



Orange County Public Law Library

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Annual Report

2025-26



Mission Statement	1
Services	2
Collection	2
Finance	2
Trustees & Staff.....	3
Looking Ahead.....	4

Mission Statement

The Orange County Public Law Library is a state chartered comprehensive public library, the purpose of which is to provide reference materials and research services on state, federal and international statutes, case law and supporting materials to the general public and legal community of Orange County, California.

The library emphasizes the provision of quality levels of traditional service and technological alternatives to meet the present and projected needs of its patrons.

The library is dedicated to maintaining and improving the high standards of its services through its skilled and knowledgeable staff.

Services

In-person usage of the library remained steady at 38,033 and was significantly higher than the average over the last eight years. See Exhibit A. Use of our research services remained high at 6,332 in-person queries, the highest volume in years. Staff also provided service beyond our building, responding to 125 questions submitted by email and 451 queries submitted through the Ask a Law Librarian service (<https://calcountylawlib.libanswers.com/>), an effort of the Council of California County Law Librarians (CCCLL) to provide online legal research assistance state-wide. Numbers for that service declined from last year partly due to staff turnover here and partly due to declining demand. CCCLL is considering ways to better promote the service.

The library's weekly Consumer Debt Workshop, offered in partnership with Community Legal Aid SoCal and Public Law Center, remained popular, with over 360 attendees this year. A series of estate planning workshops were held in partnership with Community Counsel to address a jump in probate proceedings at the Superior Court that are hitting lower income residents of the county particularly hard.

Collection

The grand total of all volumes and volume equivalents held by the library is 389,738, a 0.3% increase in collection size over the previous year. The library added 1,619 bound volumes, while obsolete materials totaling 346 bound volumes were withdrawn. Forty-two items were declared worn, defective, or lost and replaced.

The library spent \$743,392 on materials, a 13% increase over last year, as the library balanced continuing demand for print with increasing demand for online resources. The library subscribed to 14 online databases including Westlaw, LexisNexis, the LexisNexis Digital Library, FastCase, Bloomberg Law, HeinOnline, CEB OnLAW, Wolters-Kluwer VitalLaw, LLMC Digital, Martin Dean's Essential Forms, the National Consumer Law Center, the EBSCO Legal Information Resource Center, Trellis, and xSpouse.

Finance

Operating revenue was \$4,011,489. Expenditures were \$2,852,806. The library received \$90,527 in supplemental funding from the state legislature as part of an ongoing effort to offset revenue shortfalls caused by increases in filing fee waivers. See Exhibit B. The library also received \$250,371 in capital interest income from the state's Local Agency Investment Fund. The library has designated reserve accounts in that fund to ensure long-term financial stability and orderly provision of services. At year-end, those reserves totaled \$6,082,871. These

provide for replacement of equipment, expansion of the existing facility, earthquake self-insurance, and other future capital requirements.

Expenditures were mostly on target, with a few anomalies: payoff of annual leave was high due to unanticipated staff turnover (0104); a malfunctioning public entrance was overhauled to improve security and accessibility (1402); and expenditures on books, periodicals, and equipment were higher than expected as vendors passed on steep increases in, e.g., materials, transportation, and personnel costs (1802, 1809, 2400, 4000). See Exhibit B.

Trustees & Staff

The library is governed by a seven-member board of trustees, which included Hon. Michele Bell, Hon. William Claster, Hon. Robert A. Knox, Sherry Leysen, Esq., Hon. Elizabeth G. Macias, Hon. Glenn R. Salter, and Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento.

Officers were:

2025

Hon. Glenn R. Salter, President
Hon. William Claster, Vice President
Hon. Michele Bell, Secretary

2026

Hon. William Claster, President
Hon. Michele Bell, Vice President
Sherry Leysen, Esq., Secretary

Committees were:

2025

<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Finance</i>
Judge Claster	Judge Bell
Ms. Leysen	Judge Knox
Judge Salter	Judge Macias

2026

<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Finance</i>
Judge Bell	Judge Knox
Judge Claster	Judge Macias
Ms. Leysen	Judge Salter

The library was staffed by five professional librarians and ten paraprofessionals.

Five staff members achieved service milestones this year:

Juan Gomez	10 years
Diane Whitaker	10 years
Scott Enke	15 years
Elizabeth Harmon	20 years
Lu Nguyen	30 years

We thank each of them for their service!

Staff participated in the following professional and cooperative associations:

The American Association of Law Libraries
The Southern California Association of Law Libraries
The Council of California County Law Librarians
The Santiago Library System

Looking Ahead

The library looks forward to the coming year, as we strengthen relationships with other community service providers and grow our services and collection.

PUBLIC SERVICES STATISTICS

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-26
PATRONS	31,339	20,997	17,360	37,863	44,619	39,241	39,474	38,033
PHONE CALLS	649	482	1,739	837	833	787	1,010	948
REFERENCE								
Ref. Desk	6,214	3,770	2,434	3,575	4,802	4,793	6,275	6,332
Email	150	90	463	189	217	175	195	125
Chat Live	1,472	703	455	733	635	308	341	175
Chat Email	0	0	606	1,632	1,821	1,036	742	276
CIRCULATION								
Checked Out	2158	1505	1354	1325	1795	1625	1449	2444
Overdue Notices	10	0	0	0	0	15	11	105
Fine Notices	23	12	0	0	0	3	1	21
New Accounts	49	32	56	73	73	76	86	52
Closed Accounts	12	8	3	8	9	9	11	11
CONFERENCE ROOMS								
Room A	33	8	1	22	42	21	38	38
Room B	15	6	0	3	23	27	2	2

Revenue & Expenditures
FY 2025-26

Revenue	Actual	Budget	% of BUD
6610 Interest (on Cash)	\$ 332,921.43	\$ 230,000.00	145%
7430 Court Filing Fees	3,657,952.21	3,148,425.59	116%
7570 Library Services	3,484.89	3,000.00	116%
7590 Fee-based Services	1,258.00	2,000.00	63%
7670 Miscellaneous Revenue	15,872.23	10,500.00	151%
TOTAL	\$ 4,011,488.76	\$ 3,393,925.59	118%

State Supplemental Funding	Actual	Budget	% of BUD
6970 State, Other	\$ 90,527.41	n/a	n/a

Operating Expenditures	Actual	Budget	% of BUD
0101 Regular Salaries	\$ 1,239,815.32	\$ 1,363,468.16	91%
0104 Annual Leave Payoff	48,650.91	26,672.14	182%
0200 Retirement	138,561.22	149,341.72	93%
0204 Executive Deferred Compensation	8,466.25	8,872.55	95%
0206 Retiree Medical	11,148.22	12,511.26	89%
0207 Health Reimbursement Accounts	22,360.72	24,585.00	91%
0301 Unemployment Insurance	1,568.00	1,680.00	93%
0304 Management Employee Insurance	4,419.40	5,035.96	88%
0306 Health Insurance	180,627.54	187,196.82	96%
0319 Unit Employee Insurance	6,652.08	7,488.00	89%
0352 Worker's Compensation—General	3,780.00	4,000.00	95%
0401 Medicare	22,340.32	24,820.23	90%
0403 Optional Benefit Plan	11,500.00	11,500.00	100%
0450 Accrued Salary & Benefits	78,964.28	n/a	n/a
0741 Telephone—Other	12,577.44	15,185.48	83%
1100 Insurance	33,365.00	31,659.35	105%
1300 Maintenance—Equipment	32,289.35	44,970.45	72%
1400 Maintenance—Building	3,251.04	5,006.61	65%
1402 Minor Alterations & Improvements	8,085.57	3,500.00	231%
1600 Memberships	3,574.00	5,125.00	70%
1700 Miscellaneous Expense	289.00	6,550.00	4%
1800 Office Expense	18,556.02	24,934.34	74%
1801 County Publishing	39.32	3,000.00	1%
1802 Periodicals	279,535.05	242,262.58	115%
1803 Postage	694.44	1,300.00	53%
1809 Minor Equipment Controlled	11,579.11	11,095.34	104%
1900 Professional & Specialty Services	37,048.91	38,900.00	95%
1901 Databases	363,966.63	373,683.16	97%
1909 Contracts	49,462.40	49,970.42	99%
1911 CWCAP	17,840.00	16,362.00	109%
1940 County IT Charges	6,203.81	6,309.18	98%
2110 Short-Term Lease—Equipment	9,493.61	10,249.42	93%
2400 Books	99,890.36	78,357.86	127%
2600 Transportation & Travel—General	21,323.17	19,500.00	109%
2601 Private Auto Mileage	-	500.00	0%
2602 Garage Expense	30.00	200.00	0%
2700 Transportation & Travel—Meetings	4,619.12	17,500.00	26%
TOTAL	\$ 2,792,567.61	\$ 2,833,293.04	99%

Capital Income	Actual	Budget	% of BUD
6610 Interest (on Reserve)	\$ 250,370.94	\$ 226,000.00	111%

Capital Expenditures	Actual	Budget	% of BUD
4000 Equipment	\$ 24,437.82	\$ 19,513.27	125%