

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 - 2020



WHO WE ARE

The Santa Cruz County Law Library has provided freely accessible legal materials for public use since it was established in 1896. We have done this despite multiple location changes, sharp declines in filing fee revenue and sharp increases in the costs of legal materials, and now, during a global pandemic.

Our legal materials include self-help print titles, treatises, practice guides, and online databases. These materials alone do not meet the information needs of our users. Other services we provide and ways we deliver information include:

- Informational packets that help guide individuals through basic legal processes and explain county specific requirements.
- We host workshops
- We work with the Superior Court Self Help Center to create fill-in-the-blank pleadings.
- We provide computers where people can fill out forms, draft legal documents, and do legal research.

California County Law Libraries are usually the only free publically accessible resource for legal information in a community.

California County Law Libraries are governed by California Business and Professions Code sections 6300 et.seq. We are separate public entities governed by a Board of Law Library Trustees.

Each individual Board is allowed to enter into agreements with other agencies for the management of the county law library. In 2006, The Santa Cruz County Board of Law Library Trustees entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Santa Cruz Superior Court.

Board of Trustees

The Santa Cruz County Board of Law Library Trustees governs the policies, operations, budget, and future direction of the law library. The Board regularly meets on the third Tuesday of the each month at 5 p.m. Special and emergency meetings are held when necessary.

Board member appointments are in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6301. This section requires the Superior Court to appoint four or five of its members. These members may designate others to serve in their place. The Board of Supervisors makes two appointments. Appointments from the Superior Court or Board of Supervisors may be attorneys, judges, or members of the general public. However, we are limited to no more than two members of the general public. Appointments are made on an annual basis for the calendar year. There is no limit to the number of years a Board member may serve.

Board of Law Library Trustees for Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Superior Court Appointees

Hon. John Gallagher 2007
Lolly Belanger 2020
Emily Dubois, Esq. 2019
Courtney Leibrock, Esq. 2017-2019
John Mancini 2007-2019
Dinah Sapia, Esq. 2020
Hon. Timothy Volkmann 2008

Board of Supervisor Appointees

Julia Hill, Esq. 2008
Alan J. Smith, Esq. 2010

WAYS WE PROVIDE ACCESS

6758

IN PERSON
VISITS

1570

PHONE
INQUIRIES

959

EMAIL
REQUESTS

HOW WE WERE USED

1181

COMPUTER
USES

2050

GENERAL
INQUIRIES

4993

REFERENCE
QUESTIONS

WHO USES US

5,933

OF OUR IN
PERSON
VISITS WERE
NON-
ATTORNEYS

For years, the majority of our users have been non-attorneys. Each year attorneys make up about 15% of our in-person visits.

825

OF OUR IN
PERSON
VISITS WERE
FROM
ATTORNEYS

COVID-19 IMPACTS

When COVID-19 hit in March, business and government operations across California came to a halt. In an effort to keep both staff and users safe, we eliminated our after hours access and subsequently closed our doors to in-person services.

From March 24th through June 7th we provided virtual services only. Our virtual services included phone and email reference, and document delivery via email or U.S. mail. We set up a voicemail box on our public phone line, so we could return calls we were unable to answer live.

Beginning on June 8th, we resumed limited in-person services with reduced hours of Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and began setting appointments for research, and computer use with limited walk-in assistance.

With the transition to virtual services we eliminated all of our in-person workshops. In 2019, we had resumed hosting the Small Claims and Divorce workshops once a month in addition to our Record Clearance workshop.

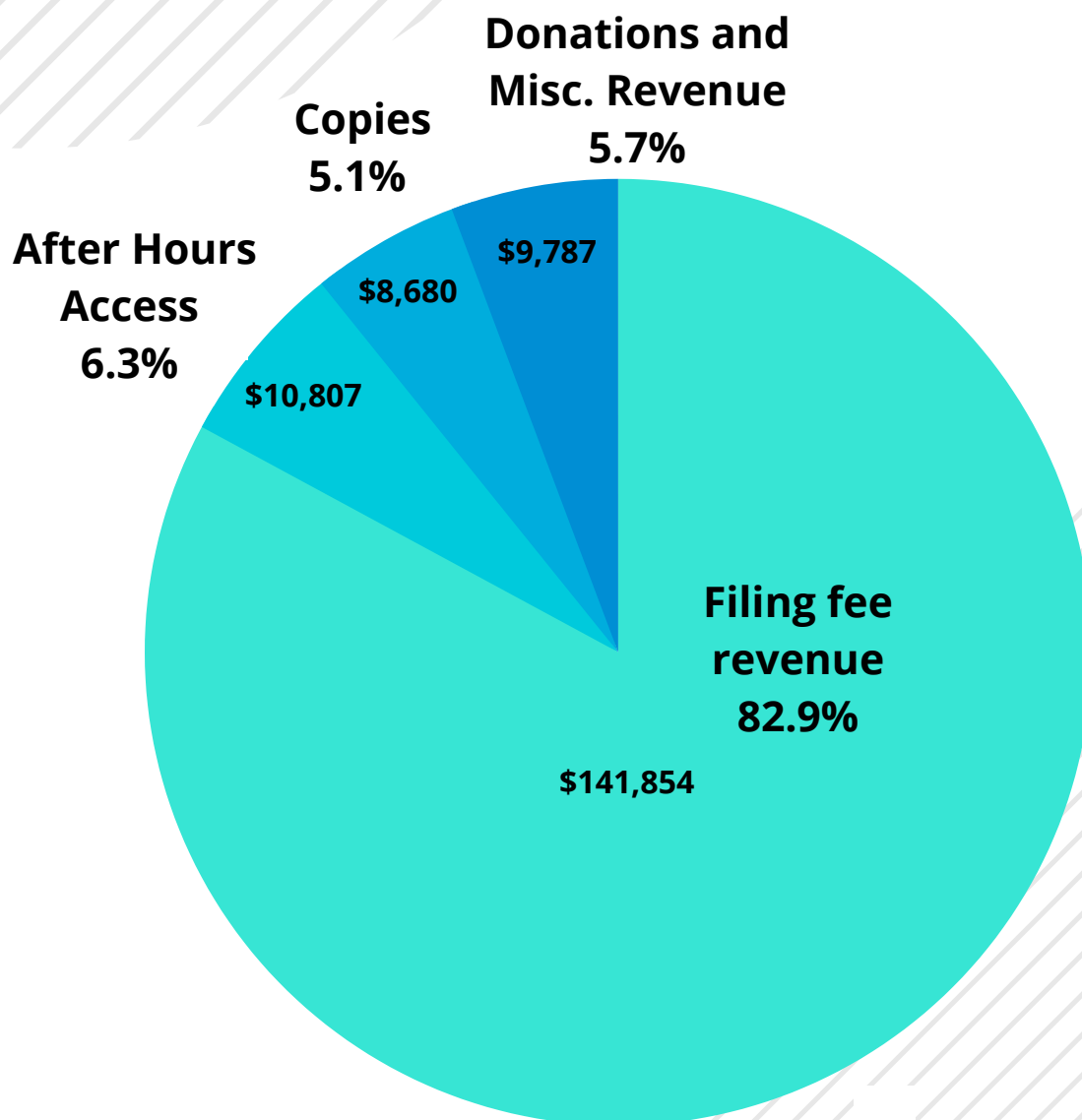
Our civil filing fee revenue dropped 30% from the previous year. We lost 62% of our non-filing fee revenue.

Our revenue has been severely impacted by the shuttering of our services. Our main sources of revenue are civil filing fee revenue, after hours access, and revenue generated by copies. We saw our fourth quarter (April-June) filing fee revenue drop 30% from the previous year. Our non filing fee income dropped from \$15,570.41 (March-June) to \$5075.77 a 67% decline.

During this time our monthly expenses remained the same. Some of our vendors worked to help offset the impact of lost revenue by offering credits, free remote access to our users, or by temporarily suspending shipment on publications.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

County Law Libraries primary source of funding comes from a portion of first paper civil filing fees. The amount we receive in Santa Cruz County is \$35 for every unlimited civil action, \$12 for each limited civil action, and \$2 for each small claims appeal. This amount has remained stagnant since 2006.

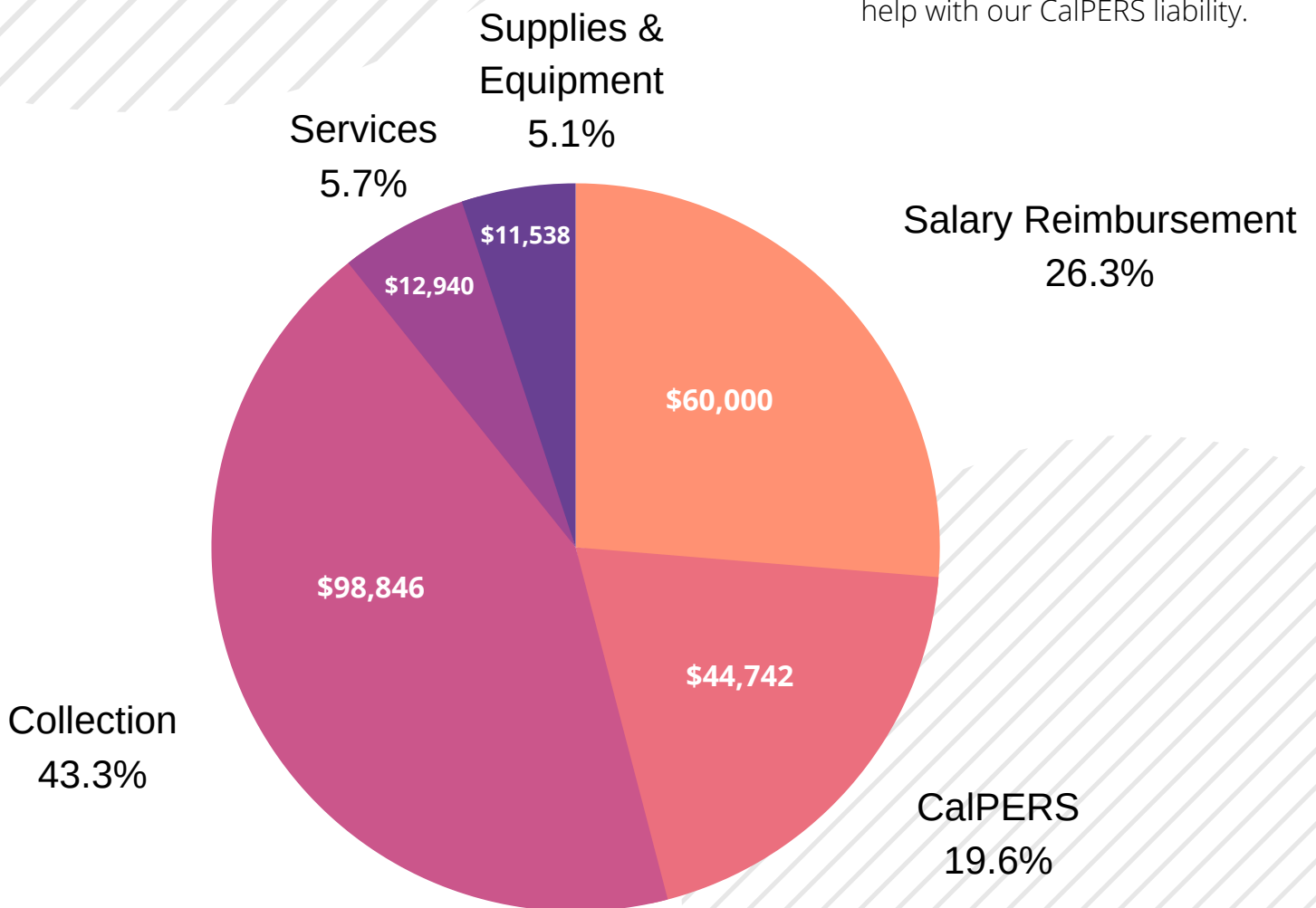


WHERE THE MONEY GOES

Over the last decade filing fee revenue has declined while expenditure costs have increased leaving most county law libraries in a precarious state.

We continuously evaluate all of our expenditures to make sure we are putting our limited funds to the best use possible.

In fiscal year 2018-2019 we received \$93,116 as one-time funding from the State General Fund. Some of this money was used this fiscal year to purchase new computers, offset the cost of current subscriptions and help with our CalPERS liability.



TRUST FUND STATEMENT

California Business and Professions Code 6320 requires that all of our money must be deposited with the treasurer for the county, who must keep the same separate and apart in a trust or trust fund. Our trust is pooled and a small amount of interest is paid during the year. We try to keep a small reserve on hand to help offset unexpected revenue losses.

Equity in pooled cash as of 6/30/19	\$137,793.77
Outstanding Liabilities	\$8,578.39
Revenues	\$172,399.43
Expenditures	\$225,889.32
Fund Balance as of 6/30/2020	\$75,725.49

COLLECTION

Our collection consists of both print and online resources. The steep decline in revenue has forced us to make cuts to both our physical and print collection. We strive to provide access to the best resources possible within our budgetary constraints.

Online subscriptions:

- Westlaw
- LexisNexis
- Legal Information Reference Center (Self Help)

Print Materials:

Number of volumes as of 6/30/2019	11,389
Number of volumes withdrawn	471
Number of volumes added	105
Number of volumes as of 6/30/2020	11,023