

AGENDA

Santa Cruz County Law Library Board of Trustees

**December Regular Meeting
December 16, 2025
Santa Cruz County Law Library, Room 070
5:00 pm**

1.0 Meeting and Organization

- 1.1 Establish Quorum
- 1.2 Approve Agenda

2.0 Public Comment

3.0 Oral Communication

- 3.1 Service Statistics October & November
- 3.2 Librarian's Report
 - 3.2.1 Law Library Staffing
 - 3.2.2 Scrabble Date

4.0 Consent Agenda

- 4.1 Approval of Report of Disbursements for November & December
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes for October

5.0 Regular Agenda

- 5.1 Friends of the Library formation discussion

6.0 Future Meetings

6.1 February 17, 2026

7.0 Adjourn

Notice to the public:

The public has the right to comment on any item listed on the regular meeting agenda before or during the consideration of that item. When a member of the public raises an issue, which has not yet come before the board, the item may be discussed but no action may be taken at the meeting.

The meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. Requests for interpretive services, assistive listening devices or other considerations may be made through the Santa Cruz County Law Library either in person at the address above or by phone at (831) 420-2205.

Materials related to any item on this agenda will be available prior to the meeting at the Law Library during normal business hours.

AGENDA ITEM 5.4

Friends Group Formation Discussion

Trustees Cheryl Ferguson and Julia Hill developed collaboratively the following document to help address questions from potential recruits.

Invitation to Participate in Formation of a Non-profit Library Foundation/Friends Group for the Santa Cruz County Law Library

Although the Law Library has been providing access to legal materials in Santa Cruz County for over 130 years, many residents don't know about this valuable resource and are surprised to learn that access is free to the general public. The library offers access to over 11,000 hardcopy volumes of legal publications as well as in house internet access to online resources. The library provides comprehensive information packets that include essential Judicial Council of California forms for a wide range of court actions. These packets are designed to help navigate through a system of legal procedures that can seem confusing and unforgiving to people outside the legal profession.

The establishment of the Santa Cruz County Law Library was originally authorized under an Act to Establish County Law Libraries, which enabled counties to create law libraries by ordinance. Today, we are governed by the State of California's Business & Professions Code. Despite our vital role in providing legal access and resources to the community, we receive no State or County funding. Instead, over 90% of the library's funding comes from civil filing fees:

<u>Case Type</u>	<u>Filing Fee</u>	<u>Allocation to Law Library</u>
Unlimited Jurisdiction	\$435	\$35
Limited Jurisdiction	\$225-370	\$12
Small Claims	\$30-\$75	\$2

The library also accepts gracious donations and sponsorships, and holds an annual Scrabble Tournament fundraising event in the Spring.

Starting in approximately late 2009/early 2010, there has been a trending decrease in the number of civil actions filed in California, and more specifically, in Santa Cruz County Superior Court. This decrease has, in turn, resulted in significantly less funds allocated to the law library. In each of the last 3 fiscal years, the library was fortunate to receive a Mutual Aid Grant through the Council of California County Law Librarians which helped to stave off otherwise necessary cancellation of some of the library's legal publication subscription contracts. Unfortunately, research and discussions concerning the current political and fiscal climate suggest that the library cannot count on additional grant awards in the near future. With this loss of sufficient funding, the library will likely have to reduce its services, service hours, inventory of legal publications and take other cost-cutting measures.

Unless...

What if there were a handful of people who believe in the importance of preserving free access to legal materials and information about the Court's legal procedures, enough to help create a non-profit Foundation or "Friends of" group to help provide financial support for the Santa Cruz County Law Library?

What if these people were willing and able to work together through the formative steps of this start-up project, such as:

- Determining the library's funding needs;
- Working with an advising attorney to determine and meet the legal requirements for establishing a non-profit corporation and obtaining tax exempt status;
- Opening a bank account and establish an accounting period and methods;
- Determining the size and organizational structure of the non-profit corporation;
- Identifying, recruiting and involving dedicated community members to raise funds and increase awareness of the library and its services;
- Developing a long-term fundraising plan?

Are you willing to be one of these heroic people who will design, build and cultivate an organization that recognizes, promotes and protects the Santa Cruz County Law Library's ongoing mission to empower litigants and learners – regardless of legal education or experience – with free access to legal materials and information?

If so, we need you and we are excited to invite you to be a founding member of this important project.