

# PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY *of* KING COUNTY

## **Welcome to the 2014 Annual Report of the Public Law Library of King County.**

The Law Library is a vital resource in our community dedicated to providing access to legal information. Statistics tell part of our story. In 2014, 63,000 people visited the library in the King County Courthouse in Seattle. Our patrons come from all walks of life - attorneys, judges, and members of the public.

The library staff in Seattle answered over 15,000 reference questions and many patrons came to meet with attorneys at one of the four legal clinics we host.

The statistics for the library in the Maleng Regional Justice Center in Kent tell an even more impressive story. Nearly 18,000 people visited the Kent library. Slightly more than half, or 9,158 people, requested assistance from the library staff. Of that number, 78% of the questions were from members of the general public in need of legal information or assistance.

Services provided to library users include not only print materials, but also electronic resources such as WestlawNext, LexisNexis, HeinOnline and Family Law SupportCalc. We also provide conference room space (by reservation and drop-in), document delivery, and an “amenities tray” for those reserving conference rooms.

There is a tremendous need for access to legal information for all people of King County. The Law Library continues to search for additional ways to meet the needs of the community within our mission. The Law Library has created the framework for a Legal Help Center in the library and is exploring ways to fund such a Center. We wish to thank the King County Executive, the King County Council, and the Access to Justice community for their continued support.



*Stephen Ellis, President  
Board of Trustees*

# 2014: The Year in Review

## Legal Help Center Planning



Law libraries across the country have become a part of the Access to Justice movement to provide limited legal assistance to those in need. Recent statistics from the King County Superior Court show that in 63% of general civil cases at least one party was not represented by a lawyer. In domestic or family law cases, the percentage climbed to 80%. In 91% of the landlord/tenant or eviction cases, only the landlord was represented by a lawyer. In 50% of family law cases, neither side was represented. This trend is typical throughout the United States, and law librarians have found that these unrepresented litigants frequently come to the law library for help.

As a result, a few law libraries in other states have developed self-help centers to provide their patrons with not only research assistance, but legal assistance as well. The Public Law Library is participating in this movement.

In 2014, we prepared a model grant application outlining the need for a legal help center in our library to provide direct legal assistance for patrons and to coordinate further legal assistance through referrals, clinics, workshops, and innovative online methods for the delivery of legal services. Our initial grant applications were not successful but we are currently exploring other ways to make a legal help center in our library a reality.

## Library Training Classes Offered

Every year, the Library staff offers training classes, both in-house and out-of-house, for a wide variety of groups. In 2014, we presented to more than 20 businesses and organizations —here are just a few:

- Department of Social and Health Services
- Washington Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys
- King County Library System
- Western Pacific Chapter of AALL
- Highline Community College
- UW Private Investigator program
- Pacific Northwest Tax, License, Fraud Association
- Edmonds Community College



## Collection Notes

2014 brought the arrival of **WestlawNext** - the newest version of the Westlaw subscription database. It includes full-text access to all State appellate-level decisions, cases from all Federal district and circuit courts, all cases from the US Supreme Court, and the legislative and administrative codes from all fifty states, as well as a broad range of secondary sources, such as *Washington Practice*.

**Casemaker Libra** was another new offering in 2014. This "slice" of the content from the Washington State Bar Association's Casemaker Libra online service provides full-text, searchable access to the popular deskbooks published by WSBA and a selection of CLE coursebooks. The deskbook list includes the *Washington Family Law Deskbook*, the *Washington Real Property Deskbook* and more!

## Services Scope and Prices Revised

To help offset rising costs and to tailor services to better match what our patrons need, we revisited all of the fee-based services we provide and in some cases made adjustments to pricing and scope. In addition, we added new services such as the sale of office supplies like writing pads, envelopes and stamps and the option to purchase an "amenities" tray when patrons reserve one of our conference rooms. The new tray includes a range of meeting supplies, bottled water and portable snacks.

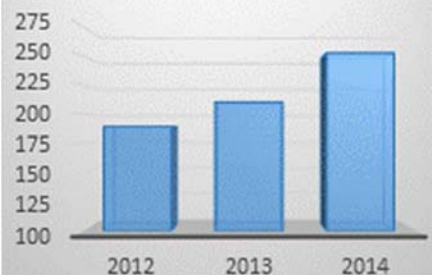


Amenities Tray for Room Reservations

## Virtual Reference Service Grows

The Library strives to reach out to patrons and to offer our services in ways that they're most comfortable with - as evidenced by the steady increase in the number of questions that we field through QuestionPoint, our virtual reference service. Between 2012 and 2014, we've seen steady growth of almost 23%. One such user commented: "Thank you for providing this service and for making programs available for the public use. Your support makes access to justice more real and less a slogan."

QuestionPoint Queries 2012-2014



## 2014 Financial Report

### Income

Filing Fees	\$ 862,072
Fee-Based Services	\$ 77,565
Other Income	\$ 356,868
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,296,505</b>

### Expenditures – Seattle

Books & Periodicals	\$ 458,394
Non-Book: Operating	\$ 56,401
Non-Book: Payroll & Benefits	\$ 618,892
Equipment/Furnishings	\$ 1,692
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,135,379</b>

### Expenditures – MRJC

Books & Periodicals	\$ 53,686
Non-Book: Operating	\$ 20,947
Non-Book: Payroll & Benefits	\$ 99,005
Equipment/Furnishings	\$ 111
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 173,749</b>

### 2014 Board of Trustees

Stephen Ellis, Esq., President

The Honorable Andrea Darvas, Vice-President

The Honorable Carol Schapira

James L. Brewer, Esq. (Designee of County  
Council Chair Larry Gossett)

Patrick McIntyre, Esq. (January - April)

Joseph E. Bringman, Esq. (July - December)

### Public Law Library of King County

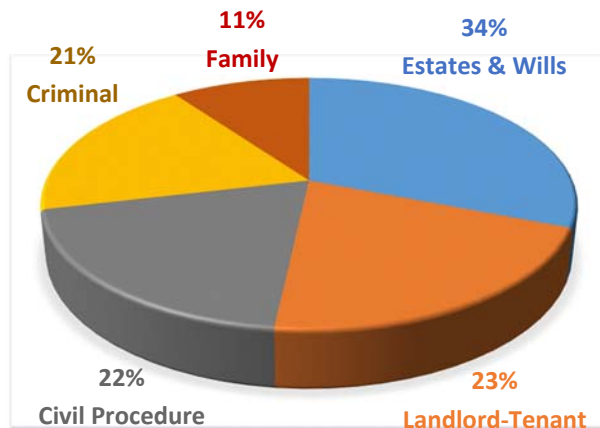
516 3rd Avenue, Suite W621

Seattle, WA 98104

206.477.1305

[www.kcll.org](http://www.kcll.org)

## Top 5 Website Searches at [www.kcll.org](http://www.kcll.org)



Patrons submitted over 4,200 searches to our web site in 2014. The chart above outlines the top five subjects people came to our web site to research. Questions related to probate, wills and other estate planning matters were number one at 34%. Questions about eviction, renting and tenants' rights ranked second at 23%, roughly the same percentage as in 2013.

The general topic of civil procedure appears for the first time in 2014 as a top five category at 22% while questions related to family law remained in the top five but declined overall to 17%. We look to website search data for ideas for new content, such as research guides and videos.