

2012 State Law Library Annual Report



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Public Services

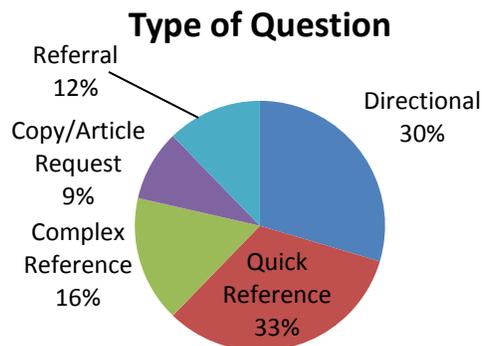
The Public Services Department is the “public face” of the Law Library. Circulation and reference statistics express interactions with library users. Numbers alone do not convey the extent, success, or tone of the interaction, but do help identify trends and respond to needs in the form of collection, website, and research tools.

The public services reference desk is staffed weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. by trained librarians drawn from each of the three library divisions, Public Services, Technical Services and Outreach. Library patron visits are evenly distributed between the morning and afternoon shifts at 49% and 51%, respectively.

Library staff responded to an estimated 6,940 individual information requests. Beginning in 2013, staff will also start to track unassisted library patrons. These are library patrons who utilize the resources of the library without requiring assistance from a librarian. The questions received at the library vary and they are categorized into one of five types. (See graph below.) Inquiries can be directional, such as where to find a book, transcript or brief; or they can be far more complex, such as how to conduct electronic legal research. Common questions also include where to find applicable forms, court rules, statutes and appellate case law.

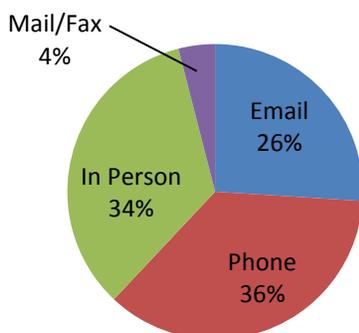
2012 Public Services Statistics

- 6,940 estimated reference questions
 - 1,804 email
 - 2,498 phone
 - 2,638 in person
- 139 reference requests from jail inmates and state hospital patients
- 1,253 items scanned and emailed as a result of a request
- 1,718 items circulated from the collection
- 136 items circulated to interlibrary loan networks



The method by which the Law Library communicates with its patrons is changing with the electronic age. In 2012, email alone comprised 26% of all of our interactions. Email is a convenient, expeditious, and inexpensive way to correspond with our patrons, both members of the public and the Judicial Branch statewide. Library staff continues to provide assistance through in-person interviews and phone reference, which have not abated. Library staff also provides mail services for those incarcerated in Minnesota county jails and those civilly committed.

Method of Access to Library Staff

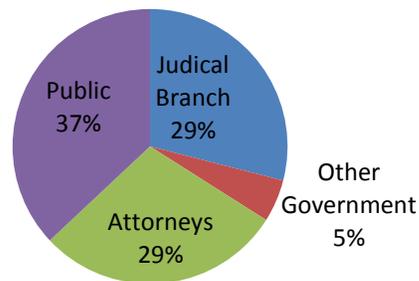


The State Law Library acts cooperatively with other libraries and service providers. When a patron's needs are beyond the scope of services that staff can provide, the library provides referrals to area legal clinics, lawyer referral services, county law libraries, and the [Court Self-Help Center](#). Questions related to legislative history occur periodically and patrons are referred to the [Legislative Reference Library](#) or the [Minnesota Historical Society](#) for source information beyond that available in the State Law Library.

The library is a valuable resource for area legal, library science, and paralegal students from programs at Inver Hills Community College, Rasmussen College, Minnesota School of Business/Globe University, the University of St. Catherine and area law schools. Additionally, the library participates in resource sharing programs via local, regional and national networks.

The library's patron base ranges from self-represented litigants to attorneys and members of the Judicial Branch. Patrons from the courts include administrative court judges, trial court judges (throughout the state), appellate court judges and justices, and other court staff. The educational and experiential range in the patron base requires the staff to be able to communicate from many perspectives and be familiar with a range of materials written with those perspectives in mind.

Library Users



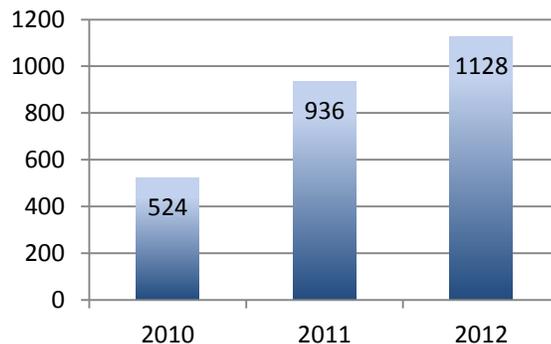
Within the Judicial Branch, most requests for information have historically been from the appellate courts. The library has continued its outreach efforts to the Office of Administrative Hearings, the Minnesota Tax Court, and trial courts statewide, resulting in a 10% increase usage by the Judicial Branch statewide in 2012. Much of increase can be credited to our new book notification and legal periodical current awareness programs. Use of all current awareness services to Minnesota Judicial Branch judges and staff increased substantially during 2012, as shown in the following sections.

Current Awareness Services

Monthly New Articles List

One component of the service is the Recently Received State Law Library Law Review Articles, a monthly e-mail bibliography of journal articles sent to all MJB employees. Judicial patrons may request any of the 30-35 articles on each list and receive a scanned copy of the article by e-mail. The response to this service, which began in January 2010, has been extremely positive. The service provided 524 articles in 2010, 936 articles in 2011, and 1,128 articles in 2012.

Requests for New Articles 2010 - 2012



The library has received many appreciative responses to the service. A representative sampling includes:

“Thanks very much—I really like this service.” ~District Court Judge

“Thank you again for your valuable service of keeping us updated on particular topics.”
~District Court Law Clerk

“Thank you for this wonderful service.” ~State Court Administration staff

Topic and Journal Alerts

In another component of the current awareness services, library staff sends notification alerts to judicial employees concerning new, recently received law review and periodical articles on any specific topic or any journal of the patron's choosing. The articles are selected from all the journals the library receives in print format: approximately 400 titles. In 2012, 989 subject alerts were sent to judicial staff—up from 740 alerts in 2011 and 463 alerts in 2010.

At the beginning of 2012, 56 individuals used this service. Those individuals were sent subject alerts on 48 different topics. By the end of 2012, 71 individuals used this service. Those individuals were sent subject alerts on 57 different topics. Alerts were sent to Minnesota Supreme Court justices, Court of Appeals judges, district court judges, referees, court administrators, law clerks, court psychologists, human resources staff, and other judicial employees. Non-Judicial Branch users include Minnesota Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals judges and administrative law judges. We have also extended the service to a few other individuals, including Minnesota Department of Corrections attorneys and correctional facility librarians.

The Outreach Services department provided other current awareness services as well. An annual bibliography, entitled Recent Articles on Diversity and the Law, was prepared and sent in 2012 to the Minnesota Judicial Branch Diversity Collaboration Group, as well as to other judicial staff interested in the topic of diversity and the law. The bibliography was also posted on the State Law Library website. In addition, 21 subject alerts and other short bibliographies and were sent to the same group of individuals. On a quarterly basis, a packet of current tables of contents from incoming Minnesota legal periodicals is also routed to the judges of the Court of Appeals.

New Books List

The Law Library also notifies the Judicial Branch of new titles added to the collection each month. In 2012 this resulted in 78 requests for new titles from court judges and staff. This was a 34% increase from 2011.

Library Website in 2012

- 270,203 visits to the website (average of 22,517 per month)

- 4,334,650 pages viewed on the Library website (361,221 average per month)
- 149,512 website visitors (126,638 repeat visitors)
- 393,520 catalog hits
- 12:42 average duration per visit (in minutes)
- 16% of visitors were international

The Library website continues to be a valuable asset to the Minnesota legal community and the public, making many resources accessible to users without the constraints of physically being in the library. While most of our interactions involve governmental and legal concerns of Minnesota residents or those conducting business in Minnesota, we also have a constituency seeking federal court and general government information.

Opinions and Briefs

While much of the year was spent behind the scenes updating and cleaning up files in anticipation for the migration to a new website in 2013, the addition of new materials to the site continued. Staff, in a joint collaboration between the Public Services and Technical Services Departments, added 1,304 new appellate court decisions to the [Appellate Court Archive](#). The Appellate Court archive contains opinions from Minnesota Court of Appeals (published and unpublished) and the Minnesota Supreme Court from May 1996 to present. The archive remains one of the most frequently visited resources located on the library webpages.

The Public Services and Technical Services staffs continue the ongoing project of posting online [selected appellate court briefs](#) in accordance with the Rules of Public Access to Records of the Judicial Branch (which specifies no posting of appendices, along with data privacy protections). Additionally, the library posts the searchable “Issues in Briefs” database. This includes statements of the issues presented to the higher court for review, an argument as to why the trial court acted incorrectly (according to the appellant's brief) or correctly (according to the respondent's brief), and a conclusion stating the relief sought. These materials are a valuable resource to researchers working on similar legal issues.

It should be noted that the library receives a number of requests from litigants each year asking to have court opinions and other publically available court-related data removed from the library website. While the library is sympathetic to individuals wishing to remove what can be embarrassing or even damaging information from the Internet, the library expends considerable effort in educating patrons on the importance of transparency in the courts and that the distribution of court records online facilitates this objective. All records are published in accordance with the [Rules of Public Access to Records of the Judicial Branch](#).

Other Research Resources

The [“Legal Topics”](#) page remains a popular resource for both staff and patrons. Each legal topic listed provides access to legal materials relevant to the topic. Topics are routinely reviewed and updated, with new subject areas added as needed. Reference staff often recommends these pages when patrons seek introductory information and referrals related to specific legal topics. Topics related to various aspects of family law, criminal expungement, and

credit and debt collection continue to be popular. In 2012, 16 new topics were added, including: Veterans & Active Military, Defamation (Libel and Slander), Election Law (Minnesota), and Whistleblower Laws.

The website also includes a compilation of Minnesota county and municipal [ordinances](#) that are available online. This is a valuable resource for anyone researching local law.

Technical Services

The Technical Services Department of the Minnesota State Law Library is responsible for the ordering, receiving, processing, and cataloging of books and other media, including websites and online documents, for the library's collection. In addition, the department catalogs for seven county law libraries throughout Minnesota. The department also serves as a micropublisher of the Minnesota Appellate Courts Briefs for county and academic law libraries. When new items come in, library staff analyzes them, catalogs them, processes them (adding spine labels, security stickers, and appropriate stamps), and then shelves them in the State Law Library, the Court of Appeals Research Library, and/or the Supreme Court Research Library. The staff also culls outdated materials from the three libraries and physically shifts materials in the Supreme Court Research Library and various areas in the main library to make space for new volumes in popular growth areas of the collection. Some of the materials are retained in an inactive section of the library for historic reference and some are removed permanently from the collection.

Technical Services Statistics

- 6,251 volumes added
- 2,596 new titles added
- 767 items withdrawn
- 1,529 briefs processed
- 468 transcripts processed
- 3,224 Federal Depository Library items added (federal government information provided by the Government Printing Office)
- 4,149 records added to the catalog
- 41,978 catalog records edited or deleted

The State Law Library Collection

The State Law Library has the second largest legal collection in Minnesota. In compliance with our Collection Development Plan, the library collects primary legal materials of the federal government, its territories, and the states; secondary materials on a wide variety of legal subjects; Minnesota law on a comprehensive level; and federal and state government documents, including selected depository items. It also houses many unique items of historical significance to the legal community. Examples include: appellate briefs going back to the start of the State, historical practice materials, and early statutory and regulatory materials. In addition to print resources, the Library subscribes to multiple comprehensive electronic databases, including Westlaw, LexisNexis, Index to Legal Periodicals, several business and

academic periodicals, and online newspapers. These may be used at the library by anyone at no cost.

Use of the State Law Library's print collection has remained steady since last year. In 2012, 1,718 items circulated from the collection. The library added 2,596 new titles to the collection in 2012. This was a 19% decrease from 2011. In addition, 1,253 items were scanned and emailed as a result of a patron request. As a result of interlibrary loan requests, 136 items were circulated to other libraries.

This year the library added a Self Help Collection geared toward the general public. It is located in the Reserve Room and it includes 89 unique books. It also includes samples of appellate briefs and forms for self-represented appellants.

This year the library continues to catalog books received as part of a generous donation from the private library of attorney Douglas Hedin. These books have been added to the main collection and to the rare books collections. The materials being added to our special collections are often first edition copies of famous trials—mostly American, but some from other jurisdictions. There are also books by and about Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, the Constitution, legal philosophy, and biographies of famous lawyers and lawyers-turned-politicians.

Minnesota Index to Legal Periodicals

The [Minnesota Legal Periodical Index](#) (MLPI) is a bibliographic database that has been maintained by the Minnesota State Law Library since 1984. It includes periodicals published by Minnesota law schools, bar association, and commercial publications. The web version of MLPI is powered by [LawMoose](#), and is a collaboration between the Minnesota State Law Library and Pritchard Law Webs. In 2012, the Head of Technical Services indexed 1,481 articles for the MLPI. The indexing process involves designating the journal, volume and issue, pagination, author, and title. In addition, up to three subject headings are assigned to each record to aid researchers in searching for articles by topic.

Appellate Briefs

The State Law Library provides access to appellate briefs in various formats. For appellate decisions that are published in the *Northwestern Reporter*, the library binds the briefs and their appendices to ensure long-term access. In 2012, 121 volumes of briefs were added to the collection. In addition, library staff prepares the briefs for microfiche processing. The microfiche is then purchased by area law libraries that do not have print copies of briefs in their collections. In 2012, 1,335 microfiche sheets were produced. The State Law Library also scans most civil briefs and makes them available on the internet. A total of 1,529 briefs were processed by library staff in 2012.

Preservation

Some older volumes have needed special attention and care to preserve them. If the paper is too brittle, a preservation copy of the material is made. This is done by the University of

Minnesota bookbinder. At the bindery the books are copied onto acid free paper, cut to size, and given a standard library binding. An example of a volume that was in need of preservation was “The Penal Code of the State of Minnesota to take effect January 1, A.D. 1886 with rules of decisions, furnished by the Attorney General, St. Paul, The Pioneer Press Co., 1885.” Two copies of this important endangered work were made for the library and posterity.

Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society Preservation Committee

The Head of Technical Services serves on the Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society Preservation Committee. This committee’s focus is on the important work of preserving the memories, writings, and oral histories of the men and women who shaped the history of the Minnesota Supreme Court, especially in the latter half of the 20th century. The committee works with the Minnesota State Historical Society and the Minnesota Supreme Court to obtain documents, oral histories, and remembrances of justices.

Services to County Law Libraries

County Law Library Program

The Minnesota State Law Library is required by law ([Minn. Stat. Chapter 134A](#)) to advise and assist development of county law libraries throughout the state. The primary tool for providing this assistance is through the County Law Library Program (CLLP). The Program Coordinator makes periodic on-site visits to the libraries and provides recommendations for solving problems or addressing issues at the request of the boards of trustees. The Coordinator also provides training in law library management and helps develop cooperative programs such as the Minnesota Law Libraries Self-Help Network.

Since most of the counties in Minnesota do not have full-time professional law librarians on staff, the Program Coordinator provides centralized services and information to county law libraries in order to assist those who supervise the libraries. Often, local law library managers are full-time law clerks, court administrators, or other county staff who take on law library duties under the umbrella of “other duties as assigned.” As a result, CLLP staff responded to requests for information from multiple county law libraries and boards. Concerns included: staffing issues; library space and collection content issues; filing fees and other budgetary matters; legal vendor questions; and questions regarding the appropriate use of law library funds.

Additionally, CLLP staff distributed Minnesota primary legal sources including *Minnesota Rules* updates and the 2012 session laws. Updates were made to resources used by county law libraries such as the Directory of CLLP Fees, which identifies the fees charged by the various county law libraries; the CLLP Directory; and “Space Requirements for Selected Resources and Recommended Print Purchases for Minnesota County Law Libraries.”

Several bills were introduced in the 2012 legislative session potentially affecting county law libraries and the collection of their operating fees. These fees are the primary source of revenue for these libraries. CLLP monitored and reported these potential changes to member libraries.

While there were no changes to Minnesota Statutes Chapter 134A in 2012, there appears to be a persistent threat to these funds.

Last year CLLP reported that “talks have already started in the 5th and 10th judicial districts to bring programs common in the Metro Area, such as topical legal clinics and volunteer attorney programs, to Greater Minnesota.” We are pleased to announce a new program has been formed in the 5th Judicial District, the Westbrook Legal Self-Help Center. It is a free legal advice clinic with volunteer attorneys on the 2nd and 4th Thursday at the Westbrook Public Library. Mara Wiggins, the Circuit Riding Librarian, assisted in the formation of this center, as well as its semiweekly clinics. The State Law Library hopes to continue this form of outreach in the region and statewide in 2013.

Additionally, the Circuit Riding Librarian continues to address the needs of member libraries in the [Minnesota Law Libraries Self-Help Network](#). Typical duties include: resolving computer connection problems to provide access to online legal services; resolving library billing issues with vendors; responding to inquiries concerning cost overages, credits, tax exempt status, returns, and billing contact info; organizing training sessions for online research; and advising county law libraries about other ways to reduce costs.

Educational Programs

In early May, the CLLP Coordinator working with the Pine County Law Library provided an educational opportunity to 12 public librarians from the East Central Regional Library Systems on the basics of legal research. Some of the questions addressed included:

- Define what is the “unauthorized practice of law”
- What legal questions can or should be answered by a public library?
- What legal questions should be referred to an attorney or legal advisor?
- What kind of research can be done at a county law library?
- What kind of research can be done at the State Law Library?
- What kind of research can be answered via the phone or email?

On October 5, 2012, CLLP staff members Mara Wiggins and Susan K. Larson presented the hour-long program “Can I have Chickens in my Backyard?” at the Minnesota Library Association Annual Meeting. The program, geared to public librarians, aimed to introduce web-based legal research tools and referrals designed to assist for self-represented litigants. Speakers walked participants through various reference scenarios typically asked by self-represented litigants and emphasized resources located on webpages from the [Minnesota State Law Library](#), [the Minnesota Judicial Branch](#), and the Court [Self-Help Center](#).

Resources for County Law Libraries

During 2012, the CLLP staff continued to work with the Minnesota Coalition of County Law Libraries (MCCLL) to exchange information and ideas related to the improvement and administration of county law libraries. In October of 2012, the State Law Library helped plan and hosted the MCCLL Fall Program titled “So What Do I Say to a Pro Se? Help Patrons

Without a Lawyer Find Legal Information.” CLLP staff once again presented “Can I Have Chickens in my Backyard?” The other programs included speakers from LawHelpMN.org, Webjunction, and Volunteer Lawyers Network. The day-long program was attended by managers from metro and greater Minnesota law libraries, public librarians, members of the Minnesota Association of Law Libraries, students from the Master of Library and Information Science program at St. Catherine University, and MSLL staff.

The State Law Library posts valuable information for county law libraries on its website, including the [recommendations](#) set forth by the Statewide Law Library/Self-Help Center Project Advisory Workgroup, to assist county law libraries in developing their offerings of legal materials. Other documents of note include: [Statement of Position: County Law Libraries](#), Office of the State Auditor (October 2008); [County Law Libraries](#) by Rebecca Otto, State Auditor (November 2008 article for *Minnesota Counties*); and the [Position Statement on County Law Library Funds](#).

Cataloging Services

The State Law Library offers cataloging services for county law libraries that want their collections to be available online. In 2012 the Cataloging Librarian added 820 catalog records for 7 counties. In addition, she edited and deleted thousands of catalog records. This was primarily due to county law libraries inventorying their records and making corrections.

Law Library Service to Prisoners Program (LLSP)

The mission of the LLSP Program is to provide law library services to inmates incarcerated in Minnesota. The State Law Library does this by providing access to legal materials, both at the correctional facilities and the Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL). Circuit-riding prison law librarians, based at the State Law Library, conduct monthly visits at eight adult correctional facilities to meet with inmates. Questions that cannot be answered on-site using the prison collections of core legal materials are researched at the State Law Library. Inmates also write or call LLSP for assistance with their legal research. The program also provides law library services to Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC) inmates housed in other facilities, such as county jails, state hospitals, and in other states, as well as to DOC staff.

- 9,345 Minnesota DOC prisoners (as of 1/1/2012)
- 74 prison visits
- 6,796 estimated miles travelled
- 924 inmate interviews
- 2,039 individual inmates assisted
- 33,822 inmate requests processed
- 1,100 hours worked by interns and volunteers

LLSP is funded by an inter-agency agreement between the State Law Library and the Minnesota Department of Corrections. The program began as a pilot project in 1984, with one librarian visiting five correctional facilities and a part-time clerk providing photocopying support.

Today, the staff includes two full-time and one half-time librarians, as well as one part-time clerk.

Overview of 2012

The Department of Corrections strives to make inmate legal research services and materials as consistent and uniform as possible in all Minnesota correctional facilities. Throughout 2012, the staff of LLSP continued working closely with DOC staff to implement this goal. LLSP librarians met collectively with DOC librarians and program administrators during their spring meeting at the Faribault Correctional Facility and, once again, at the Minnesota State Law Library in late fall.

In 2011, LLSP provided 35,086 requested items to 1,904 inmates. In 2012, we provided 33,822 requested items to 2,039 inmates, an increase of 7.1%.

The staff of LLSP also revised and updated its annual publication “Reference Guide: Occupations Impacted by Felony Convictions”, an important resource for inmates, DOC staff, and LLSP librarians. LLSP created another document, “LLSP and Prison Library Staff Responsibilities in Providing Law Library Service to Inmates”, to clarify the duties of each party. The section of the “Offender Handbook” that describes the services of LLSP was also updated.

In order to keep abreast of important information and resources, the LLSP librarians met with the staff of and toured the Minnesota Self-Help Center, a judicial branch office that provides assistance and access to a wealth of online information, including court forms. Program librarians also met with a Court of Appeals staff attorney who provided an overview on the topic of criminal appellate practice in Minnesota courts, and Lori Lofrano, the Child Support Liaison for the Department of Corrections, who provided an overview of child support/paternity issues for DOC inmates.

Statistical Highlights

LLSP compiles many statistics, some of which are shown in the table, graph, and pie chart set forth below. A few observations concerning 2012 correctional facility statistics follow. All percentages reflect changes from 2011 to 2012.

- Stillwater and Faribault received the largest numbers of items delivered to inmates (7,599 and 5,881, respectively).
- Not including Red Wing (which is primarily a juvenile facility), St. Cloud and Willow River/Moose Lake correctional facility inmates account for the largest percentage of increases in requests (51.1% and 13.3%, respectively).
- Stillwater and Faribault had the largest number of individuals assisted (476 and 372, respectively).
- St. Cloud, Faribault, and Willow River/Moose Lake had the largest percentage increases for individuals assisted (38.7%, 8.8%, and 8.8%, respectively).

- Faribault, Stillwater, and Oak Park Heights had the largest number of on-site meetings with inmates (156, 156, and 137, respectively).
- St. Cloud and Rush City saw significant percentage increases in on-site meetings with inmates (11.5% and 17.7%, respectively).

Conclusion

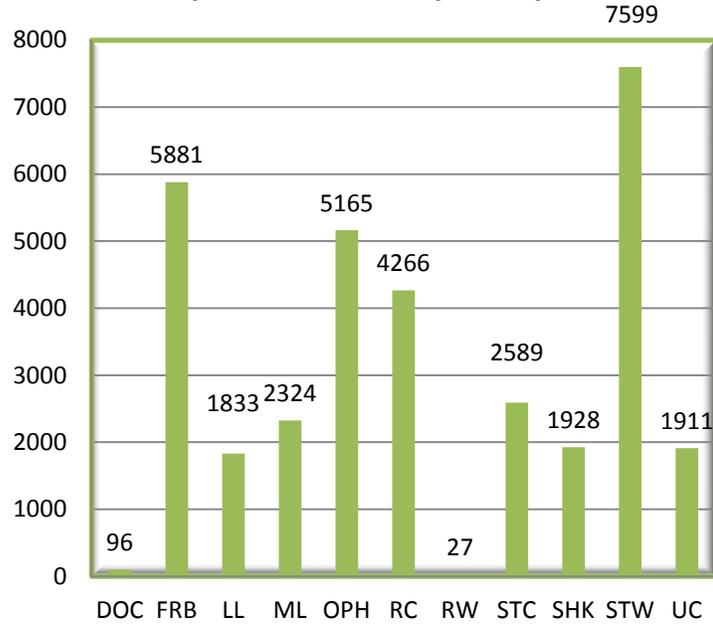
Over the course of the past 29 years, it has been a LLSP priority to provide the best possible service at the least possible cost. We constantly work to keep the program's expenses to a minimum and maximize the resources that are available for the program. We have come to believe that by educating inmates about the resources available to them and providing access to the legal information they request, the work of LLSP diminishes the number of lawsuits filed by Minnesota prisoners.

Ten Year Statistical Comparison 2002-2012

LLSP ACTIVITIES	2002	2007	2012	Percentage 2002 - 2012	Change
Inmate Requests Processed	23,617	25,429	33,822	+43.2%	
On-Site Meetings with Inmates	1,520	1,120	924	-39.2%	
Individuals Assisted	1,562	1,799	2,039	+30.5%	

- “Requests Processed” reflects the total number of items provided to prisoners.
- “On-Site Meetings with Inmates” reflects the total number of inmate reference interviews conducted in person.
- “Individuals Assisted” reflects the total number of inmates to whom information was provided, whether in person, by telephone, or through the mail.

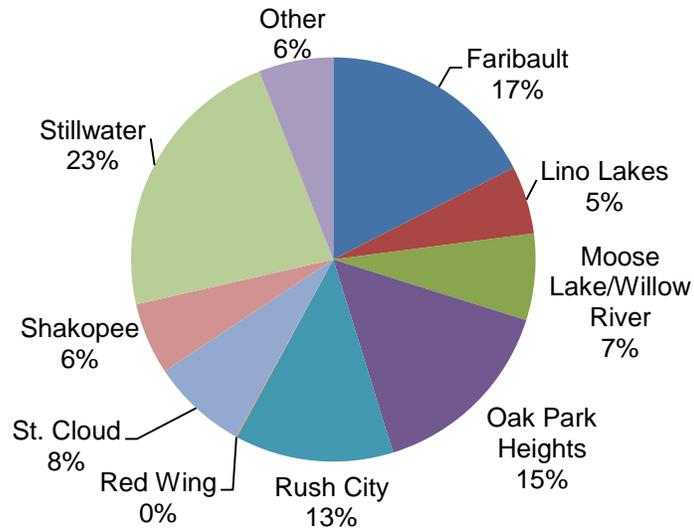
Requests Processed by Facility 2012



Abbreviations for correctional facilities used above:

FRB - Faribault, LL - Lino Lakes, ML - Moose Lake/Willow River, OPH - Oak Park Heights,
 RC - Rush City, RW - Red Wing, STC - St. Cloud, SHK - Shakopee, STW - Stillwater,
 UC/DOC - Minnesota Under Contract and Department of Corrections Staff

Distribution of Total Inmate Requests by Facility 2012



Other Outreach Activities

State Law Library Information Sent to New MJB Employees in 2012

A PowerPoint presentation was sent to new judicial staff throughout the state. The presentation provides an overview of Minnesota State Law Library services to the Judicial Branch. The PowerPoint was sent to 486 new employees.

Book Drive for the Minnesota Security Hospital (MSH)

After becoming aware of the need for library materials at the Minnesota Security Hospital in St. Peter, Outreach Services staff collected donations of library materials for the libraries on the hospital campus. Due to a non-existent library budget, the hospital was in desperate need of general (non-legal) materials to enhance its outdated collection. Over 2,500 items, including books, audiobooks, DVDs, and CDs, as well as two small financial gifts, were donated by MJB employees. This donation enabled MHS to expand its collections in the following libraries: main MSH library, Forensic Nursing Home library, Bartlett Red Room library, and Tomlinson library. The Minnesota State Law Library also donated an updated set of the Minnesota Statutes for use in the main MSH library. Shortly after the donation, the Outreach Services department received a heartfelt thank you note from several hospital residents and staff.

Twitter

The State Law Library has had a Twitter account since 2008 ([@StateLawLibrary](https://twitter.com/StateLawLibrary)). The library currently has 781 followers. They include attorneys, law firms, law schools, legal organizations, and libraries.

Staff Changes and Milestones

- Judy Rehak, Acting State Law Librarian, retired.
- Cathy Knoke, Technical Services Clerk, retired after 26 years of service.
- Melissa Terrian was hired as a Technical Services Clerk.
- Liz Reppe was appointed as the State Law Librarian.
- Dennis Skrade celebrated 25 years of service.
- Anna Cherry and Robin Horowitz celebrated 10 years of service.
- In 2012 the library was assisted by intern Molly McGilp and volunteer Jessie Anderson.