

2023 Annual Report



The Wisconsin State Law Library exists to serve the legal information needs of the officers and employees of this state, attorneys and the public by providing the highest quality of professional expertise in the selection, maintenance and use of materials, information and technology in order to facilitate equal access to the law.

Wisconsin State Law Library
Madison, Wisconsin
wilawlibrary.gov

Welcome to the Library



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Amy Crowder, State Law Librarian

The Wisconsin State Law Library reaches all corners of the state.

Our library joined the Law Library of Congress in November as part of their webinar series, Orientation to Law Library Collections. It was a great opportunity to reach people throughout the country and share information about our library's collection. The Wisconsin State Law Library originated in 1836 and is almost as old as the Library of Congress!

The David T. Prosser Jr. Library welcomed 393 new attorneys for the signing of the roll book of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. We enjoyed connecting with new attorneys at signing events throughout the year.

In 2023, we expanded upon our webinar and in-person training. Our librarians presented 22 hours of education in 19 unique presentations. We also offered tours and meeting space to agencies within each branch of government.

Self-represented litigants from all over Wisconsin continued to receive help from our librarians by phone and email. Our branch library staff in the Milwaukee and Dane County courthouses provided access to court forms and information in partnership with court offices and legal assistance clinics. In 2023, Dane County Law Library coordinated with the City of Madison to translate its Low Cost Legal Assistance Guide to Spanish, Hmong, and Chinese.

Supporting the work of the Wisconsin Court System is the State Law Library's highest priority. Judges and court staff throughout the state rely on our libraries for research help, authoritative sources, and continuing legal education. For special insight on these services, see "The Court's Library" on pages 3-4.



Dane County Law Library



Milwaukee County Law Library

The Court's Library

WSLL Rare Book Room



WSLL Patron Access Station



WSLL Reference Area

The Wisconsin State Law Library is part of the Wisconsin Court System, and serves the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and judges and court staff throughout the state.

Welcoming appellate law clerks to the library is an annual tradition at the start of the judicial term. Through law clerk orientation and new employee tours, librarians connect with new court colleagues and showcase the print collection as well as the many electronic resources the library provides. The library's Rare Book Room is always a highlight of the walking tour and serves as a reminder of the long-standing role the library holds in the court's history.

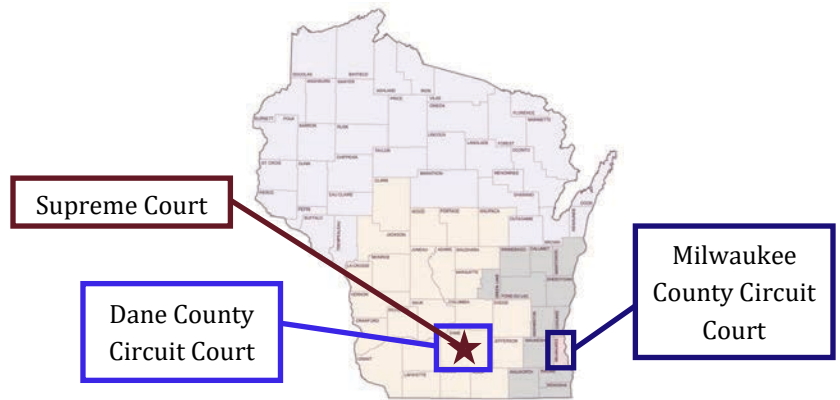
Library Collections

The Library hosts the current Wisconsin Jury Instructions on its website. Librarians collaborate with the Office of Judicial Education to coordinate and share information on jury instructions, which are created and edited by the Wisconsin Jury Instructions Committees of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference.



The three titles include +1,500 individual instructions.

The library facilitates the ordering and distribution of Wisconsin titles for the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Dane and Milwaukee County law libraries and chambers, the Prosser Library, and court departments.



The library selects, orders, and processes books which are delivered on a weekly basis to the Supreme Court chambers, Court of Appeals districts, and Dane and Milwaukee County courthouses.

Archiving materials of significance to Wisconsin judicial, legislative, and regulatory research is an important objective of the State Law Library. The library maintains collections such as session laws and statutes dating back to the Wisconsin territory, drafting files, the Judicial Council Collection, Supreme Court rules, and appellate briefs dating back to 1839.

The Court's Library

In addition to our staffed library hours, Supreme Court and Court of Appeals employees have full access to the David T. Prosser Jr. library before and after the building opens and closes, and on weekends or state holidays. Our After Hours service allows the Court to continue researching, and even check out books while the library is closed.

When the library collection doesn't have a book or article, our Interlibrary Loan service tracks it and requests it from another library, saving time and money for court staff. Interlibrary loan processes were streamlined this year, shortening response time in half.

34

New court staff received library cards in 2023

617

Library card holders are Wisconsin Courts staff



Newsletters

The library publishes bulletins for the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, with insights into services, research tips, and library events. WSL @ Your Service, the library's monthly newsletter, goes out to readers across the state and nation. Extensive archives on the library's website provide readers with instant access to librarian-authored articles.



Helping Self-Represented Litigants

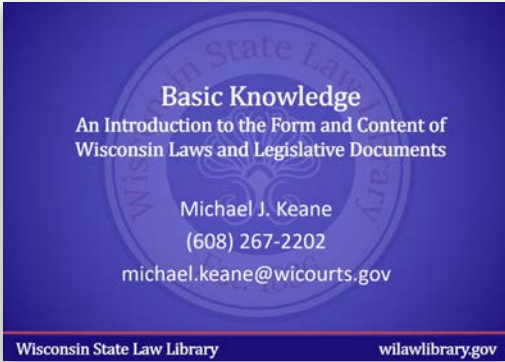
Our libraries help self-represented individuals and others to navigate the court system and legal assistance services in their area. We help people at our public service desks in Madison and Milwaukee, and many others over the phone or email. Access to technology, including the internet, computers, and printers, is an important part of supporting access to justice in Wisconsin. Our library staff brings in-depth knowledge of state and local resources, and a talent for listening to people in need throughout Wisconsin.

Law Day The Dane County Law Library (DCLL) participated in Law Day events in May. DCLL hosted free legal consultations. Several dozen visitors attended and received legal guidance from local attorneys and retired judges.

Language Accessibility DCLL broadened the availability of Spanish language forms at the library while requesting translation of additional high demand state court forms. DCLL coordinated with the City of Madison to translate the existing Low Cost Legal Assistance Guide into Spanish, Hmong, and Chinese.

Librarians as Educators

From impromptu computer support to formal CLE instruction, our librarians consistently fill the role of “educator” for judges and court staff, attorneys, and pro se users. The library’s free CLE program includes a series of classes that focus on reading Wisconsin legislation and accessing and interpreting sources of information originating in the legislative branch – often referred to as statutory or legislative history research. This program has expanded from just one class on legislative drafting files to a series of several installments, covering basic understanding, advanced research, and special problems.



482 Attendees

22 Hours of Education

19 Unique Presentations

- Basic Knowledge: An Introduction to the Form and Content of Wisconsin Laws and Legislative Documents – *January*
- Special Problems in Researching Wisconsin Legislation – *February*
- Introduction to Legislative History – *March, October*
- Researching the Wisconsin Administrative Code – *April, September*
- UW Law Student tours – *April*
- Wisconsin Legislative History - Advanced – *May*
- Office of Lawyer Regulation instruction and tours – *May, October*
- Summer School - Online Legal Research 101 at the Wisconsin State Law Library – *June, July*
- New Judge Orientation – *July*
- Legislative Reference Bureau instruction and tour – *July*
- AALL Annual Meeting - Preserving and Promoting History: Libraries with Long Memories – *July*
- Appellate law clerk instruction and tours – *August*
- Legislative Council instruction and tours – *August*
- WLA Annual Conference - Transform Your Staff Manual – *October*
- Governor's Office Intern tour – *November*
- Missing or Repealed Statutes & Other Special Problems in Wisconsin Legislative Research – *November*
- Orientation to Law Library Collections, Library of Congress webinar featuring the Wisconsin State Law Library – *November*
- Wisconsin Judicial Conference – *November*
- Law firm tours
- As part of the Wisconsin Attorney’s Desk Reference, Heidi Acker Yelk wrote the chapter “Litigation References and Resources”.

State law library staff authored five articles for the State Bar of Wisconsin’s InsideTrack, as part of an initiative spearheaded by the Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin.

InsideTrack	InsideTrack	InsideTrack	InsideTrack	InsideTrack
Legal Research 101: Wisconsin Jury Instructions	Legal Research 101: Estate Planning Resources	Legal Research 101: State and Local Government Contracts	Legal Research 101: 7 Sources for Planning Probate	Legal Research 101: Business Contracts Resources
BY CAROL HASSLER	BY AMY CROWDER	BY CAROL HASSLER	BY CAROL HASSLER	BY CAROL HASSLER

Librarians as Searchers

How can I change my name?

Does my personal representative need to be bonded?

Is this brief available online?

How hot is "too hot" for working conditions?

Librarians don't have all the answers but we know where to look. Searching is often what librarians enjoy doing best. As a library that serves an entire state (and beyond), we recognize that most users cannot trek to the library to find information.

How do I search property records?

How do I look up a registered agent?

In addition, many users are not familiar with navigating legal research systems. Reference librarians often serve as proxies for our users. We take a question and, using years of experience and honed skills, venture into the stacks or databases to see what we can find. Librarians find answers in books, articles, cases, statutes, and codes. These results are delivered to the user for review.

How do I amend my will?

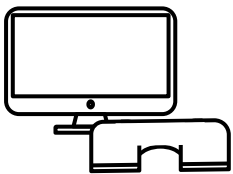
Are switchblades legal?

Where can I find laws of the Wisconsin Territory?

Has this case been overruled?

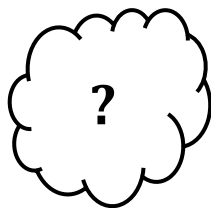
Can I raise chickens in my backyard?

Statewide Reference Services

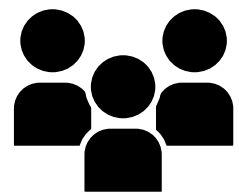


95%

Helped via Email or Phone



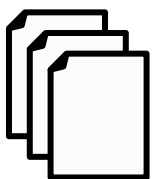
4,900 Requests



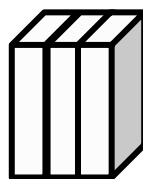
86%

Self-Represented Litigants

Dane County Jail Resident Services



29,586 Copies Made



266 Books Checked Out



1,287 Requests

Life Cycle of a Library Book

Suggested

- Court Staff
- Library Staff
- Patron
- Vendor (product advertisement)

Evaluated and Purchased

- How many copies
- Add to which collections
- Standing order or one-time purchase

Invoice Paid

Cataloged

- Added to our online library catalog

Processed

- Stamped
- Labeled
- Barcoded

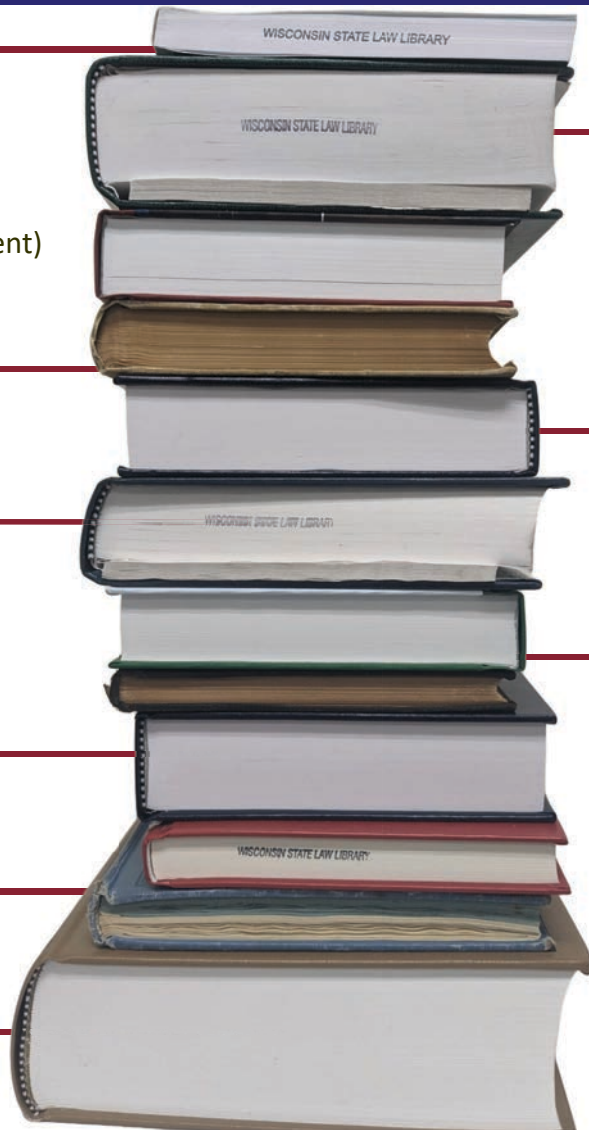
Delivered

Checked Out

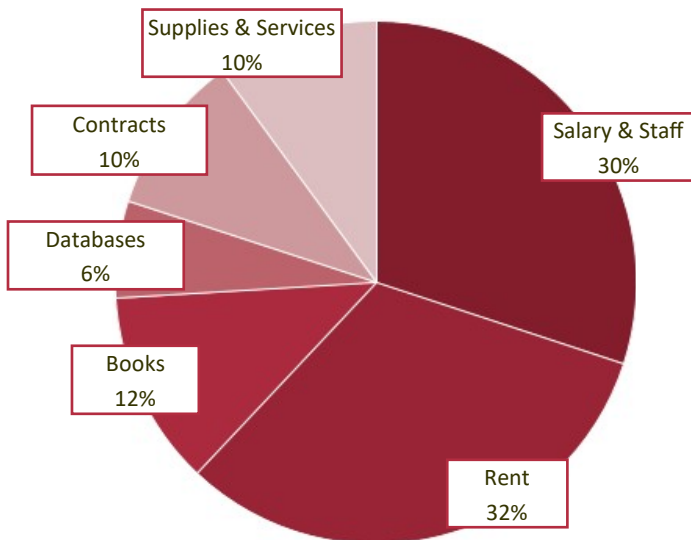
- Supreme Court
- Court of Appeals District I-IV
- Milwaukee County Circuit Court
- Dane County Circuit Court
- Milwaukee County Law Library
- Dane County Law Library
- David T. Prosser Jr. State Law Library

Read

Returned



2023 Budget



Jail Collection Update

\$1100 in materials was purchased for the Dane County Jail in coordination with the Sheriff's Department which added 40 items to the collection.



Circulation

Top 10 Circulating Titles

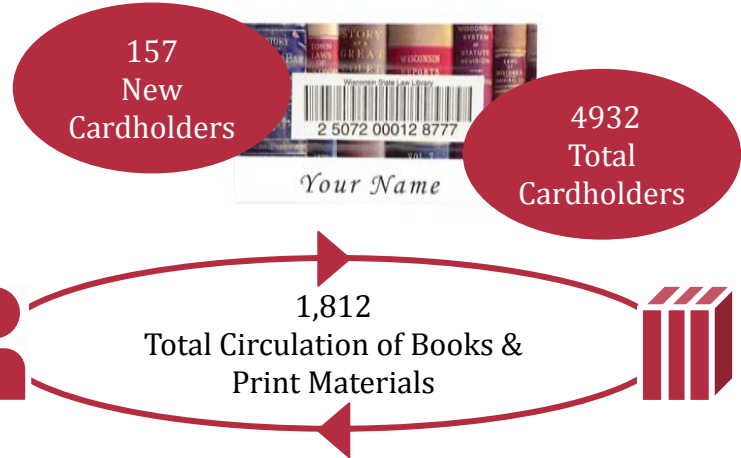


Top 10 Viewed by Lexis Digital



Records Accessed by Database

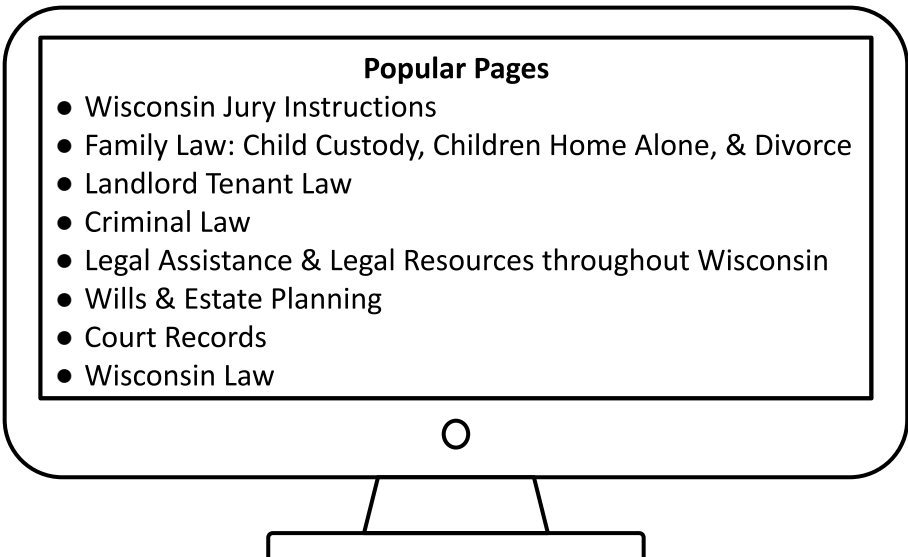
● HeinOnline	91,596
● CCH Answer Connect	23,823
● Badgerlink Access to EBSCOHost	1,557
● Lexis Digital Access	1,169
● Badgerlink Access	159



WILawLibrary.gov

Many people who ask the library for help with a legal question arrive after finding one of our Legal Topics pages in search engine results.

971,000
Page Views in 2023



Partnerships

Dane County Jail

Under a contract with the Dane County Sheriff's Office, the library responds to requests for legal materials from jail residents.

County Legal Clinics

The branch libraries collaborate with clinics in both courthouses to provide excellent assistance to litigants. The Dane County Law Library helps to coordinate clinics and provides space for clinics to meet in the library. The Milwaukee County Law Library partners with the Milwaukee Justice Center to provide information to self-represented litigants. The State Law Library also maintains a directory of legal assistance clinics and resources for all 72 counties on its website.

Office of Judicial Education and Jury Instructions

The Office of Judicial Education provides education for judges and Clerks of Court throughout Wisconsin. State Law Library staff regularly collaborate with the Office of Judicial Education to coordinate and share information on Wisconsin Jury Instructions.

The Library hosts the Wisconsin Jury Instructions on its website, wilawlibrary.gov. Instructions are used to assist judges and lawyers in providing instructions to jurors who must reach verdicts during trials. Library staff work closely with the jury instruction reporter to load new releases and other updates to the website.

Madison Paralegal Program

The Library has a long-standing partnership with the Madison College Paralegal Program. Librarians are part of the Program's Advisory Board and the Library's collection serves as a resource for faculty and staff. Libraries often host paralegal student interns fulfilling their practicum assignments.

Wisconsin Digital Archive

The library participates in the Wisconsin Digital Archives collection, a cooperative project with state agency librarians to archive and catalog state government publications. Staff catalog publications relevant to the Wisconsin Court System, Wisconsin Department of Justice, and other materials beneficial to our researchers.

Wisconsin Judicial Council

The library hosts and maintains the website for the Wisconsin Judicial Council, and stores records for the Council alongside its historical collection of Wisconsin Judicial Council minutes and archives.

Lawyers for Learners

The Wisconsin State Law Library promotes these legal services to users throughout the state and is a partner of the program. Lawyers for Learners' goal is to help people overcome legal obstacles, empowering them to move forward with their lives and achieve their educational and career goals.

2023 Library Staff

David T. Prosser Jr. State Law Library

Amy Crowder, State Law Librarian
Nate Anderson, Reference & Electronic Services Librarian
Abigail Case, Program Associate
Elspeth Gordon, Library Associate
Carol Hassler, Access Services Librarian
Jaden Henneman, Program Associate
Abby Hoffman, Library Assistant
Angela Humiston, Wisconsin Collections Librarian
Michael Keane, Reference & Instruction Librarian
Chris Schroeder, Library Assistant
Keely Wrolstad, Cataloging and Metadata Librarian
Heidi Yelk, Deputy Law Librarian
Kari Zelinka, Acquisitions & Collection Development Librarian

LTE Staff

Patti Bishop, Library Assistant
Tor Swanson, Library Assistant

Milwaukee County Law Library

Jamie Neuendorf, Branch Librarian
Faymarie Pluskota, Library Associate

LTE Staff

Victor Hoel, Library Associate
Mara Staples, Library Associate
Holly Muskat, Library Associate

Dane County Law Library

Bob Lopez, Branch Librarian
Sara Andrews, Library Associate