

Strategic Plan: Goals and Objectives

Mission

Advancing access to justice through access to legal information.

Vision

Maryland Court Law Libraries serve the needs of Maryland's citizen's and government by building and preserving collections of legal information resources, promoting access to these collections, and creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information.

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.

As part of our action steps to meet this goal, we will:

- Promote court law libraries as the resource for legal information for all.
- Coordinate with the Court Operations Committee's Courthouse Equity Subcommittee to ensure public access to all libraries maintained by Circuit Courts.
- Coordinate with the Court Access and Community Relations Committee Self-Represented Litigant Committee to provide input on court library resources and services.
- Continue collaboration, assistance and sharing of information through quarterly meetings with the Access to Justice Department and the leadership of the Courts Self-Help Center.
- Support the partnership between the People's Law Library and the Department of Family Administration in presenting "Family Law for the People" sessions.
- Support translation of People's Law Library of Maryland pages.
- Expand self-help programs and resources.

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, we have developed these action steps:

- Provide access to resources for the non-attorney and to assist the self-represented litigant.
- Retain a sufficient collection of print-based legal information to meet the needs of those with limited computer skills who access the courts.
- Explore emerging technologies, such as e-books, online communication methods, discovery tools and expanded databases.

3. Communicate effectively with stakeholders

The Maryland Judiciary communicates effectively to inform and educate the public, the bar, justice partners and staff.

Our action steps include:

- Providing legal research training to Judiciary staff, as needed.
- Providing programs for courthouse staff on legal resources available to the public.
- Providing training to local public libraries on legal research, legal reference, and law library services.
- Continuing Circuit Court libraries' talks for the public and courthouse staff on topics relating to "Everyday Law."
- Supporting the hiring of People's Law Library Fellows in order to further create and update information resources.
- Encouraging Circuit Court libraries to partner with local bar associations, legal service providers and public libraries to provide "lawyer in the library" and similar programs.
- Supporting the State Law Library's digitization efforts so that stakeholders will have easier access to legal information (see <http://mdlaw.ptfs.com/portal/index.html>).
- Keeping current and distributing the CMCLLD Finding Maryland Law brochure to all courts.
- Creating and updating local legal referral information.

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.

In order to achieve this goal, we will:

- Review and revise CMCLLD Standards for Maryland Court Law Libraries, including Core Collections Lists.
- Maintain Mutual Aid Agreements as part of the Judiciary's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).
- Share bibliographic data and records seamlessly among CMCLLD libraries.
- Provide access to computers and programs needed for e-filing.

5. Be accountable

The Maryland Judiciary holds itself to the highest standards of excellence and administers justice with diligence and integrity.

Our action plans to reach this goal include:

- Ratifying and publicly disseminating the minutes of Conference meetings within thirty days of the meeting.
- Exchanging ideas and views on matters relating to the operation, management and leadership of Circuit Court libraries.
- Providing transparency by reporting data on reference inquiries and web hits.

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 legal research and references services to the bench, the bar and the public.
- Ensuring that all Maryland court libraries provide access to information to meet the needs of all user communities.
- Providing a forum for professional development and mentoring for court library staff.
- Providing referrals for services that meet the needs of users.

7. Build partnerships

The Maryland Judiciary works collaboratively with its justice partners and the public to fulfill its mission.

Our action plans include:

- Collaborating with the Maryland Judiciary courts and departments, locally and statewide, to meet similar strategic objectives.
- Supporting the People's Law Library's partnerships with stakeholders in the legal community to author new articles and update older ones.
- Providing informational programs at Maryland Library Association and other regional and local professional library association meetings and conferences.
- Initiating and developing partnerships with Maryland legal service providers, government agencies, community organizations and other non-legal service organizations to provide comprehensive information assistance to all patrons.
- Continuing work with the MSBA Delivery of Legal Services Section to present information on access to legal services and information.

- Participating in the work of the American Association of Law Libraries' Government Law Libraries and Legal Information Services to the Public Special Interest Sections and the Self Represented Litigation Network Law Librarians Working Group.

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.

Our action plans include:

- Providing transparent budgeting processes.
- Leveraging additional assistance through the use of library interns.
- Sharing resources through interlibrary loan and document delivery.

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