



Ohio Sunset Review Committee  
Agency Questionnaire

Agency Name Statewide Consortium of County Law Library Resources Board

Point of Contact Charles Schneider, Chair; Laura Novelo, Executive Director

**Agency's primary purpose and its various goals and objectives**

Per ORC 3375.481 (D), *The statewide consortium board shall do all of the following for the benefit of the members of the statewide consortium:*

*(1) Negotiate contracts that each county law library resources board may use for purchasing or obtaining access to legal research and reference materials available in any medium; We have accomplished and continue to meet this goal by negotiating with various vendors including Matthew Bender, Blue360 Media, and Supportworks.*

*(2) Catalogue existing resources held by county law library resources boards and facilitate the sharing of those resources by the county law library resources boards; We have accomplished and continue to meet this goal by negotiating a contract with LibraryWorld to provide an online catalog to all county law libraries. Currently, nearly half of all counties are participating.*

*(3) Develop and recommend guidelines for the collection of or access to legal resources that ought to be provided by a county law library resources board; This is being done by our advisory council. It is updating an existing core collection report.*

*(4) Provide consultation and assistance to county law library resources boards; The director of the consortium offers consulting and assistance to law libraries who request it. In its first two years, the director visited each county law library. More recently, the director has been called on to assist county law libraries transitioning from one director to another. There is no charge for this service.*

*(5) Issue an annual report of its activities to each county law library resources board. The chair issues a yearly report to the interested parties.*

In addition, under ORC 3375.481 (E)(2): "The statewide consortium board may use the money deposited in the fund for the operation of the statewide consortium board and may provide grants

to county law library resources boards." We offer yearly optional grants to any law library that applies and meets our minimal requirements. Also, under ORC 3375.481 (F), "The statewide consortium board may create an advisory council that is comprised of persons with expertise in the operation and funding of law libraries." An advisory council has been established. They have worked on the core collection report as well as a re-evaluation of the grant process. Under ORC 3375.481 (G), "The statewide consortium board shall determine the necessary qualifications of staff and the facilities and equipment necessary for the operation of the statewide consortium." The consortium currently contracts with Lucas County for the services of two librarians to serve as director and assistant director of the consortium.

**Agency's past and anticipated workload, number of staff required to complete workload, and total number of staff**

Two part-time staff members work 40-60 hours per month on consortium business. This includes paying bills, working with vendors, balancing finances, creating a budget, assisting county law libraries, coordinating grant programs, and maintaining a web site and listserv. We anticipate the same workload in the future.

## **Agency's past and anticipated budgets and its sources of funding**

Historically county law libraries received their funding from court fines, primarily traffic fines. When county law libraries transitioned from private associations to public county agencies, the funding source did not change. Today, the consortium's annual budget is around \$300,000, made up entirely from the statutory contributions of the 88 county law libraries. Each is required to pay 2% of its annual statutory income to the consortium.

**Number of members of its governing board or other governing entity and their compensation, if any**

There are five members of the governing board as required by ORC 3375.481 (B). No members receive compensation.

Retired Judge Charles A. Schneider, Chair  
Office of the Ohio Attorney General  
Judicial Conference Appointment (term expires 12/31/24)

Lauren Morrison, Trustee  
Hamilton County Law Library  
Ohio State Bar Association Appointment (term expires 12/31/26)

Erin Waltz, Trustee  
Supreme Court Law Library  
Supreme Court of Ohio Appointment

Kyle Petty, Trustee  
County Commissioners' Association of Ohio  
County Commissioners' Association of Ohio Appointment (term expires 12/31/24)

Shara H. Parkomaki, Trustee  
Ashtabula County Law Library  
County Commissioners' Association of Ohio Appointment (term expires 12/31/26)

## **Additional notes**

For the last thirteen years, the consortium has assisted the 88 county law libraries by providing an online catalog, over \$1.7 million in free books – many going to law libraries that report those are the only new books they add to their collections – and more than \$760,000 in grants (including over \$55,000 just awarded in April 2024). In 2024 the consortium spent an average of \$1,500 per county law library on books, meaning at least 35 law libraries received more in the books' value than what they contributed. By contracting with county law libraries and hiring existing county law librarians, we are able to keep our overhead costs at a minimum. We are proud to be completely self-sufficient. Our establishment does not impact the state general revenue fund at all.

In addition, the Consortium only collects the full 2% statutory payment from each law library once every five years. In the other years, the Consortium administers a Refund Grants program whereby each law library is able to keep 25% of the 2% statutory contribution they owe to the Consortium.