

Mission Statement and General Policies of the Baltimore County Law Library

The primary obligation of the Baltimore County Circuit Court Law Library is to provide access to legal information and to provide information services to the judges, attorneys, paralegals, government officials, and citizens representing themselves in legal matters who reside or practice in Baltimore County, Maryland. This mission is founded on the central importance of knowledge and information to the practice of law.

Service Provided

- Answer questions about the location of books and materials within the library
- Instruction on the use of the online catalog and computer services
- Explain Basic Citations (volume, book, page)
- Referrals to other resources (pathfinders, Internet sites, Government Agencies, Lawyer Referral Service, or other libraries)
- Self-service copiers
- Access to legal research databases

Service NOT Available

Library Staff may not provide legal services or advice. Providing legal services or advice constitutes practicing law as defined, in part, in the *Maryland Annotated Code*, “Business Occupations and Professions” article §10-601 & §10-101. Ultimately, it is for the Maryland Court of Appeals to determine what constitutes practicing law. To avoid the illegal practice of law or conflicts of interest

- The staff:
 - may not advise any patron as to what the law on a particular issue is;
 - may not advise or interpret what the text of a law or legal opinion means;
 - may not advise which form to use, nor how to adapt or complete the form;
 - may not advise on court procedure, rules, or jurisdiction.
- Library Staff may not perform legal research nor spend an exorbitant amount of time with any one patron. Legal research and legal reference questions include, but are not limited to: answering requests to find or “look up” laws, cases, or forms, or answering requests to explain legal concepts or theories.
- This is a non-circulating library; therefore no materials may leave the library.

Telephone Service

- Library Staff will give preference to patrons in the library over telephone inquiries.
- Library Staff will respond, time permitting, to telephone inquiries regarding the library’s holdings on a particular subject, library business (hours, rules and procedures for use of the library) and referrals to other resources.

Library Usage Rules

To maintain a professional atmosphere the following rules **MUST** be strictly adhered to at all times or library use privileges will be revoked.

- **Food, Drink, Smoking and Cell Phone use are prohibited in the library.**
- Sign In at the front desk and do not congregate or make noise.
- Do not hoard, mutilate or remove library materials from the library.
- Do not lounge in the reading area.
- An adult must accompany all children at all times.