



Government Law Librarian

Title:

Government Law Librarian

Qualifications needed to perform job:

Government law librarians generally hold master of library sciences degrees from **ALA-accredited library schools**. Some may also hold government and public administration degrees or law degrees, but these are not usually required.

Duties, responsibilities and activities the person does or may do in this job position:

The one constant of state, court, county and bar association libraries is that each day will be different. The ability to juggle a variety of research topics is essential for librarians serving not only the whole of a legal community but the public as well. On any given day, a librarian might assist a judge, a public defender, and a prosecutor working on the same case. A government law librarian might also help a member of the public perform legal research to write her own will, file for his own divorce, or initiate a small claims court proceeding. Meeting the diverse needs of so many different people is both challenging and satisfying.

Salary Range:

According to the American Association of Law Libraries' *Biennial Salary Survey 2009*, the salary range for a variety of government librarian positions follow:

- Director - \$53,800 - \$155,178 (mean: \$92,080)
- Associate Director – \$ 47,226 - \$ 117,881 (mean: \$81,456)
- Supervisory Librarian - \$66,827 – \$109,516 (mean: \$ 83,799)
- Technical Services Librarian - \$39,564 - \$ 97,202 (mean: \$ 60,987)
- Reference/Research Librarian - \$ 40,591- \$ 89,200 (mean: \$ 64,358)

Where you might find this job position:

Government libraries are found in all shapes and sizes -- serving the legal information needs of the judiciary, the practicing bar, and the general public; government law libraries offer employment options worldwide. They are found in every setting imaginable, from the large urban federal court library to the relatively isolated county law library. Locations can be as diverse as the County of Carleton Law Associations in Ontario or the Johannesburg Law Library in South Africa. Some are operated by bar associations and exist as membership subscription libraries. Others are government

entities supporting those who perform judicial or administrative functions. Still others are state or county libraries open to the public and serving both lawyers and non-lawyer constituencies.

State, court, county and bar association law libraries range in size from the very large research and international collections of the Los Angeles County Law Library and Boston's Social Law Library to the medium-sized collections at the Grand Rapids (Michigan) Bar Association and the Clark County (Nevada) Law Library to the basic working collections of found in the rural county courthouses of Pennsylvania and Ohio. Government libraries may be one-person operations in which the librarian does a little bit of everything, including collection development, budgeting, cataloging, reference, and database searching. Or they may have large professional staffs, giving each person the chance to specialize and master the use of the sophisticated library and information technologies that are found in most government law libraries today.