

Government Law Libraries in Newfoundland and Labrador

The needs of the legal community in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador are met by both the Department of Justice and the Law Society. The Department of Justice operates its own main Law Library in addition to Judicial and Crown Attorney collections across the Province. The Law Society Library maintains its own main Law Library. There are also two libraries that are co-jointly funded by the Department of Justice and the Law Society of Newfoundland.

The Department of Justice

The Department of Justice administers and maintains a number of libraries and collections across the Province. These Libraries fall under the umbrella of the Legal Information Management Division. The Law Librarian is responsible for the administration of these Libraries/collections and reports to the Director of the Legal Information Management Division. Funding is provided through the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The client base of the Department of Justice Library systems consists of 37 Supreme Court Justices (Appeal, Trial & Unified Family); 22 Provincial Court Judges; 42 Crown Attorneys and 35 Civil Solicitors.

The Libraries/collections administered by the Legal Information Management Division consist of:

Department of Justice Law Library:

The main Library for the Department is located in St. John's at the Confederation Building, the seat of Government for the Province. The Law Library is mandated to serve the clients of the Department of Justice including Civil Solicitors, Crown Attorneys and Judiciary. The Library also provides access to other Government Departments, members of the Private Bar and to the public as well.

The Law Library provides a full range of services to its clients including research, reference, document delivery and training. The main focus of the Library is to provide services in both print and electronic materials. A range of electronic products are available to its clients including, but not limited to, Westlaw Canada, Maritime Law Book, and various in-house databases. Quicklaw, eCarswell International, Lancaster House First Resort and Criminal Spectrum are only accessible by Library staff for the purposes of conducting research for their clients. The online Library catalogue and Newfoundland Judgments Database are available through an intranet but are not accessible to the public. This intranet is available to all Courts/offices located throughout the Province.

The Law Library is staffed by one full-time Law Librarian and one Library Technician. The Director of the Legal Information Management Division, under whom the Library falls, is situated in the Library and is available for assistance as required.

Judicial Libraries/Collections:

Each Court in the Province houses its own small library/collection of materials. These collections contain the bare minimum of materials required by the Judiciary. In lieu of on-site materials, the Judiciary are requested to contact the main Law Library for additional materials and services. These libraries/collections are not staffed. Collection development is the responsibility of the Department of Justice Law Librarian who coordinates all activity, in conjunction with the users, from the main Justice Law Library.

Crown Attorney Collections:

Each Crown Office in the Province houses its own small collection of materials. Materials in these collections are quite limited and in lieu of on-site materials the Crown's are requested to contact the main Law Library for additional materials and services. As with the Courts, these libraries/collections are not staffed and collection development is the responsibility of the Department of Justice Law Librarian who coordinates all activity from the main Justice Law Library. All Crown Attorneys in the Province have access to Westlaw Canada, QuickLaw, and Criminal Spectrum.

Co-Joint Libraries:

There are two Law Libraries in the Province that are jointly funded by the Law Society (through a grant from the Law Foundation of Newfoundland) and the Department of Justice. There are no Librarians employed in these Libraries to provide research or reference work. Collection development is coordinated by the Department of Justice Law Librarian in conjunction with the users.

West Coast Law Library:

The West Coast Law Library is located in the city of Corner Brook and serves the Judiciary, Crown Attorneys and the Private Bar in the western region of the Province. The collection consists of printed materials with limited access to electronic sources.

Gander Law Library:

The Gander Law Library is located in the town of Gander and serves the Judiciary, Crown Attorneys and Private Bar of the central region of the Province. The collection is printed materials only with no access to electronic sources.

Contact Information

General email: lawlibrary@gov.nl.ca

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Law Society of Newfoundland Library

The Law Society of Newfoundland Library is located in the centre of the legal district, next door to the Supreme Courts and across the street from the Provincial Courts. There is 1.2 full time Librarian=s positions which, for the last 20 years, have been filled by a job share arrangement. Additionally, there are 1 full time technician and 1 part time clerk positions.

The Library has a comprehensive collection of Canadian texts and journals. This is supplemented by leading British texts - reference (e.g. Halsbury's) and reporters such as All E.R=s and The Law Reports. 99% of the reporters were cancelled in 2001 because of increased use of online resources but the library has retained the retrospective collections.

Reference service is provided to all members of the bar, judiciary and public throughout the province. The Library is accessible 24 hours a day for members of the bar and judiciary. Reference service is provided Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Textbooks may be borrowed for 1 week (in St. John's) or 2 weeks (outside greater St. John=s area). Reserve texts may be borrowed overnight. All other materials are for reference use only.

The Librarians provide research assistance, online searches and training for electronic resources. WestlawCanada, HeinOnline, DivorceMate are provided at no charge to all Law Society members. There is Librarian only access to LexisNexis Quicklaw , LexisNexis International, and O'Briens Forms which are available to members free of charge.

The public may use the Library during regular business hours. The librarians will provide reference assistance but the public are not permitted to borrow library materials. The Law Society participates in the National Resource Sharing agreement and the Atlantic Law Libraries Regional Reference Desk.

The bulk of the Library funding is provided by the Law Society but the Law Foundation of Newfoundland provides approximately \$60,000.00 annually for library materials.