

Minnesota State Law Library
COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Revised 2026

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I. Introduction

The Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL) is a part of the state supreme court but is also a public law library which serves all Minnesota citizens. The library's first priority is to meet the legal research needs of the Minnesota appellate courts, and it serves as the archive and principal legal research and information center for the Minnesota Judicial Branch. In addition, the library considers the research needs of practicing attorneys, state employees and members of the public.

The purpose of this collection development policy is to provide guidelines for acquisition and withdrawal decisions and for managing the collection while conforming to the library's mission statement.

Vision Statement

Access to Justice through Access to Information

Mission Statement

The Minnesota State Law Library promotes access to justice by providing useful, timely, and responsive library services and legal information to the judiciary, legal community and the public.

II. Overview of the Collection

The library maintains a comprehensive collection of American law in print (P), microfiche (M) and online (O) formats for legal information and research. Materials marked (O) are part of a paid subscription or are hosted by the court or library. The collection emphasizes materials on the practice and interpretation of the law. The primary focus of the collection is on Minnesota state law. Format decisions are based on the needs of patrons, usability, cost, uniqueness of resource and permanency of access.

In general, the library collects the following:

- Minnesota law on a comprehensive level, including legal materials concerning foundation, growth and interpretation of Minnesota's government and law; the justices and judges of Minnesota's courts; and Minnesota lawyers and bar associations. These materials are retained permanently.
- Primary legal materials of the federal government and selected federal government documents through the depository program.
- Secondary materials on a wide variety of legal subjects. Emphasis is on currency and, at a minimum, providing introductory coverage in all major areas of law, with more robust coverage of topics covered in Minnesota state courts, including materials in non-English languages where available.

III. Materials Collected¹

A. Minnesota State Materials

1. Statutory Law & Legislative History

- a) All session laws and statutory compilations (P & O)
- b) All superseded volumes of the Minnesota Statutes Annotated (MSA) (P)
- c) Local ordinances for Minneapolis and St. Paul (P)
- d) Materials related to the Minnesota Constitution (P & O)
- e) All years of the Minnesota Journal of the House of Representatives and Journal of the Senate (P & O)
- f) Minnesota Legislative Manual (Blue Book) (P)

2. Case Law, Court Records & Judicial Branch publications

- a) All precedential appellate court opinions (P)
- b) Electronic archive of the [opinions](#) for the Minnesota appellate courts since 1996 (O)
- c) Public access to recent district court and appellate court documents is provided electronically through MCRO, MPA, and MACS terminals in the library. (O)
- d) Court Rules (P & O)
- e) Minnesota Judicial Branch Annual Reports (P & O)
- f) Reports from agencies under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Supreme Court. (P & O)

3. Administrative Law

- a) Minnesota administrative decisions relating to Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals and Tax Court (P)
- b) All Minnesota Rules and Minnesota Code of Agency Regulations materials (P)

¹ P, O or M after a statement in the following document represent collected format: Print, Online or Microfiche

- c) All materials cited as “incorporated by reference” in the Minnesota Rules and Minnesota Statutes. (P)
 - d) Selected Minnesota Attorney General opinions (P & O)
 - e) All issues of the Minnesota State Register (P)
4. **Treatises/Form Books/Practice Books**
- a) All Minnesota treatises (P & O)
 - b) Materials of various Minnesota continuing legal education publishers (P & O)
 - c) Minnesota form books (P & O)
5. **Periodicals**
- a) Pioneer Press and Star Tribune retained for 1 month (P)
 - b) Local legal newspapers (P & O)
 - c) Minnesota law reviews, bar journals, etc. (P & O)

B. Federal Materials

MSLL is a partial U.S. Government Depository Library and collects Federal Depository Library Program items relating to the Judicial Branch or Justice Department. The collected documents include laws, cases, treaties, executive orders and proclamations, and House and Senate reports, as well as other types of publications available in print.

MSLL must retain all FDLP documents for five years, unless they duplicate other material in the library collections. Only one copy of a specific title, regardless of format, must be retained by the Library. Additional federal materials are purchased from other publishers.

1. Statutory Law

- a) Official session laws, annotated federal statutes and statutory compilations of the United States. (P & O)

2. Case Law

- a) U. S. Supreme Court cases (P & O)
- b) Federal Courts of Appeal cases (P & O)
- c) District Court cases (O)

3. Administrative Materials

- a) Code of Federal Regulations (P & O) print retained for five years
- b) Federal Register (P, M, & O) print retained for five years
- c) Executive Orders as published in 3 CFR from 1936 through the present (P & O)

C. Other States

- 1. The library maintains online access to laws and legal materials from other states.

D. General Materials

1. Treatises/Form Books/Practice Books

- a) A broad representation of treatises covering most legal topics (P & O)
- b) For evolving areas of the law, the library attempts to acquire at least one treatise published within the last four years
- c) Books on topics of special interest to the Judicial Branch, i.e. real estate appraisal
- d) National legal forms titles (P & O)

2. Periodicals

- a) Newspapers
 - (1) Selected national newspapers (P)
- b) Law Reviews, Bar Journals, etc.
 - (1) The library will subscribe to national print periodicals on a limited basis (P & O)

E. Self-help Materials

1. Materials to support the general public with their legal information needs. (P & O)

F. Reference Materials

1. Directories

- a) Local legal directories (P)
- b) Minnesota legislative manuals and directories (P & O)

2. Encyclopedias

- a) A Minnesota-specific legal encyclopedia (Dunnell's Digest) (P & O)
- b) A national legal encyclopedia (CJS) (P & O)

3. Dictionaries

- a) General English language dictionaries (P)
- b) Legal dictionaries (P & O)
- c) Dictionaries on special subjects (P)
- d) Dictionaries in foreign languages as available (P)

4. Periodical Indexes

- a) Legal periodical indexes (Current Index to Legal Periodicals and Index to Legal Periodicals and Books). (O)
- b) The [Minnesota Legal Periodical Index](#) (MLPI) (1985 to date) provides access to Minnesota periodicals. The Library created and maintains this resource. (O)

G. Online Subscription Resources

1. Large general legal databases

- a) Westlaw: case law, citator, legal encyclopedia, legislation, law reviews, treatises, administrative agency decisions, other state statutes, Minnesota state-specific secondary materials
- b) Lexis: case law, Minnesota-specific treatises, other treatises, legal encyclopedia
- c) HeinOnline: wide-ranging collection of local, state, and national bar journals, law reviews and legal ebooks

2. **Specialized legal databases**

- a) Lexis Digital Library: treatises, including Minnesota-specific titles
- b) LLMC Digital: Minnesota legal resources plus other historic legal materials
- c) NCLC Digital Library: consumer-focused legal books
- d) EBSCO Legal Information Source: self-help materials, particularly Nolo titles
- e) EBSCO Index to Legal Periodicals and Books

3. **Online legal periodicals**

- a) Minnesota Lawyer

4. **General interest databases**

- a) eLibraryMN is accessible to all residents of Minnesota and provides access to Academic, Newspaper, Health, eBook and other databases useful for research

H. Briefs

1. **Briefs from precedential Minnesota Appellate cases (P, M & O)**

- a) The library binds paper copies of briefs from precedential Minnesota appellate cases as opinions are published in the Northwestern Reporter. The library's bound briefs collection covers 1864 to present.
- b) Briefs and other appellate court documents filed after 2013 are available online in the law library via a courthouse view terminal.

I. Special Collections

- 1. Materials of historic value, particularly unique historical Minnesota legal materials and other rare items.
- 2. Materials collected are related to early Minnesota, especially Minnesota legal history and Minnesota Supreme Court Justices.

J. Archival Materials

1. The State Law Library Archive collects materials related to the history of the State Law Library, the State Law Librarians, the Minnesota Judicial Branch and Minnesota Legal History.
 - a) A list of materials in the Archive can be found in the Appendix.
2. The archives of the Minnesota Association of Law Libraries are kept at the Minnesota State Law Library.
3. Materials may be in any format

IV. Responsibility for Selection

The State Law Librarian assumes final responsibility for the selection of materials and will make selection decisions with the assistance and advice of the department heads. The library encourages recommendations from staff, judicial branch employees, and the public.

V. Selection Criteria

The following principles will be used when evaluating items for acquisition:

- Relevance to the work of the Minnesota state courts
- Need for topic coverage within the collection
- Timeliness of the material
- Authority of the author or publisher
- Requests from users for specific titles or subjects
- Reviews and recommendations
- Cost
- Format

In general, the library does not collect the following: law school textbooks, theoretical materials, publications in foreign languages (except dictionaries and self-help materials), foreign and international law, and most materials from other states.

VI. Tools to aid in materials selection

Resources used to identify materials for purchase:

- Hein Current Publications List
- Book reviews in reputable publications
- Lawbook Exchange catalog and other rare book dealer catalogs

VII. Collection Maintenance

The library will evaluate the collection on a regular schedule. This will include replacing lost or missing items, binding, weeding, and assessing the need to preserve fragile documents.

A. Weeding

1. The collection will be weeded at least every 10 years
2. Materials that may be removed from the collection include the following:
 - a) Materials that are no longer current
 - b) Materials that contain inaccurate or obsolete information
 - c) Superseded editions
 - d) Materials that have been duplicated in another format
 - e) Materials that no longer fit the Collection Development Policy
3. Government documents are discarded according to the procedures found in the Instructions to Depository Libraries (U.S. Government Printing Office).

B. Retired Collection

1. Materials that are no longer current but still have archival value may be moved to the Retired collection.
2. Types of materials in Retired include older CLE publications and previous editions of treatises.

C. Replacements

1. Lost or damaged materials will be replaced based on an evaluation of the value of the material to the collection, the availability of alternative formats, and price.

D. Duplicates

1. See appendix for plans to collect multiple copies of certain materials.
2. Duplicates are added as demand dictates

E. Binding

1. Certain periodicals, CLEs, and briefs are bound to increase durability and extend shelf-life.

F. Preservation & Conservation

1. Efforts will be made to ensure the long-term usability of the collection.
2. Conservation efforts will be made on a case-by-case basis.
3. Some options used may be repair, file boxes, clamshell boxes, or rebinding.
4. Digital copies may be made to increase access and protect materials, particularly fragile items.
 - a) Criteria: MSLL owns the only copy or few copies exist, format is difficult to access, unsustainable, or obsolete.

VIII. Gifts

The Minnesota State Law Library accepts gifts and donations of materials and money. Acceptance of gifts will be governed by the same principles and criteria applied to the selection of items for purchase. Gifts will be evaluated on an individual basis and no conditions may be imposed relating to any gifts. Materials donated to the State Law Library become the property of the library. The library retains the right to refuse, discard, or give away duplicates or unneeded donations. The appraisal of the gift for tax purposes is the responsibility of the donor. The library will, if requested, provide a written acknowledgment of the receipt of gifts, but in accordance with income tax regulations will leave the determination of a value of the donation to the donor. Copyright of the materials (if one exists) transfers to the library, or copyright permission is given to the library.

IX. Censorship

The Minnesota State Law Library has adopted the principles in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (see Appendix), and the collection of standards as established by the Government Law Libraries Special Interest Section, American Association of Law Libraries (see Appendix). Patrons who wish to challenge the presence of a particular item in the collection should send a written request to the State Law Librarian. Complainants will receive written notification of the State Law Librarian's decision.

X. APPENDICES

1. Appellate Court Library Standards <https://www.aallnet.org/about-us/what-we-do/policies/public-policies/appellate-court-libraries-and-state-law-libraries-standards/>
2. Library Bill of Rights <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>
3. Retention schedule [https://mn.gov/law-library/assets/Retention%20of%20Titles%20in%20Retired%20and%20Storage%202015 tcm1041-155013.pdf](https://mn.gov/law-library/assets/Retention%20of%20Titles%20in%20Retired%20and%20Storage%202015%20tcm1041-155013.pdf)
4. Archives contents list
5. Gift/donation form
6. Digital Collection Plan