



## **OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT**

### **ORS 9.825 Report OJD SURVEY OF COUNTY LAW LIBRARY SERVICES**

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**OFFICE OF THE STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR**

Submitted: February 2021

## 2021 SURVEY OF COUNTY LAW LIBRARY SERVICES

### Introduction

This executive summary and the survey report are submitted to the Legislative Assembly pursuant to ORS 9.825, which directs the State Court Administrator to survey county law library services every two years and report to the legislature. Oregon law requires that each county provide law library services, and the legislature provides funding for these services through the Oregon Judicial Department budget.

### Survey Findings

In December 2020, the State of Oregon Law Library in the Office of the State Court Administrator solicited information from each of Oregon's 36 counties. Twenty counties responded to the survey. Not all organizations answered every question and some organizations responded multiple times. OJD has clarified some responses but encourages readers to consult the survey results directly. Of those responding:

- 1) All counties use electronic databases and web-based resources to provide access to state and federal statutes, case law, administrative rules, and secondary resources. Availability of these resources varies from organization to organization. Some counties also provide print copies of those resources. *See questions 20-25, 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 41-44.*
- 2) The level of staffing and hours open varies widely. *See questions 8, 13-16.*
  - a) The hours of general operation range from two and a half hours a day to nine hours a day, and from one day a week to six days a week.
  - b) Only six county law libraries and the Multnomah Legal Resource Center (MLRC) have one or more full-time equivalent staff. Thirteen county law libraries and the MLRC have professional staff or both professional and non-professional staff. One county law library listed no staff.
- 3) Fourteen county law libraries tracked patron usage in 2019, and fourteen county law libraries and the MLRC tracked patron usage in 2020. *See questions 10-12.* In those that do:
  - a) The total number of patrons in 2019 ranged from five to 5,431, in 2020, from two to 3,629.
  - b) In 2019 and 2020, the county law libraries and the MLRC that track patrons by group reported a larger proportion of public or self-represented patrons (as opposed to attorney patrons).
- 4) Other results:
  - a) Ten county law libraries and the MLRC are in the county courthouses. Three county law libraries are in county buildings and four are in county public libraries. *See question 5.*
  - b) Eighteen county law libraries and the MLRC offer free computer use and the majority offer free internet, free or low-cost printers and copiers. *See question 19.*
  - c) Four counties reported using county law library funds for mediation/conciliation services, as authorized by Oregon law. *See question 9.*
  - d) Comments received on questions 50 through 54 state the needs for trained law librarian staff, collaboration with the Oregon Judicial Department, and facilitation services for responding to self-represented patrons attempting to understand court processes, documents, and forms. More than one library offers access to justice programs presented by local lawyers. Many comments referred to inadequate funding for statutory compliance.

Links to this summary and the full survey results for 2021, and those of previous years, may be found at: <http://soll.libguides.com/countylawlibrary>.