

AACPLL Use Statistics FY2021 – the COVID year



1788 visitors



2565 questions



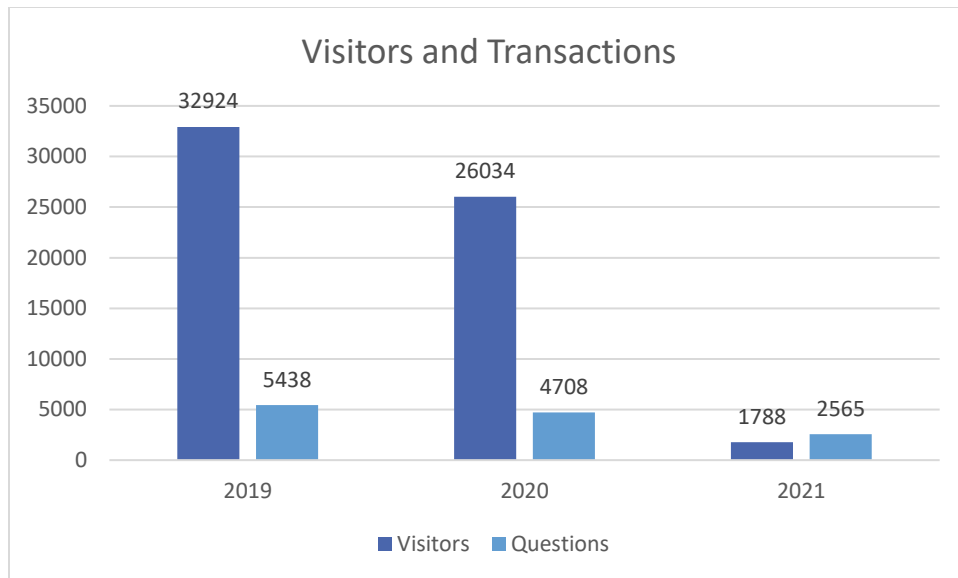
28,575 web hits



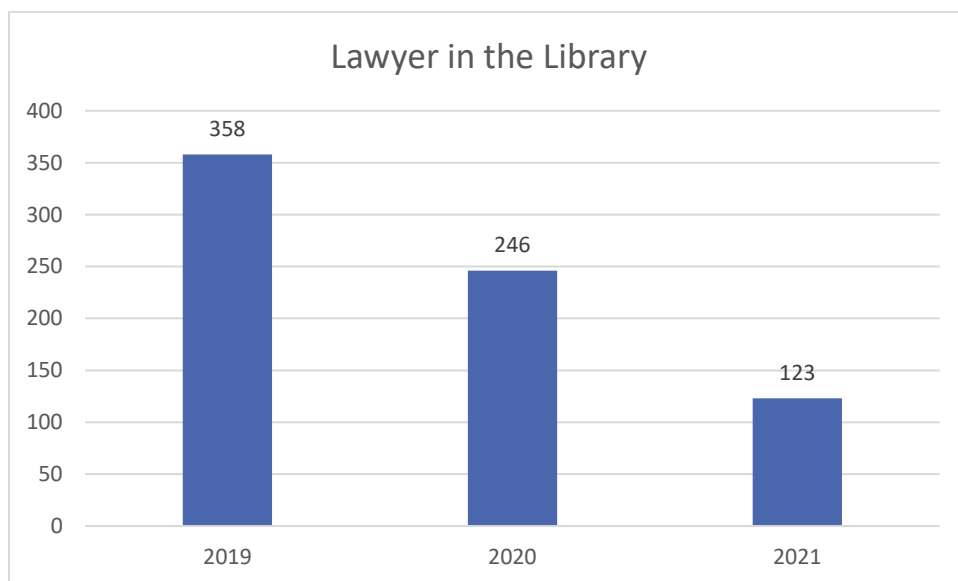
123 served by law library
self-help legal advice programs

FY2021 statistics reflect a dramatic change in the law library's use statistics especially in terms of in-person visitors and number of overall transactions.

Limited access to the court and remote hearings were obvious factors in the decrease in library visitors. The library's relocation without close proximity to the Family Law Help Center was another. FLHC traffic accounted for a large number of library visitors and transactions. When the FLHC was co-located in the law library librarians were able to provide reference and referrals and technology assistance to the Center's clients. The distance between the FLHC and law library made those encounters less frequent.



In-person visits decreased by 94% when compared with pre-COVID numbers in FY2019. In-person transactions fell by 69%. Average in-person visits went from an average of 137 per day in FY2019 to 8 per day in FY2021.



The Lawyer in the Library program assisted 67% fewer people when compared to pre-COVID numbers. The limited legal advice program was held weekly in the law library and monthly at the Eastport and Glen Burnie public libraries before COVID. The program converted to a remote format at the end of FY2020 and continued

through FY2021. Technology proved to be a barrier for some – participants and attorney volunteers.

Online access remained steady with a slight increase in library related web hits. Online catalog searches increased by 47%.

FY2021 - Who



79%
Public



16%
Attorneys



5%
Judiciary

The breakdown of library users showed a slight increase in the percentage of attorney use since FY2020 and a corresponding drop in public use.

FY 2021 - How



57%
In Person



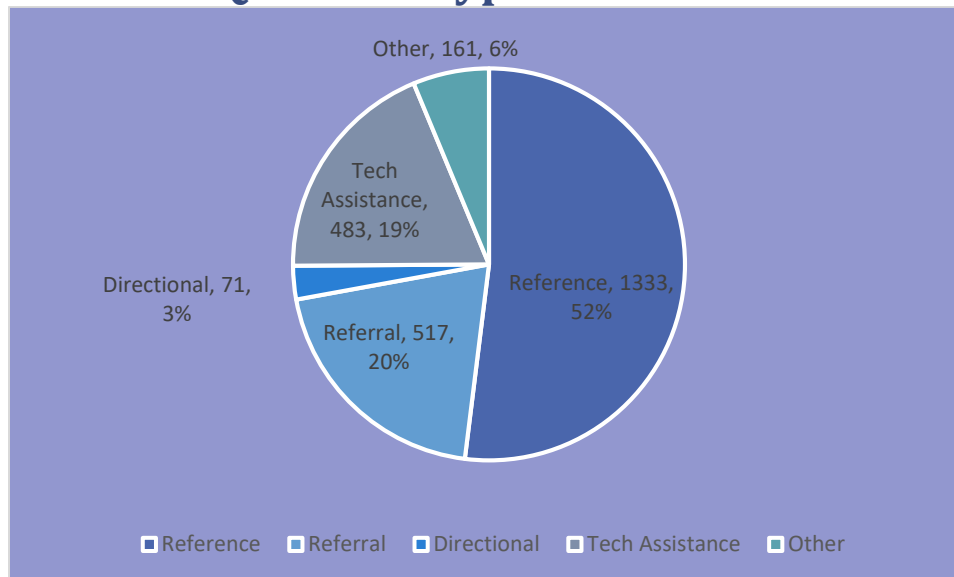
31%
Phone



12%
Email

The decrease in library visitors resulted in a drop of in-person transactions. Remote assistance increased accordingly with phone assistance up by 175% and email assistance up by 286% since FY2019. Total numbers still did not meet those of previous years.

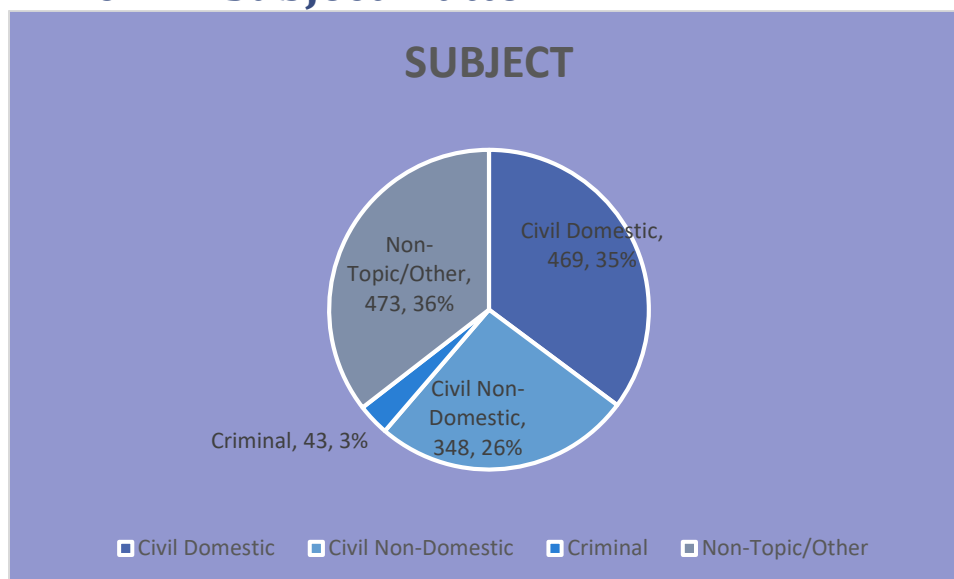
FY2021 - Question Type



72% OF QUESTIONS INVOLVE REFERENCE & REFERRALS

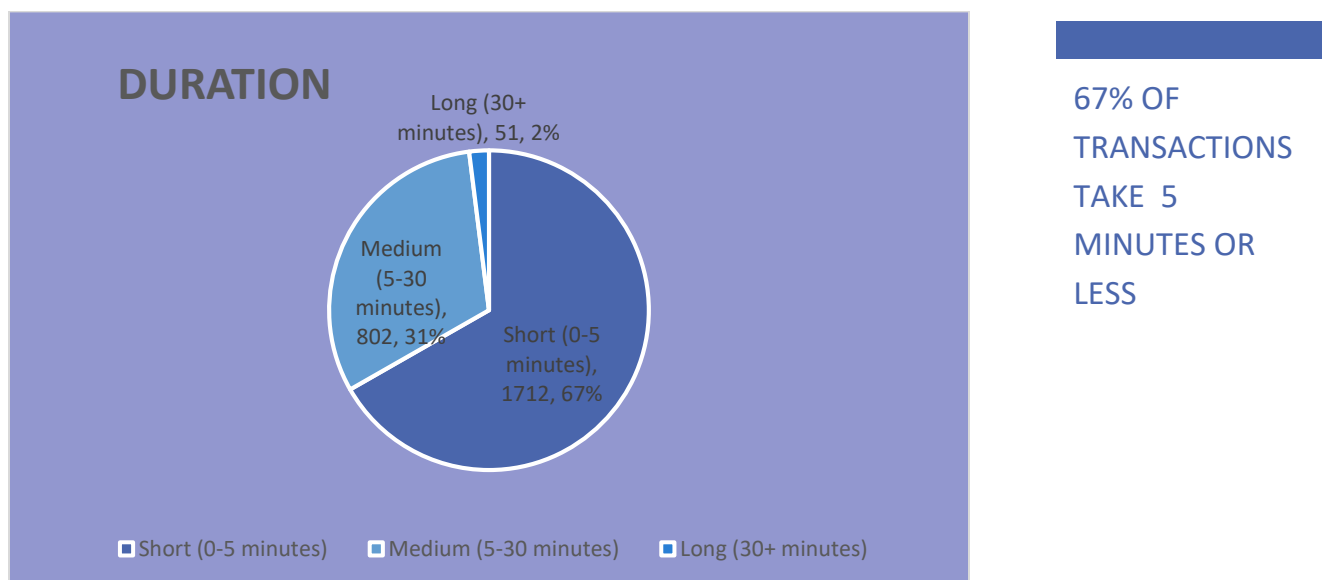
The percentage of the types of questions remained close to the percentages of previous years.

FY2021 – Subject Matter



71% OF QUESTIONS ARE CIVIL

FY2021 - Transaction Length



The percentage of short transactions decreased to 67% from 78% in FY2019. Remote assistance did not provide the opportunity for many short interactions such as how to access a PC or sign-in to the FLHC. The number of long interactions, those taking 30 minutes or more increased by 292% when compared with FY2019 going from just 12 in FY2019 to 51 in FY2021 – an average of one long interaction per month in FY2019 to one per week in FY2021. Remote reference transactions take longer with email due to the inability for a simultaneous interactive conversation. It is more difficult to demonstrate resources remotely as well.

During this time of COVID the library delivered the same level of quality information services but to fewer people. The COVID emergency brought about a number of legal issues in addition to the health consequences. Access to legal information is an essential service needed by those negotiating critical legal issues involving housing and employment resulting from the COVID emergency.

The law library should increase awareness of its services so that those in need can get the information and referrals needed. Increased outreach using traditional methods and social media should be explored and implemented.

Reports for previous years can be found here: <https://aacpll.org/annual-reports/>