

DALLAS COUNTY LAW LIBRARY FAQS/FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the Library's hours and are you open to the public?

The Library is open to the public Monday through Friday 8 am to 4:30pm.

2. Where are you located?

The Library is located on the 7th floor of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building in Suite 760. The address is 600 Commerce St., Dallas Texas 75202.

3. What is your telephone number and can I call with questions?

Yes, our telephone number is 214-653-7481. Library staff is available to answer your call during regular library hours depending on the patron volume we are experiencing in the library. Please note, Law Library staff will respond to questions from patrons appearing at the Law Library in person first and telephone inquiries second. Library Staff may provide short, factual answers to reference questions that do not require extensive research.

4. Where can I park?

There is on-street parking at meters, surface lots, and the County parking garage located under the Kennedy Memorial. There is an entrance to the County parking garage on Commerce St. immediately after crossing Houston St. on your left across from the George Allen Building.

5. Do you have forms for divorce?

Yes, the Law Library sells form packets for divorce ranging from \$13 - \$20 as well as forms for various other legal matters. Dallas County charges 25 cents a page for forms, copies, and printouts. The divorce forms and other frequently used simple forms are available for free download at: www.texaslawhelp.org.

6. Where do I file my petition, answer, and other legal forms?

All forms including original petitions and answers are usually filed in the County or District Clerks' office on the first floor of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building. Criminal matters are filed in the Frank Crowley Courthouse.

7. *Can I borrow books from the Library?*

No, our collection contains Reserve or Reference materials not available for circulation.

8. *What type of legal material does the Library have?*

The Library has practice guides, topical titles and formbooks for Texas and Federal practice.

9. *Does the Library have any court records?*

No, all Dallas County records are held either by the District or County Clerk. Some are available through the County website or in the Records department located on the basement level of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building. Some older records may be held in off-site storage facilities.

10. *Can Library staff answer legal questions, provide legal advice/opinion, or perform legal research on your behalf?*

Please remember that librarians are not attorneys and cannot give legal advice. The laws against unauthorized practice of law in Texas prohibit Library staff from telling you what to do in your case, choosing the forms you need, or otherwise performing the duties of an attorney. Law Library staff may not interpret legal materials for patrons, advise them as to how the law might apply to their particular situation, or draft legal forms or documents of any kind. The Dallas Bar has a list of legal services organizations at www.dallasbar.com. Law Library staff may assist patrons in finding the materials they need to do their own legal research. Library Staff may show you the reference materials, forms, and databases available for public use.

11. *Does the Library have copy machines?*

Yes, the Library has two public self-service copy machines available for usage at a rate of 25 cents per page.

12. *Where do I file my divorce and how much does it cost?*

If you are a Dallas County resident, you may file in the District Clerk's office on the first floor of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building. Fees are listed on the District Clerk's web page or you can call the Clerk's office at 214-653-7787.

13. *Is there an ATM in the building?*

Yes, there are two ATMs in the building. One is located on the first floor outside the Central Jury Room and an additional ATM is located on the Basement floor in the cafeteria.

14. What items are prohibited from entering the courthouse?

There is a list of prohibited items on the Homeland Security page of the County website.

15. Do you have a fax machine?

Yes, the library has a fax machine available for use. To send a fax, Dallas County charges a dollar a page locally and two dollars a page long-distance. Incoming faxes are free of charge. However, incoming faxes should be limited to a maximum of 30 pages per day. Charges may apply to incoming faxes greater than 30 pages per day. The Law Library's fax number is 214-653-6103

16. What court am I in and what is their phone number?

The court number is listed on the first page upper right corner of any document you have filed, it may also be found on any of the directories found mounted to the wall on each floor of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building. The courts' phone numbers and locations are listed on the County's website or by calling the County's information number at 214-653-7011.

17. Can I look up my case/cause information?

Yes, on the home page of the Dallas County website by clicking on the quick link, "Online Record Search".

18. Where can I get a certified copy or view an old record that's not on the website?

For information not available using the Dallas County online record search or for a certified copy, you may contact the District Clerk's Records Department in the basement of the George L. Allen, Sr. Courts Building. Their telephone number is 214-653-6853.

19. What conduct is prohibited in the Library?

Please see the library's webpage concerning the Library Rules of Conduct.

20. Do you take credit/debit cards?

Yes, the Law Library accepts Discover, Mastercard, and Visa. There is a \$3.50 convenience fee added to the total charge.

21. Do I have to go through security to enter the courthouse?

Yes, everyone is required to pass through security upon entering the building.

22. *Is there a cafeteria in the building?*

Yes, on the basement level of the courthouse.

23. *Can library employees help me fill out legal forms?*

No, we are not attorneys and may not assist in drafting legal documents. If you need an attorney to draft your legal documents, please contact a legal services organization at www.dallasbar.com or visit the Legal Assistance and Services in Dallas page on the Law Library's website.

24. *Are there legal forms available in Spanish?*

Yes, some form sets are available in Spanish at www.texaslawhelp.org

25. *Are there any public telephones in the Library?*

No, however, public telephones are available on the first floor near the Central Jury Room. The Library has two telephones available for use by members of the State Bar located in the Attorney Work Area.

26. *I'm out of state are there any Texas legal forms on the internet?*

Yes, some form sets are available for download at www.texaslawhelp.org.

27. *I'm out of state can you fax me what I need?*

In order to send you the information you need, please contact your local County Law Library or Public Library. They may request forms from us on an interlibrary loan. Patrons must identify the exact name of the form needed in order for the Law Library to process the interlibrary loan. Certain interlibrary loan fees may apply.

28. *Does the library have access to Westlaw or Lexis?*

Yes, we have a Westlaw subscription available for use by the public on Library PCs; however, it is an on-site resource only. We do not offer remote access to our Westlaw subscription. The Library staff does have access to a Lexis Advance subscription as well. If a Lexis search is required, please inquire at the Reference Desk.

29. *Do you have legal materials for other states?*

The library has a Westlaw subscription available for use to search by State. More information can be found on the internet at either the States' websites or sites such as www.findlaw.com or www.cornell.edu.

30. How do I file in justice court?

You would file at one of the [Dallas County Justice of the Peace Courts](#). The monetary value you'll be suing the other party for must amount to less than ten thousand dollars.

31. Does the Law Library have color printing services or scanners available for public use?

Unfortunately, color printing is not currently available. A scanner is available for use by members of the State Bar in the Attorney Work Area.

32. Why do I have to pay for copies misprinted as a result of user operator error?

Instructions on how to correctly utilize the copy machines are posted at each copying station. Library Staff cannot issue refunds on behalf of the copy machines as a result of user operator error. The copy machines located in the library are patron self-service only.

33. Why can't you answer my legal question or perform legal research on my behalf?

By law, no member of the Law Library staff may give legal advice. Accordingly, staff may not interpret legal materials for patrons, advise them as to how the law might apply to their particular situation, or assist them in preparing and filling out legal forms of any kind. The Staff is able to provide assistance by directing patrons to topical print materials, sections, and subject headings that might be helpful in answering a particular legal question.