

Washington State Judicial Branch 2015-2017 BIENNIAL BUDGET REQUEST

Decision Package

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Agency | State Law Library |
| Decision Package Title | Electronic Legal Services |
| Budget Period | 2015-2017 Biennial Budget |
| Budget Level | Maintenance Level |

Agency Recommendation Summary Text

The State Law Library requests funding to upgrade its electronic legal databases. Upgrades necessitated by increased library patron activity and improved services available, will maintain the Law Library's ability to provide up-to-date information while continuing to reduce costs.

Fiscal Detail

| Operating Expenditures | FY 2016 | FY 2017 | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| 001-1 General Fund State | \$ 5,000 | \$ 5,000 | \$10,000 |
| Staffing | FY 2016 | FY 2017 | Total |
| FTEs (number of staff requested) | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Package Description

The Legislature has encouraged the State Law Library to begin migrating its legal resources from print to electronic. The State Law Library must upgrade its current electronic legal databases and add additional electronic legal information to continue to provide services and reduce print costs.

Narrative Justification and Impact Statement

This package contributes to the Judicial Branch Principle Policy Objectives as identified below.

Fair and Effective Administration of Justice in All Civil and Criminal Cases.

Washington courts will openly, fairly, efficiently and effectively administer justice in all criminal and civil cases, consistent with constitutional mandates and the judiciary's duty to maintain the highest level of public trust and confidence in the courts.

The State Law Library will be able to disseminate legal information quickly and effectively to an increased number of users, assisting court personnel and the public in the most cost-effective method.

Accessibility. *Washington courts, court facilities and court systems will be open and accessible to all participants regardless of cultural, linguistic, ability-based or other characteristics that serve as access barriers.*

Providing electronic legal information allows patrons unable to utilize the library in person due to physical, cultural, or geographic constraints to get necessary information. A wide range of electronic legal databases enables staff to provide information in the most effective way for individual patrons.

Access to Necessary Representation. *Constitutional and statutory guarantees of the right to counsel shall be effectively implemented. Litigants with important interests at stake in civil judicial proceedings should have meaningful access to counsel.*

Providing convenient, current, cost-effective legal information electronically saves time and money for legal service providers. The law library provides information to clients of legal service providers, saving time and money as clients' cases progress.

Appropriate Staffing and Support. *Washington courts will be appropriately staffed and effectively managed, and court personnel, court managers and court systems will be effectively supported.*

Providing the most up-to-date electronic legal information will support court personnel, managers, and court systems in accessing necessary information in a timely manner.

Measure Detail

Impact on clients and service

Clients will have increased accessibility to a wide range of electronic databases and reference finding tools. This will reduce the burden on the legal community and courts. Informed clients should not need lengthy counsel interaction and should be able to proceed in the legal system.

Impact on other state services

Providing improved electronic legal services will reduce time needed by state legal services.

Relationship to Capital Budget

N/A

Required changes to existing Court Rule, Court Order, RCW, WAC, contract, or plan

None

Alternatives explored

Free electronic legal databases currently available do not provide up-to-date information. Free search engines are slow, produce incorrect results, and the search methodology is ineffective. Patrons using free electronic legal databases often get a large amount of incorrect legal information, requiring multiple visits to other state agencies to get the correct information.

Distinction between one-time and ongoing costs and budget impacts in future biennia

The cost of these electronic legal databases will be ongoing.

Effects of non-funding

Patrons would rely on out-of-date, free databases which would provide incorrect legal information.

Expenditure calculations and assumptions and FTE assumptions

WestlawNext upgrade: \$2500 per year
LexisNexis upgrade: \$1300 per year
Legal Library Guides Reference Software: \$1200 per year

| Object Detail | FY 2016 | FY 2017 | Total |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Staff Costs | \$ 0 | \$ 0 | \$ 0 |
| Non-Staff Costs | \$ 5,000 | \$ 5,000 | \$ 10,000 |
| Total Objects | \$ 5,000 | \$ 5,000 | \$ 10,000 |