

Government Law Libraries in Nova Scotia

Government Law Libraries in Nova Scotia include the Department of Justice Law Library, the main Judges' Library in Halifax and 12 satellite libraries located in regional courthouses across the province that house 29 district collections.

Department of Justice Law Library

The Department of Justice (DoJ) Law Library is located at 5151 Terminal Road in Halifax. The major client of the DoJ Law Library is the Legal Services Division with 158 lawyers, paralegals and administrative staff.

The Legal Services Division provides legal services to the Crown and promotes the fair and lawful administration of public affairs in accordance with the law. Programs and services include Solicitor Services providing legal advice and representation to all government departments and agencies; Civil Litigation responsible for the conduct of all civil proceedings by or against the Crown before courts and tribunals; and the Registry of Regulations which drafts, files and indexes Nova Scotia Regulations. The DoJ Library collections and services reflect these client groups.

The DoJ Library's collection consists of approximately 20,000 volumes including legal textbooks, looseleaf services, journals, law reports and statutes. In addition, the Library provides access to Westlaw Canada, Lexis Nexis Quicklaw, and other online products specific to individual practice groups. The Library's catalogue is Sirsi Unicorn and is available on computers in the Library and on individual desktops throughout Division.

Services provided by the DoJ Library include legal research and reference, collection evaluation and development, current awareness updates, training on the use of library resources and online services, and the provision of interlibrary loans. The Library is also responsible for budgeting, purchasing, processing payments, and cataloguing materials for both the DoJ Library and the Judges' Library. The Library provides limited reference and interlibrary loan services to other libraries

The Library is not open to the public, although information requests from the public are often routed to the Library. Every effort is made to provide a suitable answer or to direct the caller to appropriate resources.

The Library is funded by the Nova Scotia Dept. of Justice and is maintained by the Librarian, Therese Lamie (lamietm@gov.ns.ca) and one full time assistant.

Judges' Library

The main Judges' Library, which is under the general direction of the DoJ Library, is located at the Halifax Law Courts Building which houses the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, the Bankruptcy Court, and the Probate Court. In addition, the Judges' Library includes a system of 29 basic collections existing at 12 separate court locations across the province. These satellite locations are not staffed.

The Judges' Library serves the judiciary (approximately 95 judges) from all courts in Nova Scotia (Court of Appeal, Supreme Court, Supreme Court Family Division, Provincial Court and Family Court), as well as their judicial assistants and the five legal researchers who work exclusively for the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. Service is also provided to other court officials such as prothonotaries and administrators.

The Judges Library collection consists primarily of legal texts, looseleaf services, law reports, and statutes specific to the needs of the judiciary. A number of online databases are available to the judiciary through an internal platform and well as via paid subscriptions. These include: Westlaw Canada, Lexis Nexis Quicklaw, Criminal Spectrum, Canadian Family Law Guide (CCH). The Librarian also has access to Lexis Nexis Quicklaw International. The Judges' Library online catalogue, Sirsi Unicorn, is available to the Nova Scotia Judiciary via an intranet.

Services provided by the Judges' Library include the provision of legal research and reference, collection evaluation and development, current awareness updates, training on the use of library resources and online services, the provision of interlibrary loans, and the budget planning for the Judges' Library collections.

The Judges' Library is not open to the public, however, it does provide limited reference and ILL service to other libraries.

The Judges' Library has a formal agreement with the Federal Court of Canada, which provides a number of texts, in return for allowing Federal Judges access to the main library when Federal Court is in session.

The Library is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Justice and is maintained by the Judges' Librarian, Donata Krakowski-White (krakowdr@gov.ns.ca), with some administrative and clerical support provided by the DOJ library.

Both the Department of Justice Law Library and the Judges' Library rely on the availability of the local collections of the Sir James Dunn Library of the Dalhousie Schulich School of Law, the Nova Scotia Barristers Society Library and private law firms in the area, although no formal agreement exists there.