

Conference Protocols

On September 28, 2015, the Honorable Mary Ellen Barbera, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals* and administrative head of the Judicial Branch, reaffirmed the **Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors** (the Conference) charter by [Administrative Order](#) (the Order).

**Per Administrative Order of December 14, 2022, "...all previous administrative orders issued by a Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of Maryland that are currently in effect shall remain in effect; and...all references in such administrative orders to the Court of Appeals of Maryland shall mean the Supreme Court of Maryland, and all references to a judge or judges of that court shall mean a justice or justices of that court; and all references in such administrative orders to the Court of Special Appeals shall mean the Appellate Court of Maryland."*

Operational Guidelines

Membership and Participation. As defined by the Order, the Conference will consist of:

- Maryland Circuit Court Law Library Directors;
- The Director of the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library;
- Outreach coordinator of the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library acting as a representative for those libraries without a professional law library director; and
- The Director of the Department of Access to Justice within the Administrative Office of the Courts, *ex officio*, or that person's designee. The *ex officio* member is not eligible to vote at Conference meetings, or to serve as an officer of the Conference.

Other court staff representing the interests of a local court law library are welcome and encouraged to participate in Conference meetings and activities. Voting will remain restricted, however, to the positions enumerated above.

Officers, Duties, Terms and Vacancies. The Conference will select a Chair and Vice-Chair every two years. Elections will be determined by a majority vote of Conference members as defined and enumerated by the Order. The Chair and Vice-Chair will each serve two-year terms, beginning on July 1st of the elected year. Both positions are elected every two years; the Vice-Chair does not automatically move to Chair at the end of the two-year term.

- The **Chair** will be responsible for representing the Conference; organizing, setting the agenda, and conducting meetings, including remote meetings and conference calls; ensuring that Conference records are properly kept; appointing committees and Conference representatives to other organizations; and performing other duties as necessary. The **Chair** will draft an Annual Report for the Conference each fiscal year. This report will be approved by the members after discussion.
- The **Vice-Chair** will be responsible for composing and disseminating Conference meeting notes and maintaining the Conference collaboration platform, which includes adding, organizing, and amending information as needed. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will act as Chair.

Meetings. The Conference will have regular meetings to conduct the business of the Conference and discuss collaborations and standards.

- The Conference will meet a minimum of three times per year. At least one of these meetings will be held in Annapolis. The locations of other meetings may rotate among the members' courthouses or be held remotely.
- The schedule of meetings will be set at the start of each calendar year and posted on CourtNet and the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library website, as required by the [Protocol for Maryland Court Committees](#) (rev. October 2023). Amendments to the meeting schedule should be posted no fewer than five days before the scheduled meeting date or the revised date, whichever takes place first.
- One or more of these meetings will include a program for managers of all Maryland court law libraries (the "Annual Meeting of Maryland Court Law Libraries"). Other court staff representing the interests of a local court law library are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- Proposed meeting agendas will be sent to members at least thirty days in advance of the meeting or as soon as practicable and posted on the Conference collaboration platform and the Thurgood Maryland State Law Library website.
- Because of the cooperative nature of the Conference's mission, decisions will be made by consensus as often as is practicable.
- If a quorum is required for voting purposes, a quorum constitutes, per the Order, a majority of the authorized members of the Conference.
- When a more formal procedure is desired, meetings will follow the applicable guidelines of *The Modern Rules of Order*, by Donald A. Tortorice (5th edition).

Meeting Notes. Meeting notes for the minimum required three meetings will be kept by the Vice-Chair and are approved according to the "Procedure for Approval of Minutes" posted on the Conference collaborative platform and the Thurgood Marshall State Law Library website, within thirty (30) days of the meeting. In addition to sending copies of the final notes to the Chief Justice and State Court Administrator, the Chair may send copies of final notes to the Chairs of the following Conferences: Circuit Court Clerks, Circuit Judges, and Circuit Court Administrators.

Committees. Committees are not required for Conference action. Members may volunteer for research or other work as required to further Conference education, development, action, recommendation, and other duties in the Order. In the absence of volunteers, the Chair will appoint members for these duties as they arise.

Conference Collaborative Platform. Conference proceedings, notes, agendas, statistics, procedures, standards, and surveys are disseminated and shared on the collaborative platform, which has instructions for posting and amending posts. Conference materials are also archived on the collaborative platform.

Metrics. Member and participant libraries will keep metrics and share them on the Conference collaborative platform. Metric categories are posted to and defined on the Conference collaborative platform. Metrics may be shared with the Administrative Office of the Courts and other relevant groups and committees.

Goals and Objectives

The Conference's general goals and objectives are provided in the Administrative Order (2015), under (D) Duties, as follows:

- (1) Exchange ideas and views on matters relating to the operation, management, and leadership of the court law libraries including, but not limited to: court law library standards, coordination of collection development and acquisitions, retention and disposal of court law library resources, court law library funding, service to the public, and access to justice through education and the provision of legal information;
- (2) Consider and make recommendations to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland, the Judicial Council, the Conference of Circuit Judges, the Conference of Circuit Court Clerks, the Conference of Circuit Court Administrators, and the State Court Administrator, regarding legislation and policies affecting Maryland court law libraries.
- (3) Provide advice on other such matters as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Maryland, the Judicial Council, the Conference of Circuit Judges, the Conference of Circuit Court Clerks, the Conference of Circuit Court Administrators, and the State Court Administrator, may request from time to time;
- (4) Consider and make recommendations to the Education Committee of the Judicial Council regarding the professional development of Court Law Library Directors; and
- (5) Provide a forum for mentoring new Court Law Library Directors and other court staff involved in the management of law library resources.

Revised June 2024