY17, the series drew 14,282 views.

## Self-Help Videos

*My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland: A video series for the self-represented*

Have a legal problem and don't know where to begin? These videos may help. Each video includes transcripts in English and Spanish, a tip sheet, and links to resources, forms, and court services.

<p><b>Law Topics</b></p> <p>What is service of process? Expungement? Each video in this series tackles a specific legal subject.</p>  <p><a href="#">Learn More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	<p><b>Court Basics</b></p> <p>From filing fees to court interpreters, videos in this series deliver fundamentals on how the court operates.</p>  <p><a href="#">Learn More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	<p><b>Family</b></p> <p>A growing collection of videos on domestic law and family legal matters.</p>  <p><a href="#">Learn More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	<p><b>Guardianship</b></p> <p>Considering becoming a guardian? Have you been appointed? This video series has the information you need for success.</p>  <p><a href="#">Learn More &gt;&gt;</a></p>	<p><b>Get Started</b></p> <p>Should you represent yourself? Or should you get a lawyer? These videos help get you on track to self-representation.</p>  <p><a href="#">Learn More &gt;&gt;</a></p>
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Figure 37. FY18 Video Library

A video on expungement of criminal records was the most watched video in FY18, followed by a video on small claims, adult guardianship and rent court.

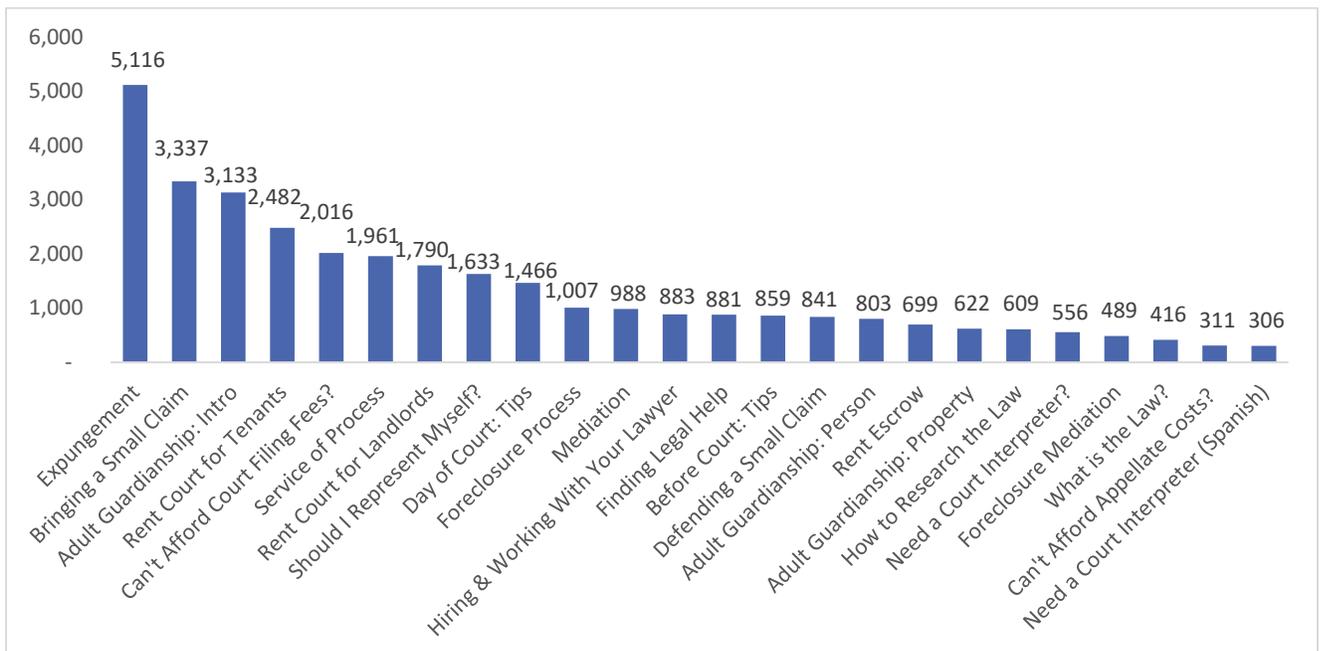


Figure 38. Videos—Number of Views—FY18

# WEBINARS

In FY17, attorneys at the MCSHC identified frequently asked questions by self-represented litigants and began teaching webinars -- online classes -- on these topics. Each hour-long webinar is taught by a staff attorney and provides practical information on which form(s) to use, how forms should be completed, fees/costs, common problems and when to consult with a lawyer.

In FY18, staff launched a new webinar topic, *How to Collect Your District Court Judgment*. This webinar covers the basics of post-judgment collection in District Court and will be offered every other month on the last Wednesday of the month.



Figure 39. FY18 Live Webinar Topics

A total of 97 people participated in 12 live webinars.

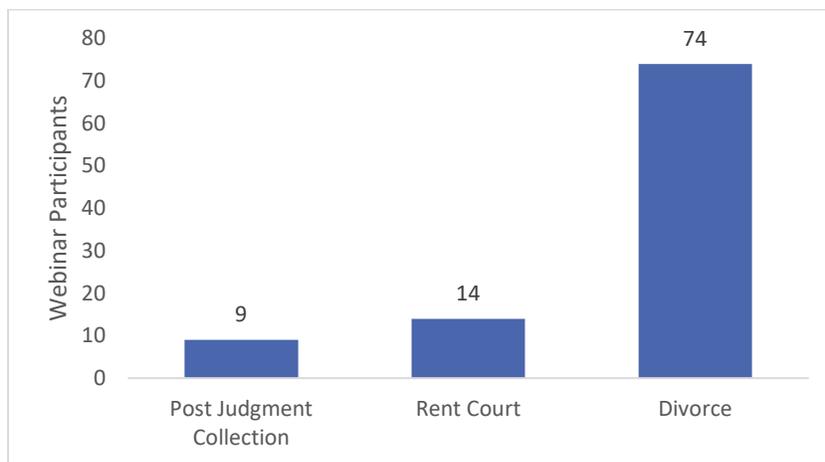


Figure 40. Live Webinar Topics – FY18

*Rent Court for Landlords* and *Rent Court for Tenants* are now offered “on-demand.”

On Demand Classes



Filing Your Case in the District Court of Maryland

This class will help you learn when and how to fill out the form used to start many civil cases including small claims and return of property.

Watch Now



Facing Eviction for Failure to Pay Rent?

This class will help you learn about Failure to Pay Rent in Maryland.

Watch Now



Filing a Failure to Pay Rent Case?

This class will help you learn how to fill out the form.

Watch Now

Figure 41. FY18 On-Demand Webinar Topics— FY18

In FY18, 355 litigants viewed the three on-demand webinars.

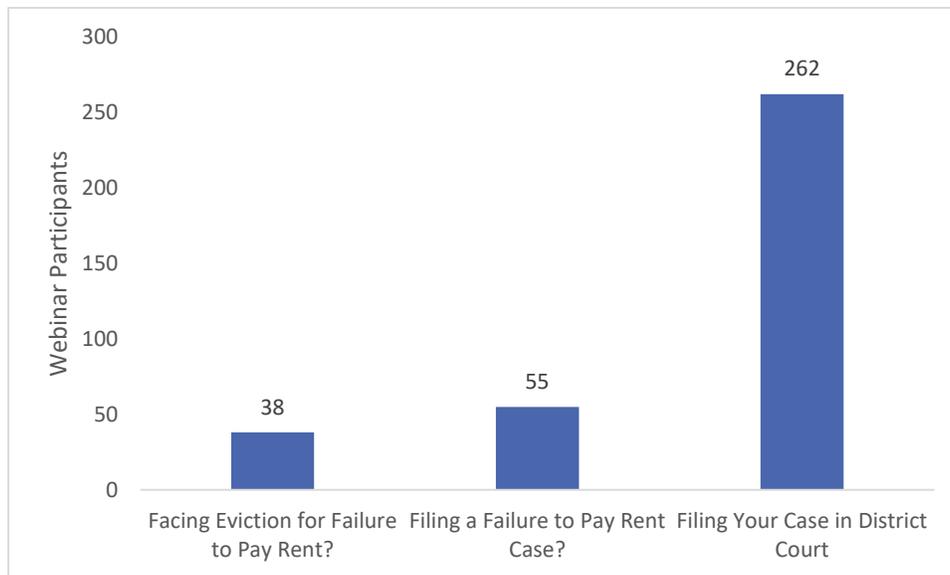


Figure 42. On-Demand Webinar Views – FY18

In July 2017, staff began offering two new webinars, *Filing a Failure to Pay Rent Case?* and *Facing Eviction for Failure to Pay Rent?* A webinar on child custody is planned for 2019.

## MARYLAND LAW HELP APP

The Maryland Law Help app brings together the many programs and services available to the self-represented in one place.



Figure 43. Maryland Law Help App. <http://MarylandLawHelp.mobapp.at>

In FY18, there were 1,675 downloads of the app in the United States.

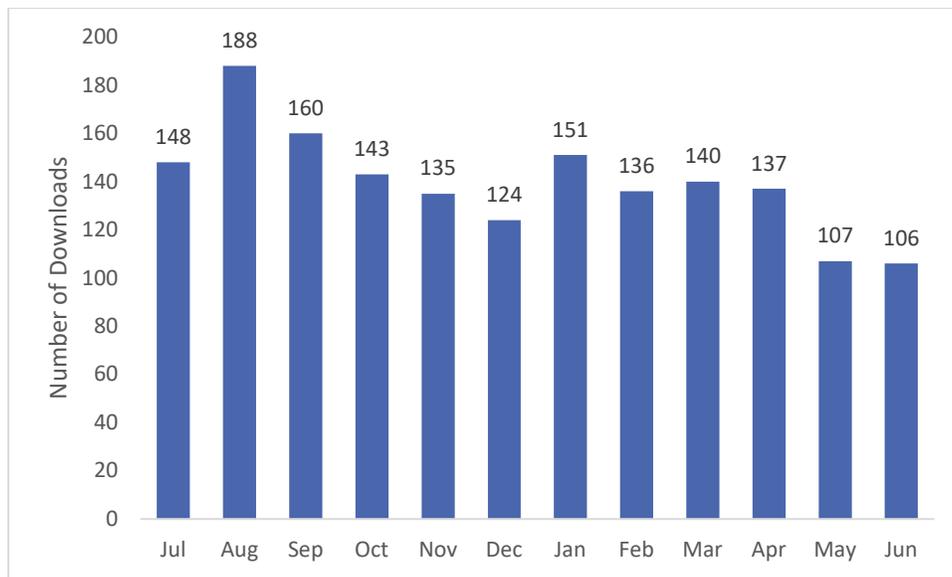


Figure 44. App Downloads—FY18

The app allows users to click to call or click to chat directly with an attorney at the MCSHC. Users can view videos and tip sheets, access legal help pages on [mdcourts.gov](http://mdcourts.gov), or use the People’s Law Library.

## FORM FINDERS

Form finders are web-enabled decision trees that walk users through a series of questions to guide them to the right forms. The form finder takes litigants through a series of questions to determine which form best suits their needs. Once the questions are complete, the form finder provides links to all needed forms and relevant brochures.

In FY18, there were 37,175 web hits on the family law form finder. 40 percent of users indicated that they wanted to see the full list of forms, 35 percent selected that they wanted to begin a court case, and 21 percent wanted to file papers in an existing case.

### Court Forms Finder

Need help finding the right forms?

The interactive tools below guide you through a series of questions to help determine which court forms you need. The tools help you identify, select, and print forms.

- **District Court** forms (civil, criminal, DV/protective order, traffic citation, etc.)
- **Family Law** forms (adoption, child custody, child support, divorce, marriage, protective order, guardianship, etc.)
- Are you looking for forms in other Maryland courts? Do you already know which forms you need? You should go to the [Court Forms Page](#).



Family Law Forms Finder



District Court Forms Finder



Court Forms Page

Figure 45. Forms Finder Web Page

## FAMILY LAW NOTEBOOK PROJECT

In FY17, the People’s Law Library and the Frederick County Pro Se Clinic collaborated with the support of the Department of Juvenile and Family Services to create a notebook for self-represented litigants. The notebook helps litigants organize case documents more effectively to present their case to the court. Family and legal services staff were trained to help litigants use the notebook.

The notebooks are now being used by self-help centers and legal services providers across the state. Nearly 500 litigants received help using the notebook at self-help centers in FY18. Next year, the Frederick County program will partner with a local college to evaluate the effectiveness of the notebook as a tool for litigants who represent themselves in court.

## FAMILY LAW FOR THE PEOPLE

Through a partnership between the Family Section of the Maryland State Bar Association and the Department of Juvenile and Family Services, the Family Law for the People Initiative launched in FY17. This program offers seminars, taught by trained attorneys, to educate litigants about the court process and law around family law cases.

In FY18, 30 seminars were held and 170 people attended. Seminars were held in Allegany, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, and Frederick counties. Calvert and Queen Anne’s counties plan to begin hosting these seminars in FY19. The Department of Juvenile Services continues to work with the Family and Juvenile Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association to update and adapt this program to best meet the needs of the public.

## WRITTEN AIDS FOR SRLs

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### REFERRAL PAD

In FY18, judges continued to use referral pads to provide written guidance to self-represented individuals appearing before them. For example, a judge in Salisbury used the referral pad to refer a litigant to a self-help center for forms help. The litigant had filed a petition for an emergency evaluation, when she really needed help with guardianship. Attorneys at the self-help center provided legal advice about the situation and helped her fill out the correct forms.



**Get Help**

- Finding a lawyer
- Serving a party
- Filing
  - Amended complaint
  - New case
  - Motion \_\_\_\_\_
- Preparing for
  - Pretrial Conference
  - Hearing \_\_\_\_\_
  - Trial
  - Mediation
- Post Judgment
  - Enforcement
  - Appeal
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Kind of Case** \_\_\_\_\_

**Case Number** \_\_\_\_\_

**Maryland Court Self-Help Centers**  
mdcourts.gov/selfhelp

**Walk-In**

Family Law  
 Available in most circuit court locations.

District Court  
**Baltimore** - 501 E. Fayette Street,  
**Glen Burnie** - 7500 Gov. Ritchie Highway  
**Upper Marlboro** - 14735 Main Street  
**Salisbury** - 201 Baptist Street

All Civil  
**Frederick** - 100 W. Patrick Street

**Chat**  
 mdcourts.gov/selfhelp  
 M-F 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

**Call**  
 410-260-1392  
 M-F 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

**Visit a Law Library**

**In-Person** [www.lawlib.state.md.us/researchtools/otherlibraries.html](http://www.lawlib.state.md.us/researchtools/otherlibraries.html)

**Online** [peoples-law.org](http://peoples-law.org)

Order Referral Pads: [mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice](http://mdcourts.gov/accesstojustice) 6/2018

**Figure 46. Referral Pad**

Much like doctors’ patient discharge forms, the referral pads allow judges, from the bench, to quickly and easily provide information to link self-represented litigants to resources. Litigants may be distressed, have low literacy, low legal literacy, or limited English proficiency and not understand why their case was dismissed, how to collect on a judgment, or gain access to their children when an order is issued. Written referrals help self-represented litigants obtain better results when they arrive at a self-help center or law library for advice or assistance.

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**BENCH CARD**

In FY18, the Access to Justice Department created a bench card to aid judges in making referrals for self-represented litigants from the bench. The card reminds judges about available resources, and provides telephone numbers and websites to help judges connect self-represented litigants to programs and resources that may assist them.

## Resources for Self-Represented Litigants

### Maryland Courts Self-Help Center

#### 410-260-1392 or Chat

8:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Monday – Friday

- Landlord and Tenant
- Small and Large Claims
- Consumer – Auto Repossession, Debt Collection
- Return of Property (Replevin and Detinue)
- Expungement and Shielding of Records
- Domestic Violence/Peace Orders
- Family Matters
- Foreclosure

### District Court Self-Help Centers

#### Walk-in

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday

Baltimore City, Frederick, Glen Burnie, Upper Marlboro, Salisbury

- Landlord and Tenant
- Small Claims (claims of \$5,000 or less)
- Consumer – Auto Repossession, Debt Collection
- Return of Property (Replevin and Detinue)
- Domestic Violence/Peace Orders
- Expungement

### Family Law Self-Help Centers

#### Walk-in

Most Circuit Court locations.

- Divorce
- Custody
- Child Support
- Domestic Violence (protective orders)
- Name Change

### Webinars (online classes)

[mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/webinars](http://mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/webinars)

- Divorce
- Post Judgment Collection
- On Demand: Rent Court, Filing a Case in District Court

### Videos

[mdcourts.gov/videos](http://mdcourts.gov/videos)

*My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland*

A video series for the self-represented. Each video has a webpage that contains tip sheets, transcripts, forms and more.

- Getting Started
- Law Topics
- Court Basics

### Maryland Law Help App

[mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/mobileapp](http://mdcourts.gov/legalhelp/mobileapp)

### Form Finder

[mdcourts.gov/courtforms/finder](http://mdcourts.gov/courtforms/finder)

Helps litigants identify, select and print the forms they need.

### People's Law Library

[peoples-law.org](http://peoples-law.org)

Legal information and self-help website.

### Law Libraries

[peoples-law.org/maryland-law-libraries](http://peoples-law.org/maryland-law-libraries)

- Ask a law librarian
- Public computers
- Reference and information assistance



[mdcourts.gov/selfhelp](http://mdcourts.gov/selfhelp)

7/2018

Figure 47. Bench Card

## IMPROVEMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Each year, program staff improve operations, efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of programs to help self-represented litigants navigate the courts fairly. The following is an overview of improvements and achievements that occurred in FY18.

## SELF-HELP CENTERS

### LANGUAGE ACCESS

**ASL LAPTOPS.** All DCSHRCs have been equipped with laptops that provide remote video interpretation for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The Access to Justice Department covers the cost of remote ASL interpretation when the service is used.

**SPANISH SURVEY.** Walk-in DCSHRCs use an electronic survey to track user data. In FY18, the survey questions were translated into Spanish. Questions incorporate logic, so if a litigant

identifies that she or he is a Spanish speaker, the questions will automatically populate in Spanish.

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## OUTREACH AND ADVERTISING

While Maryland’s self-help centers serve tens of thousands of Marylanders each year, many more individuals are not aware that the centers and other services are available. In the past three years, the Judiciary adopted a targeted outreach and marketing campaign to increase awareness of resources for self-represented litigants.

Campaign objectives included promoting self-help center programs and services and the Maryland Law Help app through traditional and social media coverage, driving traffic to the [mdcourts.gov](http://mdcourts.gov) webpage where programs and services are highlighted, promotion via paid advertising, and collaboration with community and faith-based organizations, state agencies, and nonprofit partners. Below are some of the initiatives undertaken to further these goals:

**MASS TRANSIT ADVERTISING.** A transit advertising campaign launched in June 2017 to promote the opening of the newest DCSHRC in Baltimore City. The campaign ran in the Baltimore City and Baltimore County market for 12 weeks.



Figure 48. Bus Shelter in Baltimore City with Self-Help Center Advertising

**SMALL JURISDICTION ADVERTISING.** In FY18, the Judiciary promoted remote self-help services from the MCSHC by advertising in small, local print and online publications. Campaigns focus on rural jurisdictions where litigants may struggle to access walk-in self-help centers. Advertising campaigns remind the public they can receive legal help via phone, live chat, and email no matter where they are. Online advertisements allow users to click to chat with an attorney at the MCSHC.

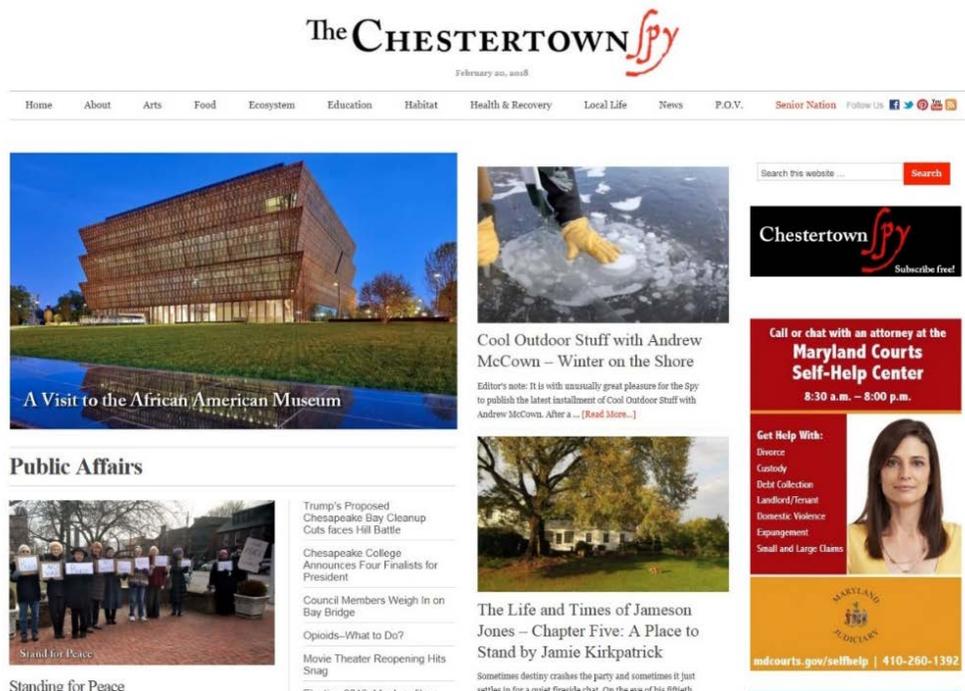


Figure 49. Screenshot of Online Kent County Community Newspaper with Self-Help Center Advertising

**MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION ADS.** Static images advertising the Maryland Law Help app and self-help centers appear on the electronic queuing system at Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) locations statewide. A 30-second spot airs on MVN, the Motor Vehicle Network, which plays at MVA locations statewide.

**BALTIMORE CITY RENT COURT PROGRAMS.** In FY18, staff worked with Baltimore City District Court to create a color-coded brochure, posters, and name tags to help self-represented landlords and tenants identify which programs could assist them in Baltimore City rent court.



Figure 50. Baltimore City Rent Court Brochure

**CHAT BUTTON.** The Judiciary encouraged local courts, justice partners, and nonprofit organizations to put the chat button on their websites in FY18. The chat button links litigants directly with attorneys at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center.

Questions? Call (410) 222-1397

Home Employment Inclement Weather News Room Court Holidays

Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County

Enter search term... SEARCH

About Us How Do I? Learn About... For Jurors Daily Docket Legal Help

HOME > LEGAL HELP

**Legal Help**

- Chat with a lawyer about your civil case
- Child Support
- Circuit Court Fee Schedule
- Civil Law
- District Court
- Family Law
- Forms
- Law Library
- Lawyer In The Library
- Lawyer Referral Service
- Legal Aid Bureau
- Legal Links
- People's Law Library
- Public Defender
- Self Help Videos

**Legal Help**

**CHAT**  
with a lawyer about your civil case  
Click Here

Maryland Courts Self-Help Center

Call 410-260-1392 or click image above to chat with a lawyer  
8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday-Friday

**About Us**  
Information Desk  
Court Administration  
Court History  
Directions

**How Do I?**  
Apply for a Passport  
Appear by Telephone  
Request an Interpreter  
Get a Business License

**Learn About**  
ADA Requests  
ADR  
ASTAR  
Child Support

**For Jurors**  
Inclement Weather  
Juror Call In Procedure  
Juror Orientation Video  
Juror Qualification Form

**Legal Help**  
Child Support  
Civil Law  
District Court  
Family Law

Figure 51. Video Page with Chat Button

**FLYERS.** The Access to Justice Department and the Government Relations and Public Affairs Division revamped the self-help center flyers to make it easier for staff to refer litigants to self-help centers and to help litigants identify the programs and services that best meet their needs.

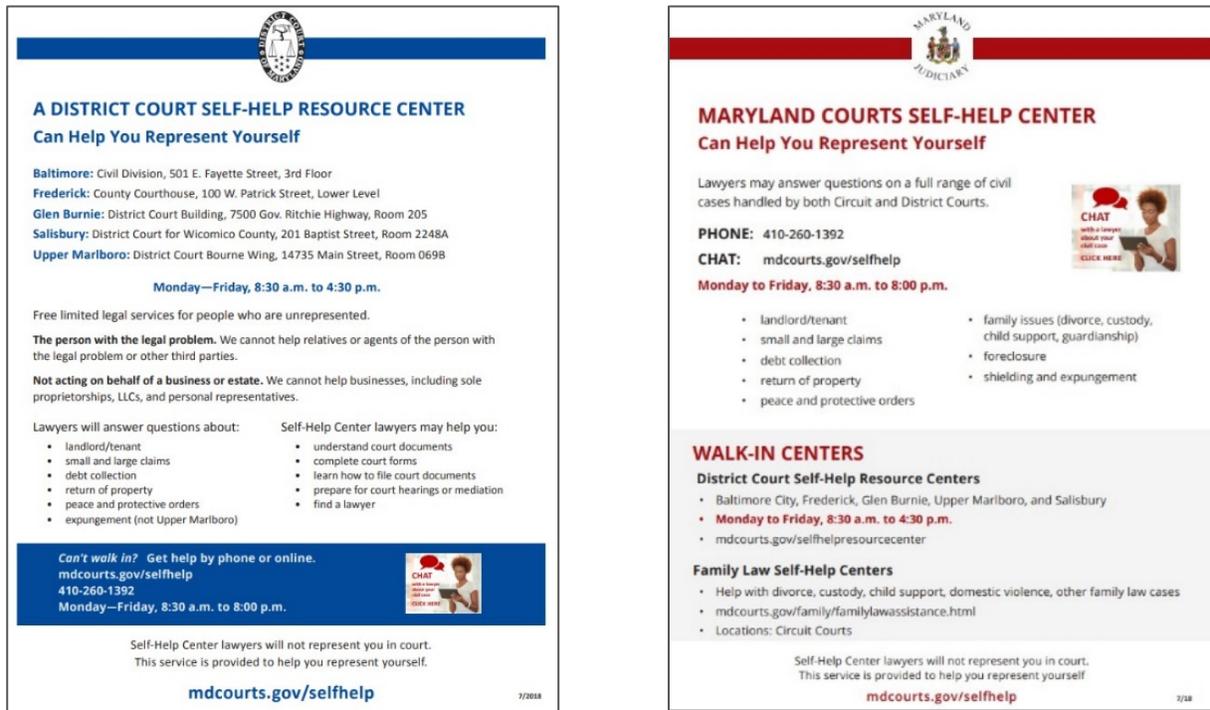


Figure 52. Self-Help Center Flyers

**JUDGE’S GAZETTE.** The Access to Justice Department and Government Relations and Public Affairs Division collaborated on a two-minute informational video featuring District Court Chief Judge John P. Morrissey and MCLA supervising attorney Megan Challender for the *Judges’ Gazette*, an e-newsletter distributed to judges throughout Maryland. The video reminded judges of the network of self-help centers statewide.

**STAFF TRAINING.** In May 2018, the Access to Justice Department taught live webinars for court staff that covered the resources available for self-represented litigants in Maryland courts. The training provided an overview of resources and covered how to connect litigants to resources. More than 100 staff participated in the training.

**EXPANSION**

**FREDERICK.** The newest walk-in self-help center opened in Frederick, Maryland, in July 2018. The District and Circuit Courts are located together in Frederick, and the new center assists self-represented litigants with all civil matters, in both courts. The center is staffed by a FLSHC attorney, plus two attorneys from the MCLA.

**CAMBRIDGE.** Preparations also began to expand the DCSHRC in Salisbury to serve litigants in neighboring Dorchester County. A space was identified to house the center, and staff planning began. The Cambridge center launched in October 2018.

## LAW LIBRARIES

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### MDEC

In FY18, law librarians took part in a three-day in-depth training class to learn how to help self-represented litigants and attorneys e-file court documents via the Maryland Electronic Court System (MDEC). At the close of FY18, 83% of Maryland's trial courts were on MDEC, and law librarians assisted a number of self-represented litigants with e-filing.

### LEGAL REFERENCE FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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In FY18, the Maryland State Law Library and other members of the CMCLLD did widespread outreach to public libraries on the topic of legal reference for the public. They developed a training course for public librarians and online materials for staff to use when responding to requests for legal reference help. Resources include mini-discussions of aspects of public legal reference provision, with examples and tips to reinforce best practices.

**MARYLAND COURTS**  
mdcourts.gov

**Maryland STATE Law Library**

**Maryland State Law Library**  
361 Rowe Blvd. Annapolis, MD, 21401  
Phone: 410.260.1430 | Fax 410.260.1572  
lawlibrary@mdcourts.gov  
Public Hours: M,W,F 8AM - 4:30PM | Tu,Th 8AM - 9PM | Sat 9AM - 4PM

Search Catalog  
Search Web Site

About Us Collections Research Services Just For . . . Site Map

**YOU ARE IN:**  
Just For . . .

- Just for Specialized Audiences
- Legal Professionals
- Judiciary Employees
- Students
- Self-Represented Litigants
- Historians
- Librarians
- Maryland Court Libraries

**Law on the Frontlines:  
Legal Reference for Public Libraries**

Law and legal reference constitute a specialized area of knowledge and resources. The best way to be comfortable with a specialized area is to deal with it often, an opportunity not always presented to the generalist in a public library system. It is possible, however, to develop ability in this area through training and practice.

Traditionally, training on legal reference has focused on the classic materials of law - cases, statutes, regulations, law textbooks, and the formal process of legal research. Some of the materials referenced herein include these classics. In addition, and possibly more importantly, the information here will help develop in reference staff the ability to:

- recognize when a question is a legal one or has a legal aspect
- conduct an appropriate legal reference interview
- respond to a legal question with confidence that the information is good and helpful, and does not constitute advice
- identify relevant and pertinent referrals from the broad spectrum available

**Training Elements**

The training materials on these pages are grouped in five main elements. Each of the main elements may have several sub-parts.

- Introduction to Legal Reference for Public Libraries (this page)
- The Legal Reference Interview
  - Reference behaviors and practice tips
  - Distinguishing between information and advice

**Maryland STATE Law Library**

Maryland Public Library Toolkit

**Legal Reference Elements**

- The Legal Reference Interview
- Distinguishing Between Information and Advice
- Rephrasing the Question
- Questions to Ask
- Online Sources for Getting Started
- Helpful Tools for Legal Reference
- Evaluating Legal Information Websites
- Finding Legal Forms
- Choosing and Making Referrals

**Figure 53. Law on the Frontlines Webpage**

Librarians traveled around the state and presented face-to-face sessions on legal reference skills for public librarians. This initiative was a collaboration with the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, the Maryland Access to Justice Department, the Maryland State Library Agency, and the State Library Resource Center at the Enoch Pratt Free Library,

Thirteen sessions took place in FY18 in Baltimore City, Carroll County, the Southern Maryland Regional Libraries, Harford County, Prince George’s County, and the Western Maryland Regional Libraries. More sessions are scheduled for the upcoming year.

## FUTURE INITIATIVES

The Maryland Judiciary’s vibrant network of self-help services, including self-help centers, law libraries, videos, webinars, the Maryland Law Help app, and form finders is modern, innovative, successful, and growing. Ensuring access to justice for self-represented litigants is part of the Maryland Judiciary’s strategic plan, and program staff are working to create services to meet future needs.

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## SELF-HELP CENTER EXPANSION

**DCSHRCs.** The District Court of Maryland intends to continue expanding walk-in DCSHRCs into Baltimore County, where a new District Court location is expected to open in March 2019.

**FLSHCs.** The Access to Justice Department and Department of Juvenile and Family Services are working together to encourage FLSHCs to serve litigants with all civil circuit court matters. Some jurisdictions are already doing this work, and others may need additional funding and support to move this initiative forward.

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## PRO BONO

The Upper Marlboro DCSHRC's pro bono project, *Justice for Lunch*, which launched in FY18 has been successful in connecting members of the Prince George's County Bar with litigants in need of assistance with expungement of criminal records in Upper Marlboro.

In FY19, we hope to add additional pro bono opportunities for members of the bar in conjunction with other self-help centers statewide.

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## COURT TV

In FY18, preparations began to launch Court TV, a digital signage board that will display court related content on large television monitors throughout court locations statewide. Content will include self-help videos, "commercials" for self-help centers and other programs, and other court-related information.

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## SELF-HELP CENTER PROVIDER CONFERENCE

In September 2018, the Access to Justice Department and Department of Juvenile and Family Services hosted the first annual Self-Help Center Provider Conference. This summit brought together self-help center providers from around the state to network, exchange ideas, and receive training on substantive topics. More than 130 people attended from throughout the state. Plans are underway for next year's event.

# FISCAL YEAR 2018 PROGRAM COSTS

## SELF-HELP CENTERS

### MARYLAND COURTS SELF-HELP CENTER (MCSHC)

Remote services at the MCSHC are funded equally by the District Court of Maryland and the Access to Justice Department of the Administrative Office of the Courts. In FY18, personnel expenditures were \$1.3 million. An additional \$28,800 was spent on chat software in FY18. Other costs include office space, supplies, and technology.

### DISTRICT COURT SELF-HELP RESOURCE CENTERS (DCSHCRs)

Funding for the four DCSHRCs comes from the District Court of Maryland. In FY18, staffing costs were \$1.7 million. Other costs include office space, supplies, and technology.

### FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTERS (FLSHCs)

The FLSHCs are funded by the Administrative Office of the Court’s Department of Juvenile and Family Services. Grants are made to local courts, which determine how to dedicate resources to self-help centers and other programs. In FY18, \$1.3 million was spent on FLSHCs. Two counties, Garrett and Howard, do not budget funds to support self-help centers. In Calvert, Charles, Carroll, and Howard counties, funds are used for *Family Law for the People* seminars.

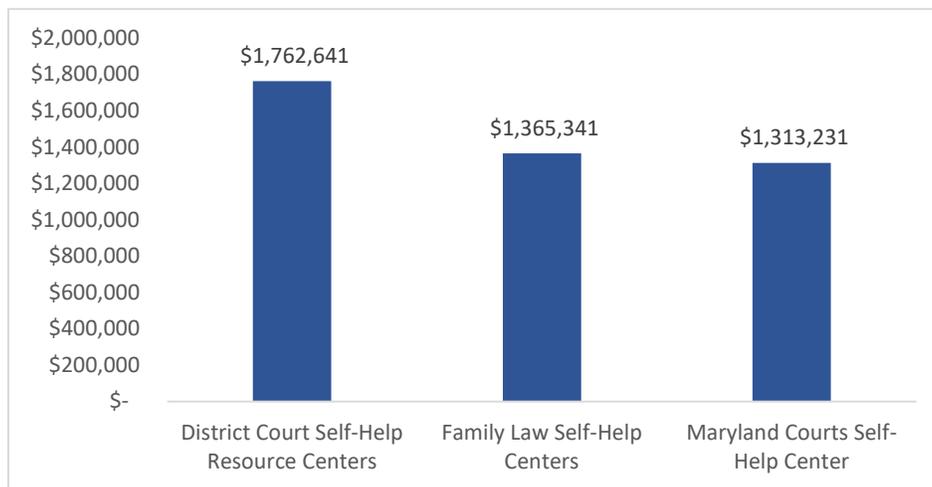


Figure 54. Self-Help Center Expenditures—FY18

# LAW LIBRARIES

## MARYLAND STATE LAW LIBRARY

In FY18, the Maryland State Law Library budget was \$2.8 million, excluding funds budgeted for the Maryland Code volumes and database access for judges.

## CIRCUIT COURT LAW LIBRARIES

Maryland circuit court law libraries are not funded uniformly. A combination of county budget appropriations, membership dues, appearance fees, criminal fines and forfeitures, and miscellaneous sources, such as copy and printing fees, make up the libraries' annual budgets.

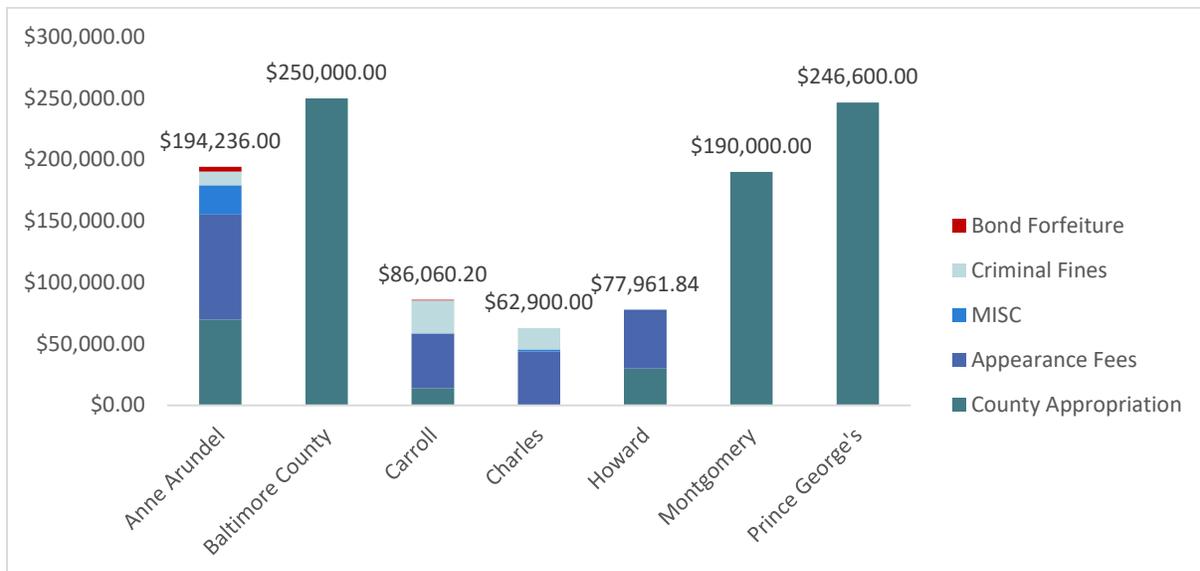


Figure 55. CMCLLD—Funding Sources—FY18

## APPENDIX

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### DISTRICT COURT SELF-HELP RESOURCE CENTERS

#### Baltimore City

District Court Self-Help Resource Center  
District Court in Baltimore City, Civil Division  
501 East Fayette Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### Glen Burnie

District Court Self-Help Resource Center  
District Court in Anne Arundel County  
George M. Taylor Multi-Service Center  
7500 Gov. Ritchie Highway, Room 205  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### Upper Marlboro

District Court Self-Help Resource Center  
District Court in Prince George's County  
Bourne Wing, Room 069B  
14735 Main Street  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### Salisbury

District Court Self-Help Resource Center  
District Court in Wicomico County  
201 Baptist Street, Room 2248A  
Salisbury, MD 21801

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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### MARYLAND COURT SELF-HELP CENTER - FREDERICK

#### Frederick

Frederick Self-Help Center  
Circuit Court for Frederick County  
100 West Patrick Street, Lower Level  
Frederick, MD 21701

Monday – Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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### MARYLAND COURTS SELF-HELP CENTER – PHONE, CHAT, EMAIL

#### Phone

410-260-1392

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

#### Live Chat

[www.mdcourts.gov/selfhelp/mcshc.html](http://www.mdcourts.gov/selfhelp/mcshc.html)

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

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## FAMILY LAW SELF-HELP CENTERS

### Allegany County

Circuit Court for Allegany County  
Courthouse Annex  
59 Prospect Square  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Tuesday: 12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Contact: Allegany Law Foundation, 301-722-3390

### Anne Arundel County

Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County  
Circuit Court Law Library  
8 Church Circle, Suite 303 (main entry floor)  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Daily: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: Erin McCarthy, 410-222-1153

### Baltimore City

Circuit Court for Baltimore City  
Courthouse East  
111 N. Calvert Street, Room 114  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Morning sign-up: 8:30 a.m.  
Afternoon sign-up: 1:00 p.m.

### Baltimore County

Circuit Court for Baltimore County  
401 Bosley Ave., Room 101, First Floor  
Towson, MD 21204

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.; 1:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.; 12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Self Help Workshop last Tuesday: 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

### Calvert County

Circuit Court for Calvert County  
175 Main Street  
Prince Frederick, MD 20678  
Sign-up in room C213; Clinic in room B205

Wednesday: 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Contact: Rose Naughton, 410-535-1600, ext. 2516

### Caroline County

Circuit Court for Caroline County  
109 Market St., Room 200  
Denton, MD 21629

Monday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Caroline Public Library  
100 Market Street, 2nd Floor  
Denton, MD 21629  
Third Thursday: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

### Carroll County

Circuit Court for Carroll County  
Courthouse Annex  
55 North Court Street, Suite 208  
Westminster, MD 21157  
Contact: Powel Welliver, 410-386-2751

Legal Clinic  
Wednesday: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Family Law for the People Seminar  
First Wednesday: 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Family Navigator (non-legal help with forms only)  
Monday - Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

### Cecil County

Circuit Court for Cecil County  
129 East Main Street, Room 205  
Elkton, MD 21921

Monday: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Tuesday: 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.  
Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.; 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
Contact: Nolanda Kirby, 410-996-1157

### Charles County

Circuit Court for Charles County  
200 Charles Street  
La Plata, MD 20646

Family  
Tuesday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Civil and Family  
First and third Wednesday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Jennifer Murphy, 301-932-3278

### Dorchester County

Circuit Court for Dorchester County  
206 High Street, Room 204  
Cambridge, MD 21613

Monday: 12:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Contact: Jessica Milligan-Ross, 410-228-1395

### Frederick County

Circuit Court for Frederick County  
100 West Patrick Street, Lower Level  
Frederick, MD 21701

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Evening hours on the third Tuesday: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
(A dedicated Spanish interpreter is on site on the third Wednesday of each month)  
Contact: Colby S. Hall, 301-600-2023

Family Law for the People Seminars  
C. Burr Artz Public Library  
110 East Patrick Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
Second Tuesday: 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

### Garrett County

Circuit Court for Garrett County  
203 S. 4th Street  
Oakland, MD 21550

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Contact: Randy Whitaker, 301-334-7602

### Harford County

Circuit Court for Harford County  
20 W Courtland St., Level A  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Contact: Ann Cogan, 410-638-4916

### Howard County

Circuit Court for Howard County  
8360 Court Avenue, Room 209  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Monday, Wednesday and first and third  
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Sandy Brewer, 410-313-2135

50+ Center at East Columbia Branch Library  
6600 Cradelrock Way  
Columbia, MD 21045  
Second and third Tuesday: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00  
p.m.

Self-Help Workshop  
Miller Branch Library  
9421 Frederick Road  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
Quarterly: 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Register: 410-313-3650

### Kent County

Circuit Court for Kent County  
103 N. Cross Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Chestertown, MD 21620

Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 a.m.- 11:00  
a.m.  
Contact: Lori Jacobs, 410-810-1059

### Montgomery County

Circuit Court for Montgomery County  
50 Maryland Avenue  
South Tower, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Room 1500  
Rockville, MD 20850

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Evening Hours on Tuesdays: 4:00 p.m. - 8:00  
p.m.  
Contact: Madeline Jones, 240-777-9061

### Prince George's County

Family Division Information Center - No  
legal advice  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
14735 Main Street, Room 1420

Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Paralegal Unit - No legal advice  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
14735 Main Street, Room 1420  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Family Law Clinic  
Circuit Court for Prince George's County  
14735 Main Street, Room 1420  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772  
Monday -Thursday: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Community Legal Services of  
Prince George's County, Inc.

Latino Legal Access Program  
Langley Park Multi-Service Center  
1401 University Blvd East, Suite G-1  
Hyattsville, MD 20783  
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday:  
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Worker's Rights Clinic  
Tuesday: 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Contact: Community Legal Services of  
Prince George's County, Inc., 240-391-6370

### Queen Anne's County

Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County  
100 Court House Square  
Centreville, MD 21617  
Monday: 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Kathryn St. Landreau 410-758-  
1773 ext. 6

Kent Island Public Library  
200 Library Circle  
Stevensville, MD 21666

First and second Thursday: 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Centerville Public Library  
121 S. Commerce Street  
Centerville, MD 21671  
Third and fourth Thursday: 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

### Somerset County

Circuit Court for Somerset County  
Circuit Court Annex  
11774 Somerset Avenue  
Princess Anne, MD 21853

Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Karen Brimer, 410-621-7582

### St. Mary's County

Circuit Court for St. Mary's County  
41605 Courthouse Drive  
Leonardtown, MD 20650

Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
First and last Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Lexington Park Public Library  
21677 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Blvd.  
Lexington Park, MD 20650  
Two Wednesdays each month: 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Contact: Clair Langeluttig, 301-475-7844 ext. 4121

### Talbot County

Circuit Court for Talbot County  
11 North Washington St., Suite 16  
Easton, MD 21601

Monday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

(Beginning January 2019) First Thursday:  
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Contact: Barbara Mitchell, 410-770-6806

### Washington County

Circuit Court for Washington County  
24 Summit Avenue, Room 229  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
Contact: Amie Spigler, 240-313-2580

### Wicomico County

Circuit Court for Wicomico County  
101 North Division Street  
Salisbury, MD 21803

Monday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Contact: Lauren Cooper, 410-334-3110

### Worcester County

Circuit Court for Worcester County  
One West Market Street, Room 101  
Snow Hill, MD 21863

Monday: 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Contact: Anne Turner, 410-632-5638

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## LAW LIBRARY LOCATIONS

### Maryland State Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff  
Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building  
361 Rowe Blvd.  
Annapolis MD 21401

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.  
Contact: 410-260-1430

### Allegany County Circuit Court Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed  
Circuit Court for Allegany County  
30 Washington Street  
Cumberland, MD 21502

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 301-777-5925

### Anne Arundel County Public Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff  
Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County  
8 Church Circle, Room 303  
Annapolis MD 21401

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-222-1387

### Baltimore County Circuit Court Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff

Circuit Court for Baltimore County  
County Courts Building  
401 Bosley Avenue  
Towson, MD 21204  
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-887-3086

### Baltimore Bar Library

Open to the public, full-time staff  
Circuit Court for Baltimore City  
Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse  
100 N. Calvert St, Room 618  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
(In July and August, Monday - Thursday:  
8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.)  
Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (In July and  
August, Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)  
Contact: 410-727-0280

### Calvert County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed  
Circuit Court for Calvert County  
175 Main Street  
Prince Frederick, MD 20678

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Contact: 410-535-1600 ext. 2730

### Caroline County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed  
Circuit Court for Caroline County  
109 Market Street  
Denton, MD 21629

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., by appointment or prior arrangement  
Contact: 410-479-2303

### Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff  
Circuit Court for Carroll County  
200 Willis Street  
Westminster, MD 21157

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-386-2672

### Cecil County Circuit Court Law Library

Not open to the public.  
Circuit Court for Cecil County  
129 E. Main Street, 2nd Floor  
Elkton, MD 21921

Contact: 410-996-5325

### Charles County Public Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff  
Circuit Court for Charles County  
200 Charles Street  
La Plata, MD 20646

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 301-932-3322

### Dorchester County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.  
Circuit Court for Dorchester County  
206 High Street  
Cambridge, MD 21613

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-228-6300

### Frederick County Law Library

Open to the public, part-time staff  
Circuit Court for Frederick County  
100 West Patrick Street  
Frederick, MD 21701

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 301-600-1993

### Garrett County Law Library

Not open to the public.  
Circuit Court for Garrett County  
203 South 4th Street  
Oakland, MD 21550

Contact: 301-334-1934

### Howard County Public Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff.  
Circuit Court for Howard County  
8360 Court Avenue  
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-313-2135

### Kent County Public Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.  
Circuit Court for Kent County  
103 North Cross Street  
Chestertown, MD 21620

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Contact: 410-778-7440

### Montgomery County Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff.  
Circuit Court for Montgomery County  
50 Maryland Ave Room N-3420

Rockville, MD 20850

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Contact: 240-777-9120

### Prince George's County Law Library

Open to the public, full-time staff.

Circuit Court for Prince George's County

14375 Main Street, Room M1400

Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 301-952-3438

### Queen Anne's County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.

Circuit Court for Queen Anne's County

100 Courthouse Square

Centreville, MD 21617

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 410-758-0216

### Somerset County Law Library

Open to the public, staffed.

Circuit Court for Somerset County

30512 Prince William Street

Princess Anne, MD 21853

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 410- 621-7581

### St. Mary's County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.

Circuit Court for St. Mary's County

41605 Court House Drive

Leonardtown, MD 20650

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 301-475-7844 ext. 4165

### Talbot County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.

Circuit Court for Talbot County

11 N. Washington Street

Easton, MD 21601

Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 410-770-6801

### Washington County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.

Circuit Court for Washington County

24 Summit Avenue, Room 116

Hagerstown, MD 21740

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 240-313-2570

### Wicomico County Law Library

Not open to the public.

Circuit Court for Wicomico County

P.O. Box 4074

Salisbury, MD 21803

Contact: 410-749-6513

### Worcester County Law Library

Open to the public, not staffed.

Circuit Court for Worcester County

1 West Market Street, Room 228

Snow Hill, MD 21863

Monday - Friday: 8:30a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact: 410-632-0600