

*access to justice
through
access to legal information*



Report of the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library

FISCAL YEAR 2025

CIRCUIT COURT FOR ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

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Anne Arundel County Public Law Library Anne Arundel County Circuit Court July 2024 – June 2025

Vision *access to justice through access to legal information*

Mission The Anne Arundel County Public Law Library serves the court, attorneys, government, and citizens of Anne Arundel County by providing access to legal information resources; promoting access to these resources; creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information; and facilitating legal advice programs.

Introduction

The **Anne Arundel County Public Law Library (AACPLL)** plays an essential role in supporting the administration of justice in Anne Arundel County by providing access to reliable legal information and research assistance for the court, legal professionals, government agencies, and the public.

Public law libraries serve as a vital bridge between the legal system and the community. For many residents, the law library is the primary source of trusted legal information when navigating legal issues. By offering access to authoritative legal resources, professional research assistance, and educational materials, the library helps ensure that individuals can better understand legal processes and locate the information they need.

Fiscal Year 2025 marked the first full year of operation in the law library's new location following the September 2023 relocation. The improved accessibility and visibility of the space, along with the co-location of the **Family Court Help Center (FCHC)**, has enhanced the ability of the library to provide integrated services and expanded support to court users.

This report highlights library use, services, programs, staffing, finances, and strategic initiatives during the 2025 fiscal year. It reflects the library's ongoing commitment to advancing **access to justice through access to legal information.**

Report Summary

The **Anne Arundel County Public Law Library (AACPLL)** continued to strengthen its role in supporting access to justice during Fiscal Year 2025. The library serves the court, attorneys, government agencies, and the public by providing access to legal information resources, research assistance, educational opportunities, and legal assistance programs.

Library use increased significantly during FY2025, reflecting the impact of the library's relocation to its new space in September 2023 and its co-location with the Family Court Help Center. The more visible and accessible location contributed to a **35% increase in library visitors**, with **31,088 visitors** recorded during the year. Library staff responded to **5,541 legal information questions**, returning service demand to pre-pandemic levels. Most users (90%) were members of the public, highlighting the library's critical role in supporting self-represented litigants and community members seeking legal information.

In-person services remain the primary method of library access, accounting for **86% of interactions**, followed by phone and email assistance. Online engagement remained strong as well, with **30,621 web hits** on curated legal information resources.

The library continues to support access to justice through programs and partnerships. The **Lawyer in the Library** program provided free brief legal consultations to **128 individuals**, a **33% increase** over the previous year. The program operates remotely in partnership with the Anne Arundel Public Library and Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.

The integration of the law library with the Family Court Help Center has improved accessibility providing a seamless connection between legal information resources and legal assistance.

Library services include legal research assistance, database access, instructional support, and guidance with electronic filing through the Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) system. The library also provides access to major legal research databases such as Westlaw, Lexis, and the National Consumer Law Center. Virtual reference services, online research sessions, and digital guides further extend the library's reach to remote users.

Financially, the law library remains fiscally responsible and efficient. While income decreased by 6%, expenditures increased modestly by 4%, largely due to rising costs of maintaining essential legal resources and subscriptions. Overall expenditures remain significantly lower than a decade ago, reflecting the library's efficient resource management and transition toward digital resources.

Throughout FY2025, the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library continued to advance its vision of **promoting access to justice through access to legal information**, supporting the work of the court while serving the legal information needs of the public and legal community.



Library Services

The law library provides a wide range of services designed to support legal research, promote understanding of legal resources, and assist individuals navigating the legal system. These services combine traditional reference assistance with digital tools, online resources, and educational materials to meet the needs of both in-person and remote users.

At the heart of library services is access to legal information via research assistance, legal research training and instruction, and online query formulation. The law library continues to provide quality service using the comprehensive resources in print and online to fit the needs of the varied groups of those who use the law library.

The law library maintains a **Virtual Reference Desk** for easy access to remote library services. Remote services continue to be available to those who cannot or do not want to visit the court in-person. Copies of requested information can be sent via email using online resources. Online research sessions using screen sharing allow users to search databases with librarian assistance in real time remotely.

The law library public computers provide **access to Microsoft Office, legal databases and online programs**. Databases include Westlaw, Lexis, the National Consumer Law Center, and SasiCalc. As a result, most print titles once found in the original library space are still available online.

The [AACPLL BLOG – Law Library News](#) is one of the methods that the law library uses to reach users online. This year posts included [New Maryland Laws](#), [A Quick Guide to Locating Executive Orders](#), “What’s New” posts describing law library acquisitions, and highlights of library resources such as [National Consumer Law Center \(NCLC\) Offers Free Practice Aids](#).

Legal services referrals

Access to self-help resources

Curated online information

Legal advice programs

Access to the MCHC (Maryland Court Help Center)

FAQ Templates

A variety of services are provided to varied user groups.

Public

Videoconferencing

Technology and MDEC assistance

Research assistance

Legal research training and instruction

Online query formulation

Court

Management of chambers resources

Information resource SharePoint site

Westlaw password and Lexis E-book access

Law clerk orientation

Court staff training and tours

Bar

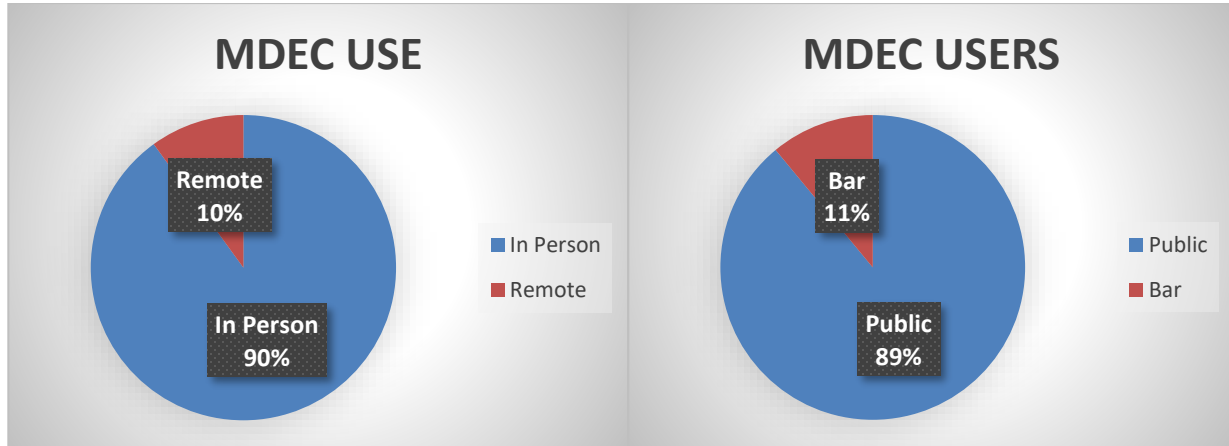
Circulation of legal texts and treatises

Research co-browsing

Document delivery





Pro bono coordination

With the adoption of **MDEC**, law library staff have increasingly assisted the bar and public with performing electronic filings and accessing electronic case documents. The law library has two laptops dedicated to Public Kiosk access. Law library staff are trained to assist attorneys and the public with basic MDEC needs.



Most instances of MDEC transactions involved in-person assistance to self-represented litigants.

[Wiki FAQs](#), including the **Family Law Resource Packets**, contain links to the law, online articles, forms, and videos, as well as lists of resources in the library pertaining to topics that are most often asked by the public. **Library FAQs and Family Law Resource Packets**, which contain a QR Code, can also be used as handouts. Email templates allow for quick and efficient response to remote requests and provide links to the [Wiki FAQs](#) and/or [Family Law Resources](#) as well as [legal assistance referrals](#). Law Library staff reviews information sources and revises the guides as needed.

AACPLL FAQs Frequently Asked Questions	
	Expungement
Administrative Appeals (Judicial Review)	
	Power of Attorney
Wills and Estates	
	Mandamus—Vehicle Titles
Landlord and Tenant	
	Find a full listing of all FAQs- Frequently Asked Questions here and on all law library computers.

The **Family Law Packet Poster with QR Codes** is on display in the Family Court Help Center. The **Family Law Packets** double as checklists for finding the print forms that are available on the FCHC “wall” of forms. 642 Family Law Information packets were distributed this year.

Non-family FAQ Information packets have been added to the Help Center space. A poster with QR codes provides online access to such topics as expungement, administrative appeals, power of attorney, wills and estates, mandamus - vehicle titles, and landlord and tenant.

296 FAQ information sheets were distributed this year.

Library services for legal research training were provided to high school STEM students researching pro bono legal service.

The law library continues to revise the Clerk of Court **Cheat Sheet** of referral information as needed.

The law library provides a tour and information session as a part of the judges’ **law clerk orientation**.

Law library staff participates in **Clerk of the Court events** such as Bring your Child to Work Day and provides tours to new employees and summer interns of the Clerk’s office.

Access to Justice Initiatives

Promoting access to justice is a central component of the law library's mission. Through partnerships with legal service organizations, the bar association, and the judiciary, the library supports programs that connect individuals with legal information and legal assistance resources.

Brief Legal Advice Services

[Lawyer in the Library](#) provides the opportunity to consult with a volunteer lawyer for at least 20 minutes about civil, non-family legal issues for free. The program continues to be offered remotely in partnership with the Anne Arundel Public Library and the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, every Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Joan Bellistri, as a member of Local Pro Bono committee helped with the coordination of **brief legal advice clinics held at the Chrysalis House** in October 2024 and March 2025.

Maryland Justice Passport

The Maryland Justice passport is a project of the Maryland Judiciary, Civil Justice, and A2J Tech. A passport is a digital portfolio of information to assist Marylanders seeking legal help. The law library partners with the Maryland Justice Passport to assist in creating and promoting passports. The law library can provide the technology, access to computers and scanners, for passport creation. The library made 40 specific passport referrals this year.

AABA President's Pro Bono Award

The Anne Arundel Bar Association reinstated the President's Pro Bono Award at the request of the Local Pro Bono Committee in 2016. The law librarian creates the online nomination form used for the award. Award recipients are listed [here](#).

Anne Arundel Pro Bono Committee

The law library supports the work of the Pro Bono Committee by taking meeting notes, posting agendas, sending meeting reminders and maintaining [information pages](#) on the [AACPLL Self Help and Pro Bono WIKI](#). Information there includes project information, pro bono resources, committee reports, meeting minutes and agendas.

Law Library Space

After the first full year in the new space the law library and Family Court Help Center have been busier than ever.

With the co-location of the **law library and the Family Court Help Center (FCHC)**, the law library and the FCHC have become one integrated service. The services of the law library and FCHC are not delineated by space as before allowing for a seamless flow from one service to the other.

FCHC users make use of library resources before and after a consultation with the FCHC attorneys. Oftentimes, people who have come for non-family library resources find they can also make use of the center for a family law question.

The law library works with the FCHC to provide access to information and forms. The law library created an online index of print forms available on “the wall” using Teams for FCHC staff and clients. The index is in chart form showing form name, its link and its shelf location. Printouts of the index act as guides to forms found on the form shelves in the FCHC.

C

NAME CHANGE	NAME CHANGE PACKET	WVW	C	3
NAME CHANGE	Petition For Change Of Name Of An Adult (Md. Rule 15-901)	CC-DR-060	C	1
NAME CHANGE	Petition For Change Of Name Of A Minor (Md. Rule 15-901)	CC-DR-62	C	2
NAME CHANGE	PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S/CUSTODIAN'S - CONSENT OBJECTION TO	CC-DR-063	C	2
NAME CHANGE	MINOR'S <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECTION TO CHANGE OF NAME (Md. R.	CC-DR-119 (01/20)	C	2
NAME CHANGE	Petition For Change Of Name Of An Adult (Md. Rule 15-901)	CC-DR-060	C	2
GENDER	Petition For Judicial Declaration of Gender Identity of a Minor	CC-DR-121	C	3
GENDER	PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S/CUSTODIAN'S <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECTION	CC-DR-123 (01/20)	C	3
GENDER	MINOR'S <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECTION TO JUDICIAL DECLARATION OF	CC-DR-124 (Rev. 0	C	3
GENDER	Petition For Judicial Declaration of Gender Identity of an Adult	CC-DR-120	C	4
PATERNITY	Complaint To Establish Paternity	AAFCHC	C	4
PATERNITY	Complaint To Disestablish Paternity & To Establish Paternity	AAFCHC	C	4
DISCOVERY	Navigating Discovery In The Circuit Court	MVLS	C	5
DISCOVERY	Notice of Service Of Discovery Materials	AAFCHC	C	5
DISCOVERY	Interrogatories (Divorce Cases)	AAFCHC	C	5
DISCOVERY	Interrogatories (Custody Cases)	AAFCHC	C	6
DISCOVERY	Request For Production of Documents (Divorce Cases)	AAFCHC	C	6
DISCOVERY	Request For Production of Documents (Custody Cases)	AAFCHC	C	6
EVIDENCE	Submitting Evidence	MVLS	C	7
EVIDENCE	Certification of Custodian of Records or Other Qualified Individual	CC-DC-CV-110	C	7

Both attorneys and non-attorneys used the **small conference room** for client meetings, videoconferencing and access to the Maryland Court Help Center.

Cataloging Project

In addition to keeping up with new editions in the law library, there are still historic titles to be added to the online catalog. The historic project is close to complete. The law library will continue to add online resources to the catalog.

Staff and Professional Activities

Law library staff consisted of the Law Library Director, Joan Bellistri, and one full time contractual position. (With the retirement of Nancy Wallace in 2011, the law library lost its permanent assistant law librarian position. The law library was then allotted one contractual FTE position.) The contractual position was shared by Denise Wolf and Mariemily Rodriguez. Jeff Ross was able to return and fill-in when needed for law library coverage.

There have been fifteen people in the assistant law librarian position since the permanent position became contractual in 2011. Frequent staff turnover requires extensive and ongoing training.

These training periods adversely affect law library productivity and service as do periods without any support staff. Historically, the library operated most efficiently with two full-time positions and one part-time position funded through the now-discontinued Maryland State Law Library Grant Program. There were no backlogs and at least two staff members were almost always available in the law library. Reinstatement of the Assistant Librarian position would improve library productivity and service.

Staff Highlights

Joan Bellistri was elected to serve as the vice-chair of the Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors, July 2024 through June 2026.

Professional Participation, Presentations, and Publications

Memberships – Library Staff

LLAM (Law Library Association of Maryland), Members - through an Institutional Membership

Memberships – Joan Bellistri

- Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors, member 2007 – present (Vice-Chair, 2024-2026; Chair, 2007-2009)
- Anne Arundel County Local Pro Bono Committee, member (Chair, 7/2011 – 6/2015)
- Maryland Judicial Council Court Access and Community Relations Committee, Self-Represented Litigant Subcommittee (2015 - present)
- Maryland Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service, Public Member, 05/12/2010 - present
 - Liaison to Anne Arundel County Local Pro Bono Committee
- Pro Bono Coordinating Council, member, 2013 - present

- LLAM (Law Library Association of Maryland) Member, 1982- present
 - Government and Vendor Relations, Chair, 2006 - present
- Maryland Library Association, Member
 - LLAM Representative on the Legislative Panel, 2005 – present
- GLL (Government Law Libraries, American Association of Law Libraries Special Interest Section) Member, 1980- present (Chair, 2018-2019)
 - Best Access to Justice Practices Committee, 2021- present (Chair, 2022 –2024 and 2025-2026)
- LISP (Legal Information Services to the Public, American Association of Law Libraries Special Interest Section) Member, 1996-present
- Self-Represented Litigation Network (now the Access to Justice Network), Member, December 2008 - present
 - Law Librarians Working Group, Member, 2008- present (Chair, 2012-2013)
- Access to Justice Commission Public Library Training Workgroup, 2016 – present
- Pro Bono Resource Center, Partners for Justice Conference Planning Committee, 2016 – present

Presentations – Joan Bellistri

- Put It on the Map: Using GIS Technology to Answer Questions About Our Communities, Speaker, Partners for Justice Conference, May 2025
- Putting Law Libraries on the Map – Using GIS Technology to Promote Services to the SRL, Speaker, Self-Represented Litigation Conference, September 2024



Partners for Justice Conference – May 2025

Publications – Joan Bellistri

AALL Spectrum Shelf Life, Access to Justice Partnerships July/August 2024 volume 28, No.8 p.53 Contributor <https://aallspectrum.aallnet.org/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&edid=dc373a93-269d-4267-a428-74ca8a597c07&pnum=55>

Trainings and Programs Attended

- Self-Represented Litigation Conference
- Maryland Judiciary Leadership Conference
- Maryland Partners for Justice Conference
- TRI/NCSC AI Policy Consortium Webinar Series
- Reference Roundup: Transformative Reference Services in the Age of AI (Syracuse University)
- Building Bridges: Collecting Culturally Relevant Data
- Exploring Public Libraries Survey Data for Peer Comparisons
- The Judiciary in the Age of AI: Preparing for a Transformative Future (Thomson Reuters) NCLC Digital Library Toolbox Webinar: Housing Topics
- Maryland Court Help Center Provider Conference

Mariemily Rodriguez continues to work towards her MLIS (Master of Library and Information Science) and is scheduled to graduate after the 2026 summer session.

Library Use Statistics FY2025



31,088 visitors



5541 questions



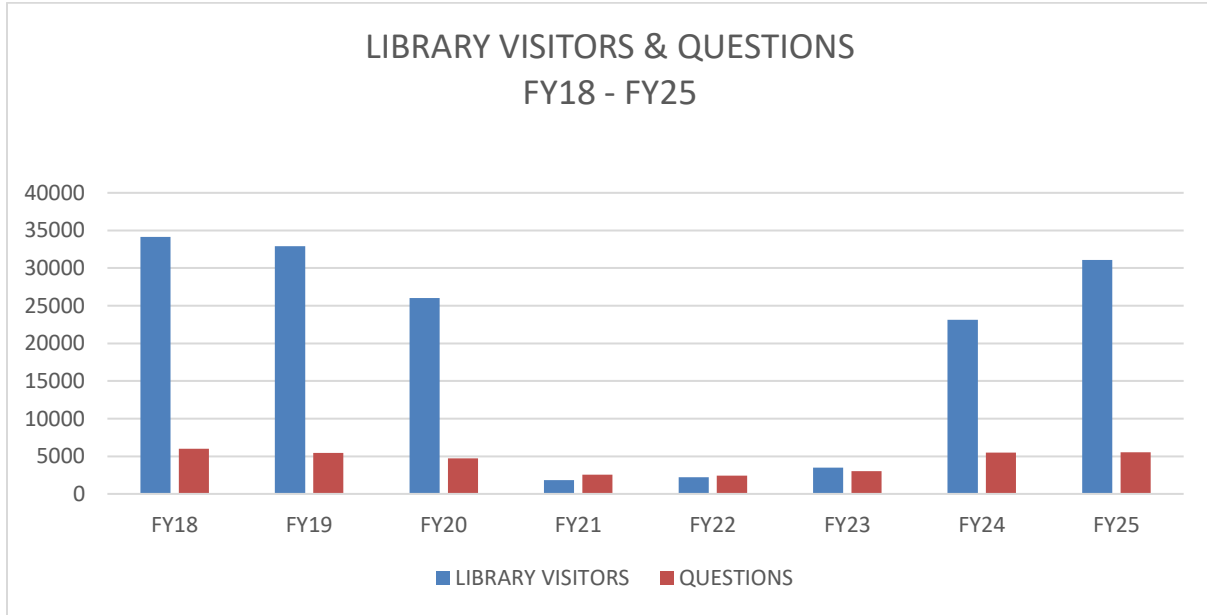
30,621 web hits



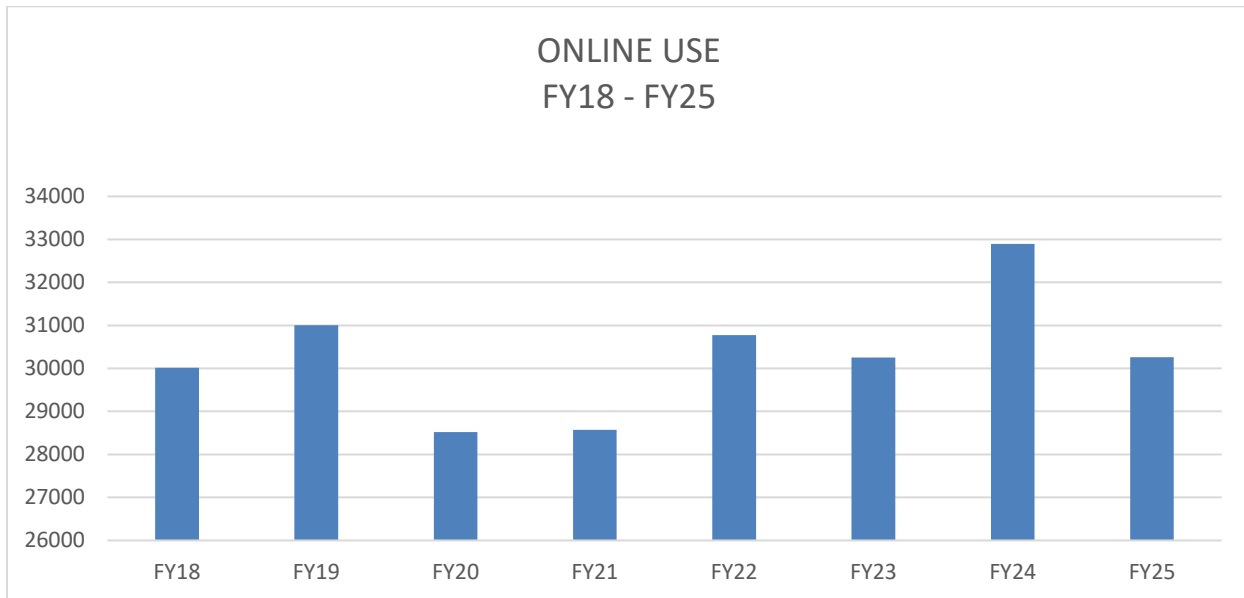
128 served by law library
limited legal advice programs

Library use increased significantly during FY2025, reflecting the impact of the library's relocation to its new space in September 2023 and its co-location with the Family Court Help Center. The more visible and accessible location contributed to a **35% increase in library visitors**, with **31,088 visitors** recorded during the year. Library staff responded to **5,541 legal information questions**, returning service demand to pre-pandemic levels. Most users (90%) were members of the public, highlighting the library's critical role in supporting self-represented litigants and community members seeking legal information.

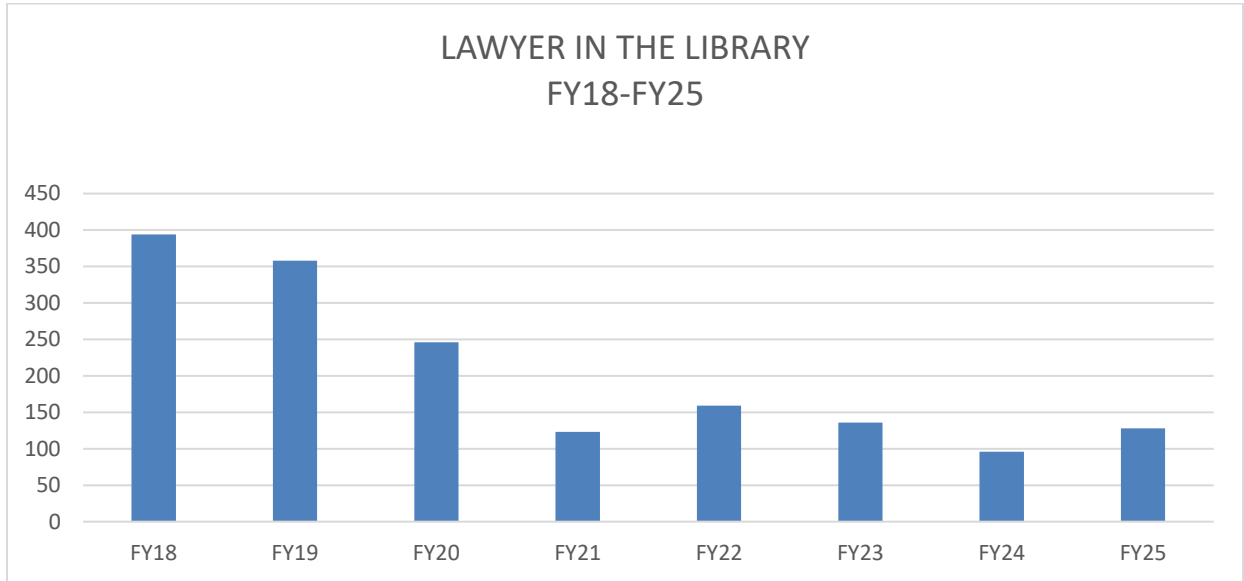
The 35% increase in the number of library visitors reflects the improved accessibility and visibility of the library’s new location with its integration with the Family Court Help Center.



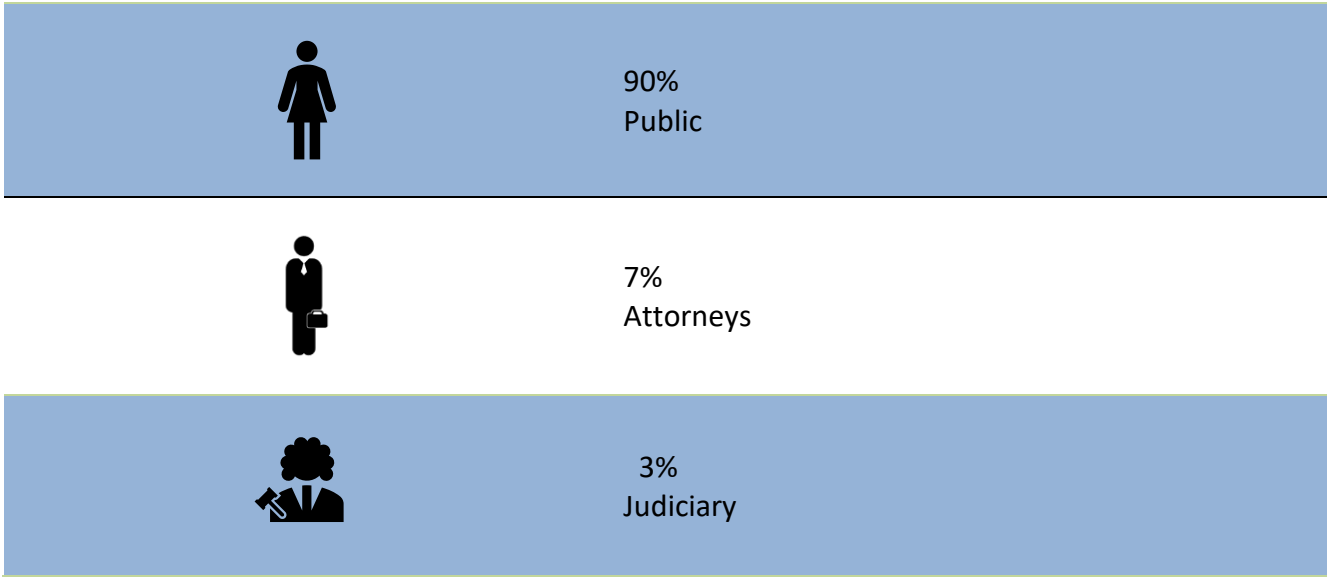
Online access to curated legal information remained strong, with more than **30,000 web visits**, demonstrating the continued importance of remote access to legal resources.



The **Lawyer in the Library** program assisted **128 individuals**, representing a **33 percent increase** from the previous year. The program continues to provide free brief legal consultations through remote appointments in partnership with community organizations.



FY2025 – Law Library Visitors



FY 2025 – Methods of Library Assistance



86%
In Person

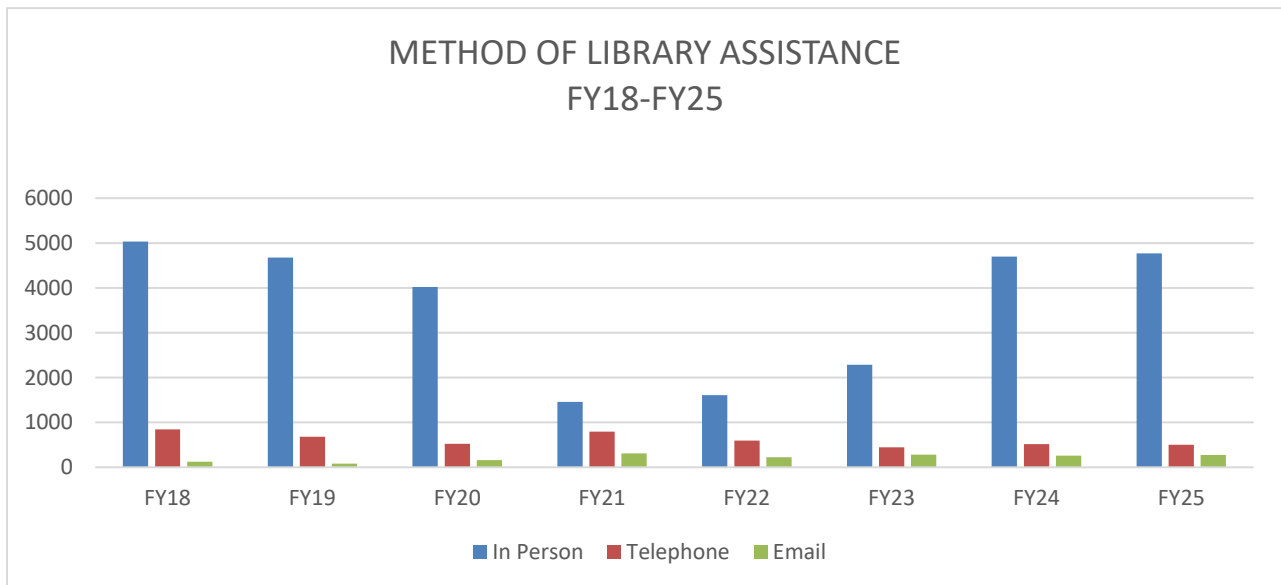


9%
Phone

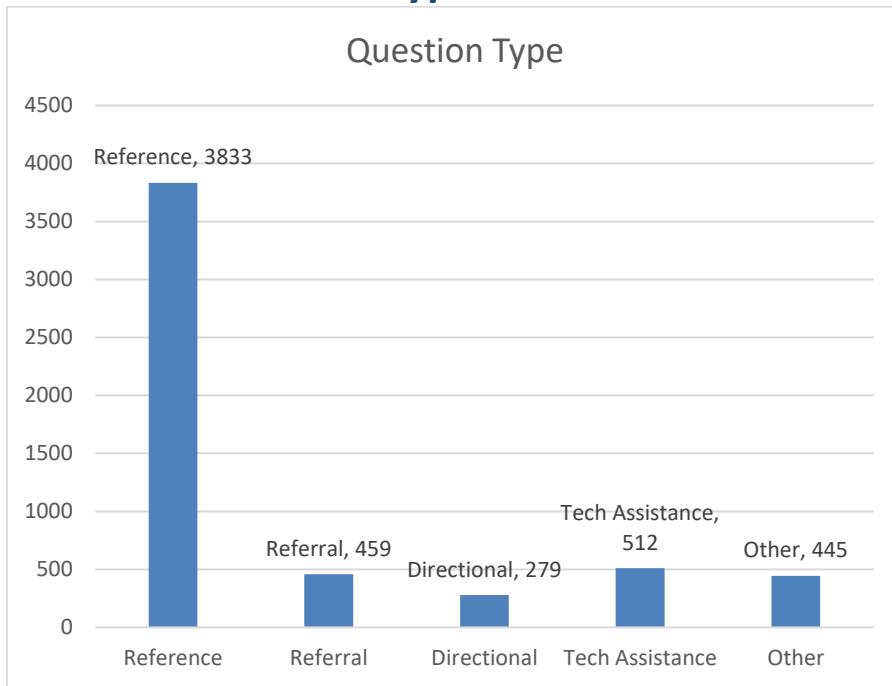


5%
Email

In-person services remain the primary way users access the library, accounting for **86% of interactions**, followed by phone and email assistance.

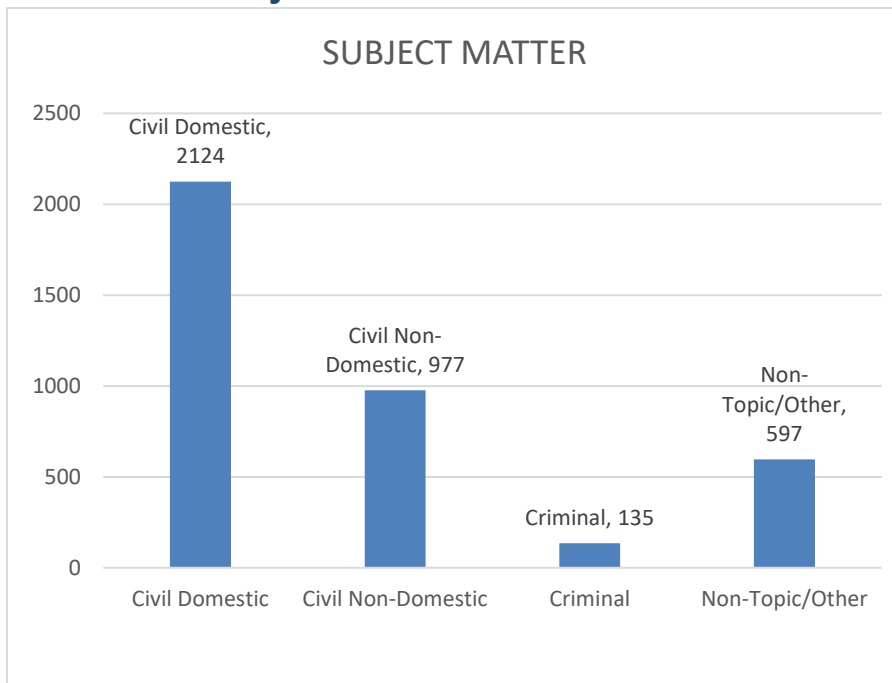


FY2025 - Question Type



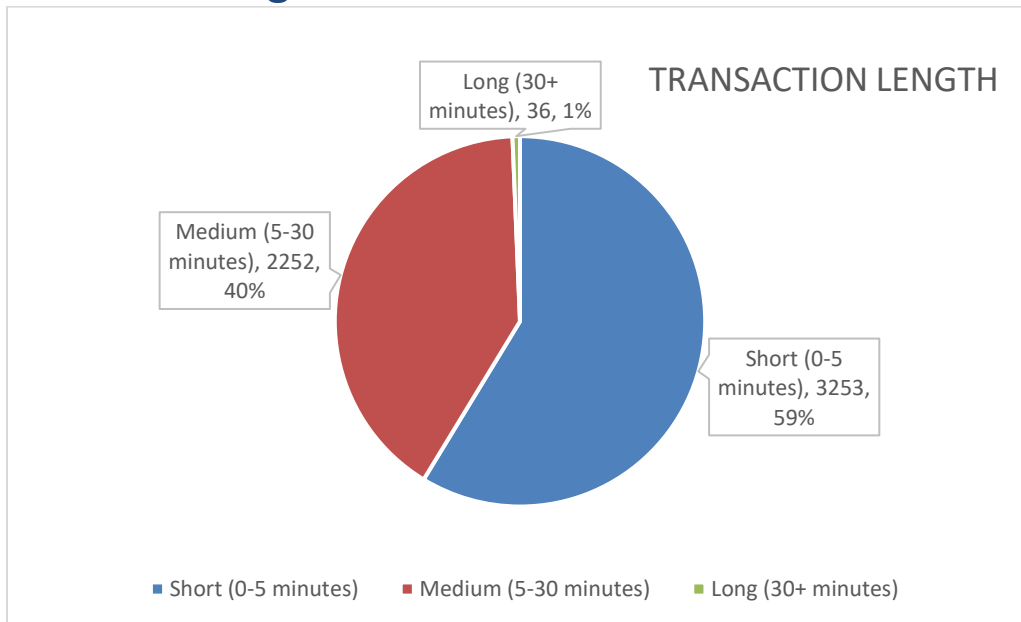
70% OF
QUESTIONS ARE
REFERENCE

FY2025 – Subject Matter

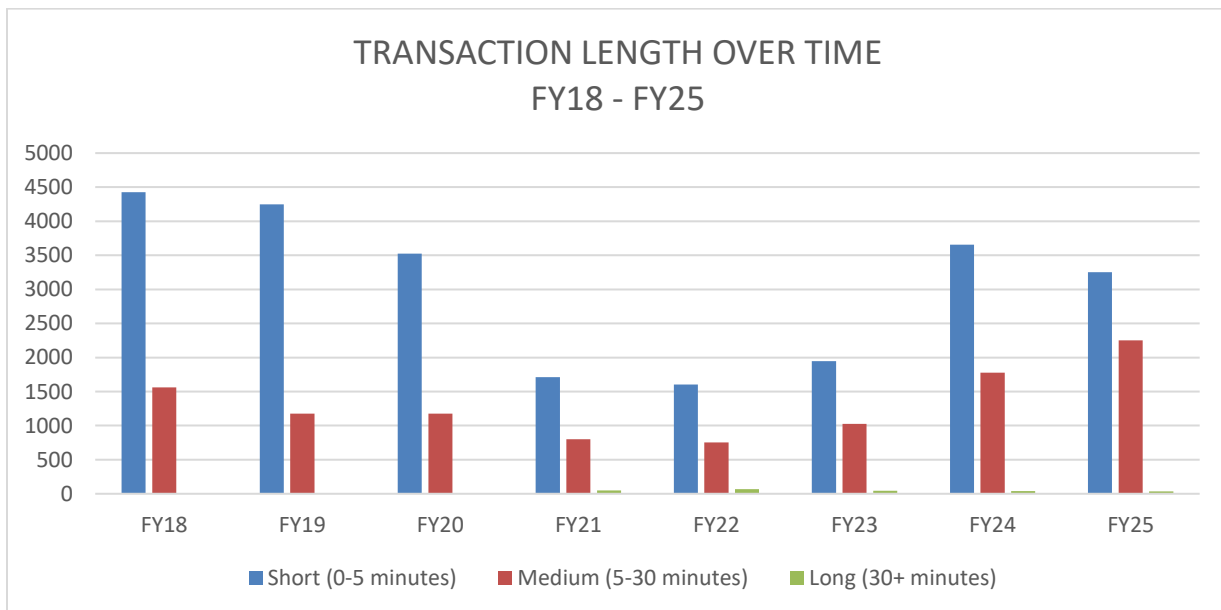


80% OF
QUESTIONS
INVOLVE CIVIL
ISSUES

FY2025 – Length of Reference Transactions



**59% OF
TRANSACTIONS
TAKE 5
MINUTES OR
LESS**



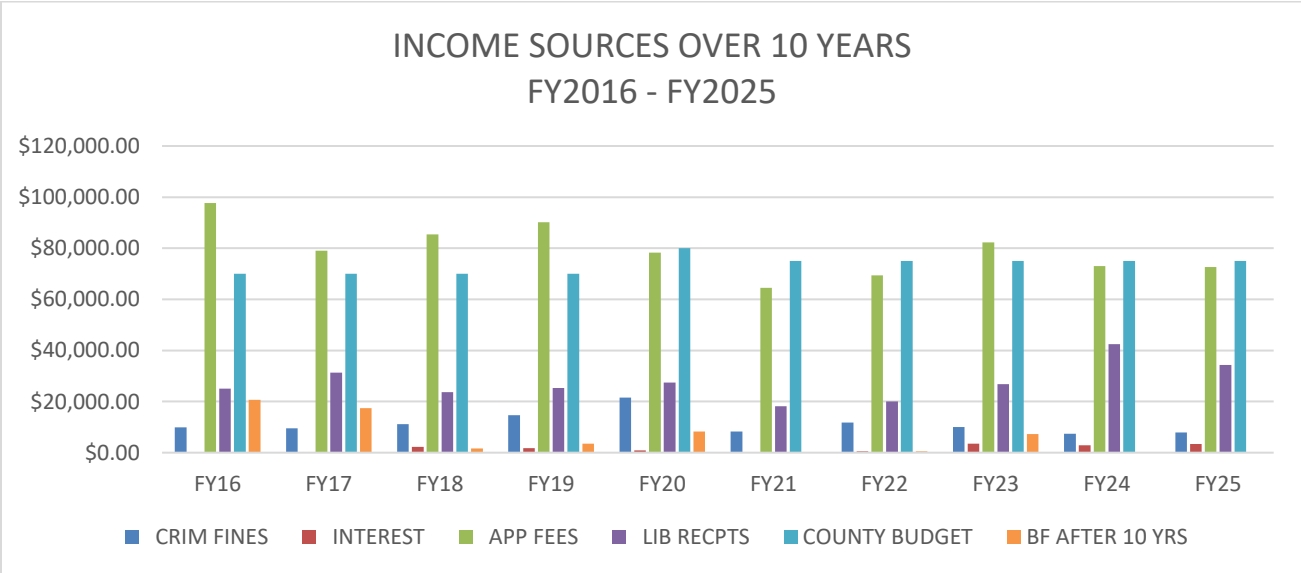
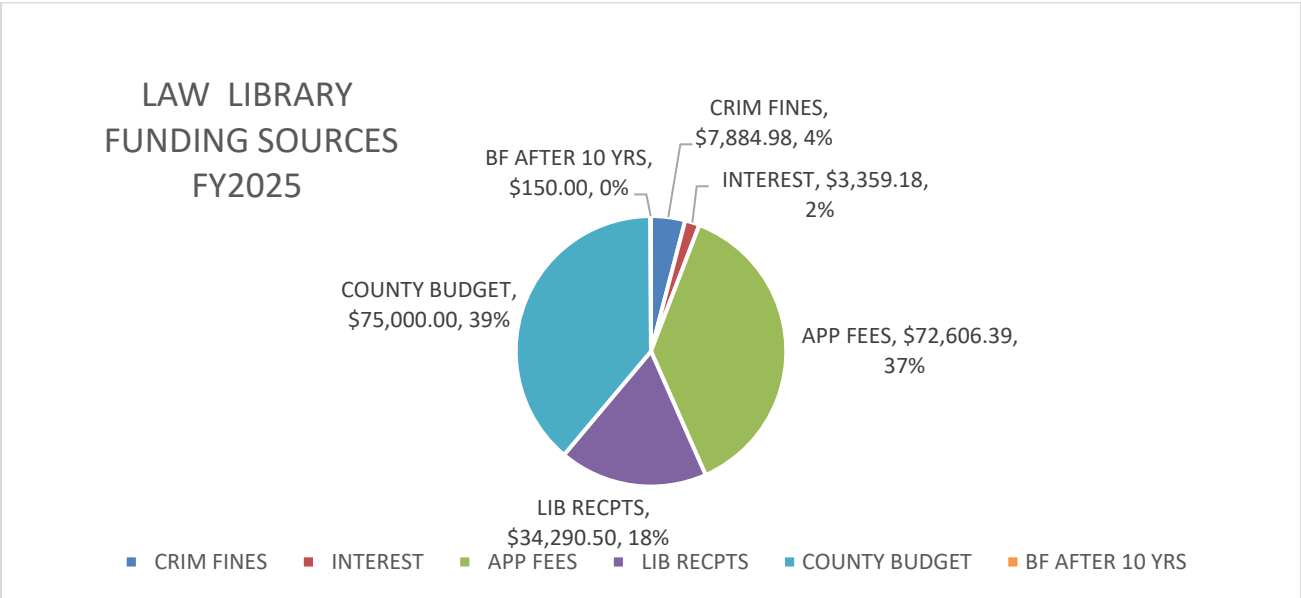
The number of questions that take between five and thirty minutes reached the highest level since FY17.

The library statistics for FY25 show that the library continues to play a vital role in supporting the public, legal professionals and the court.

Law Library Financial Report FY2025

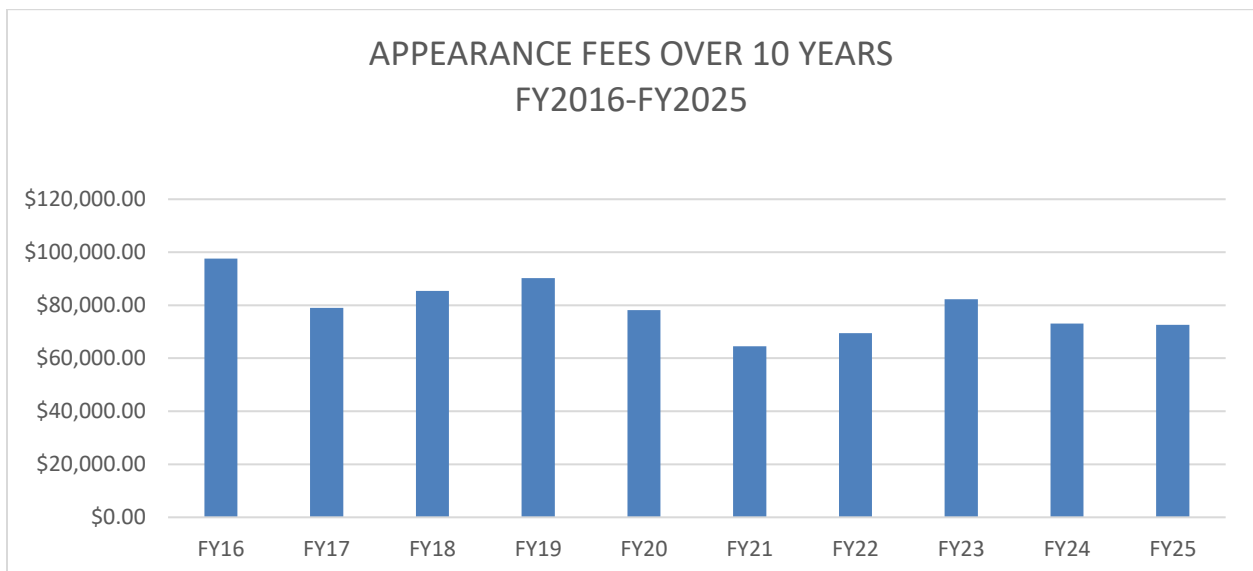
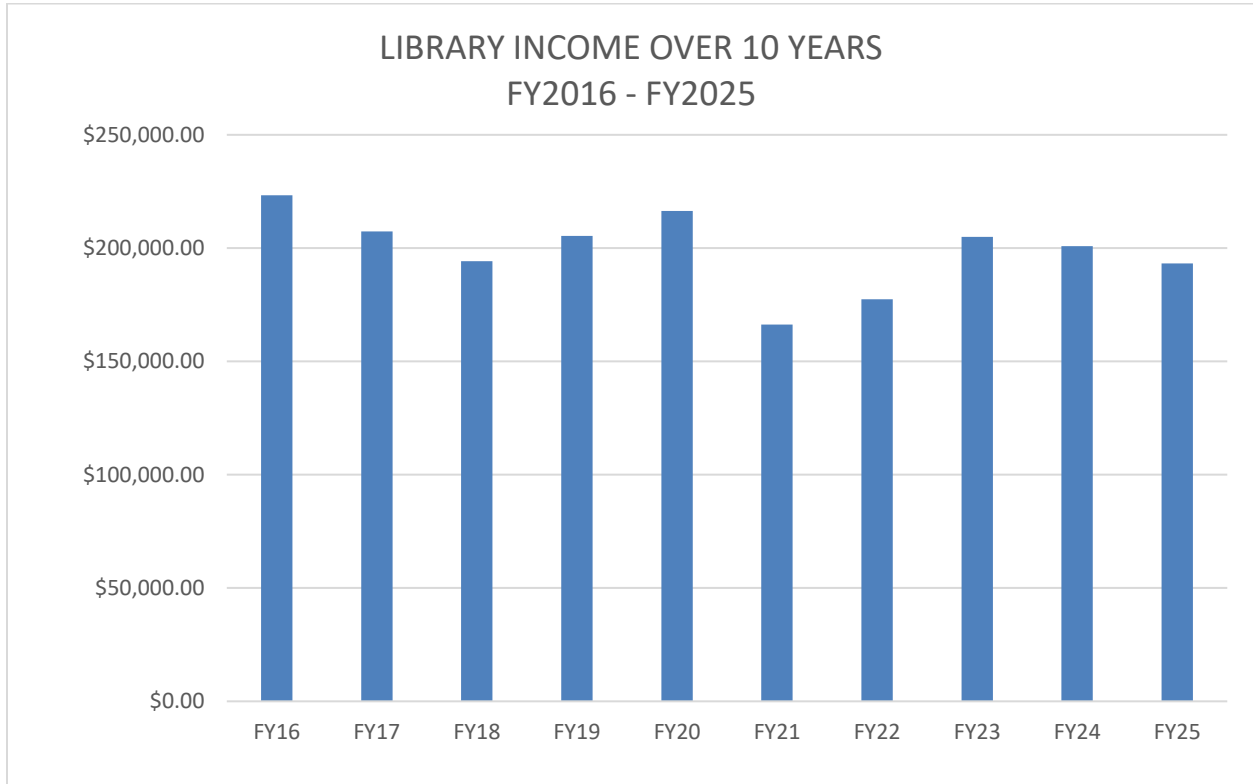
Funding

The law library is funded through a combination of budget appropriations, appearance fees, criminal fines, bond forfeitures held beyond ten years and miscellaneous library receipts that include court reporter charges.



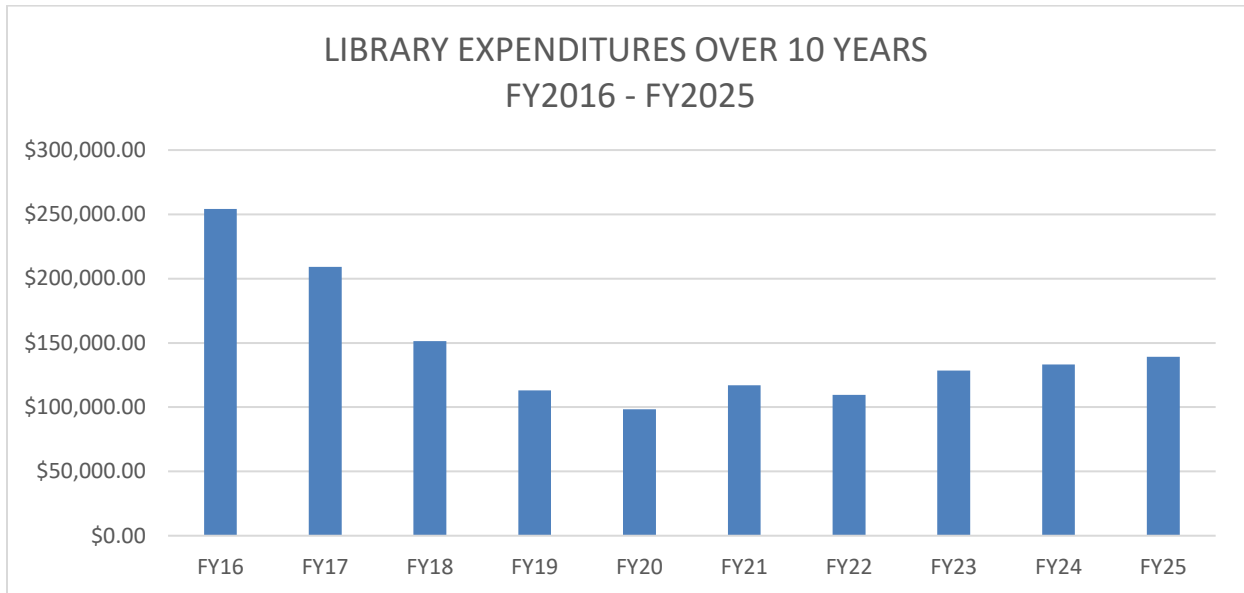
Income

Income decreased by 6% this year. After the county budget appropriation, appearance fees were the law library's largest source of income.



Expenditures

Law library expenditures increased by 4% when compared to last year. This increase is attributable to the increase in the cost of updating existing library materials and subscriptions. However, expenditures are 45% lower when compared with FY16.



There were additional non-library expenses again this year for courthouse supplies and projects. Still, even with the increased non-library expenditures, the amount is still 28% less than 10 years ago.

Circuit Court Special Fund

The Circuit Court Special Fund is a non-lapsing fund that can be used for maintenance and improvement of the Court's facilities, equipment, and programs in addition to the funding of the law library per § 4-11-113 of the Anne Arundel County Code.

Future Goals and Priorities

- During the coming fiscal year, the law library will focus on several initiatives designed to improve services and strengthen access to legal information:
- Expanding marketing and outreach efforts to increase awareness of law library services among court users, attorneys, and the public.
- Completing cataloging of the historic collection and reorganizing the space dedicated to this collection.
- Improving the interface of the library's public computers to allow users to locate resources more easily and independently.
- Working with the Access to Justice Department to offer family law videos on the Court TVs and provide a schedule of videos shown in the library and FCHC each day.
- Developing a new database system to replace the current obsolete financial tracking database.
- Continuing to update the library's strategic plan to guide future service development and resource allocation.
- Revising the collection development policy to reflect the increasing role of digital legal resources.
- Exploring the use of generative artificial intelligence as a tool to assist with legal research and streamline internal library processes.
- Beginning succession planning by reviewing and documenting library procedures.

Key Impact – FY2025

During Fiscal Year 2025, the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library continued to play a critical role in supporting the administration of justice in Anne Arundel County. With more than **31,000 visitors** and over **5,500 research questions answered**, the library provided essential legal information services to court users, attorneys, and the public.

The majority of library users were members of the public seeking reliable legal information to help them navigate legal issues and court procedures. By providing access to legal research resources, instructional materials, and referrals to legal assistance programs, the law library helps ensure that individuals—particularly self-represented litigants—can better understand and participate in the legal process.

The integration of the law library with the **Family Court Help Center** has strengthened service delivery by allowing users to move seamlessly between legal information resources and attorney consultations. Programs such as **Lawyer in the Library** further expand access to justice by connecting residents with volunteer attorneys for brief legal consultations.

Through its services, partnerships, and commitment to providing trusted legal information, the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library continues to support the court system while improving access to justice for the residents of Anne Arundel County.

Words of Appreciation

From the court:

Thank you so much, this is really helpful!

From the bar:

Just stopping in but want to say how much I appreciate the library. I am a new attorney just starting out and appreciate the resources here.

Thanks for all of that research help. I could never have gotten there without you.

Thanks so much for what you sent me. Now I know the terms for researching my topic. I could not have gotten here without you.

Thank you – some rabbit holes end up with just dirt. This one actually yielded a piece of the puzzle. Thank goodness for book hoarding!

From the public:

You helped me the other day and just wanted to come back to say thank you.

This is such a blessing.

Thank you very much for your research efforts and the information and referrals related to my [legal research].

Thanks for listening.

Thank you – all went well, and I got what I need!

Strategic Plan: Status Report

The law library developed a strategic plan to make the best use of resources and to provide the highest quality of service to all who use the law library. The plan follows the Strategic Plan for the Maryland Judiciary. The plan with goals and actions taken over the last year follows. Actions may address more than one goal as indicated by the numbers following each action.

GOALS

1. Provide access to justice

“The Maryland Judiciary ensures equal access to justice. The courts develop services and programs that facilitate access to and understanding of court processes.” To meet this GOAL, the Anne Arundel Public Law Library will:

- Provide cost-effective and equal access to legal information resources in multiple formats.
- Identify and respond to information needs of the judiciary and attorneys.
- Identify and respond to areas for which self-represented litigants request assistance to legal information.
- Remove barriers that may prevent access to legal information and services.
- Ensure that people who come to our courts without a lawyer know that legal resources are available to them through the law library.
- Strengthen public awareness and understanding of the Judiciary through library resources and programs.
- Expand self-help programs and resources.
- Continue outreach through partnerships for such programs as the Lawyer in the Library program.

2. Be responsive and adaptable to changing community needs

“The Maryland Judiciary provides responsive leadership, ensures a respectful forum for justice, and proactively addresses the changing needs of its constituents

and employees. With the aim of helping families and our communities and, in particular, our most vulnerable citizens, children and seniors.” The AACPLL will:

- Retain a sufficient amount of print-based legal information to meet the needs of those with limited computer skills who access the courts.
- Wisely experiment with newer technologies, such as e-books, “discovery” tools (online catalog) and expanded databases.
- Provide access to resources to assist the non-attorney and self-represented litigant.
- Promote and use language access resources.

3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders

“The Maryland Judiciary communicates effectively to inform and educate the public, the bar, justice partners and staff.” The law library will:

- Provide legal research training to Judiciary staff, as needed.
- Provide programs for courthouse staff on legal resources available to the public.
- Provide training to the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library staff on legal research, reference, and referrals.
- Create and develop talks, open to the public and courthouse staff, on topics relating to “Everyday Law.”
- Provide information about library resources and referrals to local government departments and elected officials.
- Continue to partner with the local bar association, legal service providers and public libraries to provide “Lawyer in the Library” programs.
- Keep current and distribute law library information brochures.
- Create, update, and distribute local legal referral information.
- Continue to work with the Anne Arundel County Local Pro Bono Committee to promote pro bono service by Anne Arundel attorneys.
- Promote library resources of interest to the court and bar through the use of varied communication methods.
- Create and maintain online information sources for the general public.

4. Improve systems and processes

“The Maryland Judiciary is forward-thinking and focused on continuous improvements to systems and processes, helping the courts to better serve the people and provide for prompt, efficient and just resolution of cases.” To achieve this GOAL, the law library will:

- Maintain Mutual Aid Agreements with other Maryland court law libraries as part of the Court’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).
- Provide access to computers and programs needed for document creation and e-filing.
- Review and revise law library procedures as needed to meet the information needs of users.
- Coordinate with court IT so that technology needed to provide the services needed by all is available.

5. Be accountable

“The Maryland Judiciary holds itself to the highest standards of excellence and administers justice with diligence and integrity.” The action plan to reach this GOAL includes:

- Adhering to CMCLLD standards for library operation and resources.
- Providing reports to court administration on library operations.

6. Assure the highest level of service

“Because a dedicated and professional workforce is essential to providing quality service to all, the Maryland Judiciary trains, develops, and supports a professional and skilled workforce.” Our action plans include:

- Providing the training needed for professional development of court library staff.
- Participating in continuing education.
- Participating in professional library and legal services organizations.
- Providing access to the information to meet the needs of all user communities.

7. Build partnerships

“The Maryland Judiciary works collaboratively with its justice partners and the public to fulfill its mission.” This action plan includes:

- Collaborating with the Anne Arundel Bar Association to promote pro bono in Anne Arundel County.
- Supporting the work of other court departments to ensure they have the information needed for the work of the department and those they serve.
- Collaborating with the Conference of Maryland Court Law Library Directors in matters relating to the operation, management, and leadership of court law libraries.
- Coordinating with the Judiciary’s Access to Justice Department to enhance library programs and resources.
- Participating in the work of the Judicial Council Community Access and Community Relations Committee SRL Sub-Committee to provide the perspective of court law libraries.
- Communicating with the Maryland Access to Justice Commission to ensure awareness of law library programs and resources.
- Working with the Anne Arundel County Public Library to expand law library services and programs.
- Developing and continuing partnerships with Maryland legal service providers to provide services to those of low and middle income.
- Collaborating with Maryland Center for Legal Assistance (MCLA) to coordinate legal information resources needed to support the Family Court Help Center.
- Participating in the work of the American Association of Law Libraries and its Special Interest Sections; the Self Represented Litigation Network (now the Access to Justice Network) Law Librarians Working Group; the Law Library Association of Maryland; and the Maryland Library Association.
- Collaborating with Civil Justice, Inc. to provide access to Maryland Justice Passports.

8. Use resources wisely

The Maryland Judiciary uses public funds wisely to assure sufficient resources for personnel, facilities, programs, equipment, and technology, all with the aim of

efficiently administering justice and providing exceptional public service. This action plan includes:

- Providing transparent budgeting processes.
- Leveraging additional assistance through the use of library interns and volunteers.
- Sharing resources through inter-library loan and document delivery.
- Assessing resources for relevancy to the needs of all user groups.
- Working with vendors to maximize library material/resource dollars.
- Retaining and maintaining the historic code collection for legislative history research.

ACTIONS

- The law library provides and maintains online family law form packets to support the work of the Family Court Help Center. The packets include links to online forms as listed in results of the [mdcourts.gov](#) forms finder as well as links to online information and listings of resources in the law library. Packets include QR codes. A Family Law Resource poster with QR codes with links to the online family law form packets provides access to these resources. [\(1, 2, 3,4 6, 7](#)
- Poster with QR codes with links to non-family FAQ information packets have been added to the Help Center space. [\(1, 2, 3,4 6, 7](#)
- The law library updates the Clerk of Court Cheat Sheet. [\(1, 2, 3, 7](#)
- The law library maintains a legal referral display. [\(1, 2, 3, 4](#)
- The law library continues to offer the Lawyer in the Library Program remotely in partnership with the Anne Arundel County Public Library and the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS). The program is held every Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. [\(1, 2, 6, 7](#)
- The law librarian helped with the coordination of brief legal advice clinics including those held at the Chrysalis House in October 2024 and March 2025. [\(1, 2, 6, 7](#)

- The law library maintains a Virtual Reference Desk to better serve library users remotely. ([1](#), [2](#), [6](#))
- The law library creates the online nomination form and compiles results for the AABA President’s Pro Bono Award, a project of the Anne Arundel County Local Pro Bono Committee. ([1](#), [7](#))
- JIS networked computers are available in the law library for access to online information, legal databases and MDEC. Two stations are dedicated to MDEC Public Kiosk use. ([2](#), [4](#), [8](#))
- Law library maintains a SharePoint site providing information on resources available to the court. ([3](#), [6](#), [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [7](#))
- Continues to maintain and distribute the Pro Bono Services Directory and the law library brochure to the court information desk and online. QR codes are included. ([3](#), [6](#))
- Law library maintains legal information [FAQ pages](#) on the [AACPLL Self Help and Pro Bono Wiki](#) and publishes [Law Library News](#) via the blog. ([3](#), [6](#))
- The online catalog continues to be updated with the addition of records for all primary sources, current and historic to the [library online catalog](#) so that all library resources are discoverable. ([1](#), [2](#), [5](#), [6](#), [8](#))
- Financial reports are provided quarterly to court administration. ([5](#))
- Law library staff participated in activities of professional organizations including the American Association of Law Libraries, the Law Library Association of Maryland, the Maryland Library Association, and the Self Represented Litigation Network (now the Access to Justice Network). ([6](#))
- Pro bono hours incurred by Lawyer in the Library volunteers are compiled and sent to the lawyers in time for their annual reporting. ([4](#), [7](#))

- Joan Bellistri is a member of the Judicial Council Court Access and Community Relations Committee SRL Sub-committee. She is also the public member of the Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono. ([7](#))
- The law library partners with the Maryland Justice Passport to assist in creating and promoting passports. ([1](#), [7](#))
- Law library participates in the court's new law clerk orientation by providing information on resources available to chambers. ([3](#), [6](#), [7](#))
- Law library participates in Clerk of the Court programs such as the Bring Your Child to Work Day and provides tours for summer interns and new employees of the Clerk's office. ([3](#), [6](#), [7](#))
- Law Library provides research assistance in the use of all library resources, both print and online. ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#),
- Law library manages Westlaw access for the court. ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [6](#))
- Law library manages Chambers library resources for the court. ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [6](#))
- Law library provides technology and MDEC assistance to the court, attorneys, and the public. ([1](#), [6](#))
- Law library provides access to legal databases and instruction in their use to the court, attorneys, and the public. ([1](#), [6](#))
- Joan Bellistri presented at two conferences: Put It on the Map: Using GIS Technology to Answer Questions About Our Communities, Speaker, Partners for Justice Conference, May 2025 and Putting Law Libraries on the Map – Using GIS Technology to Promote Services to the SRL, Speaker, Self-Represented Litigation Conference, September 2024 ([3](#), [6](#), [7](#))
- Library staff attended the following continuing education programs and conferences ([3](#), [6](#), [7](#)):
 - Self-Represented Litigation Conference, September 2024

- Maryland Judiciary Leadership Conference, June 2025
 - Maryland Partners for Justice, May 2025
 - Maryland Court Help Center Provider Conference
 - TRI/NCSC AI Policy Consortium Webinar Series
 - Reference Roundup: Transformative Reference Services in the Age of AI (Syracuse University)
 - Building Bridges: Collecting Culturally Relevant Data
 - Exploring Public Libraries Survey Data for Peer Comparisons
 - The Judiciary in the Age of AI: Preparing for a Transformative Future (Thomson Reuters)
 - NCLC Digital Library Toolbox Webinar: Housing Topics
- Joan Bellistri contributed to the AALL Spectrum with Shelf Life Access to Justice Partnerships July/August 2024 volume 28, No.8 p.53 Contributor <https://aallspectrum.aallnet.org/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&edid=dc373a93-269d-4267-a428-74ca8a597c07&pnum=55> (3, 6, 7)