



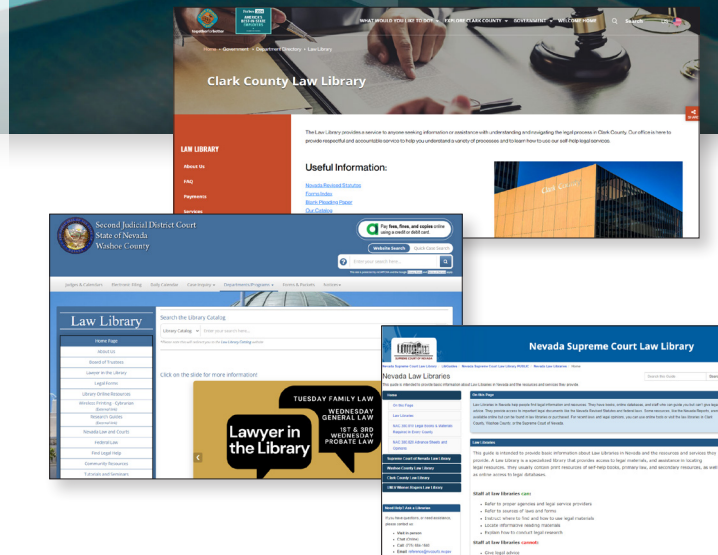
# AI for Legal Research: Law Library Resources & Services

BY ANN WALSH LONG, ESQ.

**In a world of Artificial Intelligence (AI), it's comforting to know that the Nevada law libraries are staffed by A+ law librarians who have the knowledge and expertise to connect you with the legal information you need.**

You don't have to craft the perfect AI prompt or use magic Boolean keywords; the law librarians can quickly direct you to quality resources, and we don't hallucinate. Instead, we apply our expertise to interpret complex legal issues and provide tailored guidance that generative AI, which relies on algorithms and data patterns, cannot fully replicate.

The Nevada judiciary benefits from the support of three law libraries: the Supreme Court of Nevada Law Library in Carson City, the



Washoe County Law Library in Reno, and the Clark County Law Library in Las Vegas. All three serve the bench, the bar, and the public, but have different collections and services aimed at our intended audiences, historically intended for use by walk-in patrons based on geography. However, in our digital world, what difference does geography make? We provide reference services in person, over the phone, or through chat or email.<sup>1</sup> All law libraries help self-represented litigants navigate the court system, and all law libraries help attorneys find the resources they need to interpret and analyze various legal principles. While self-represented litigants (SRLs) look to us for compassion and empathy, the law-trained bench and bar trust us to save them time. Regardless of the patrons we serve, it's the personal connections we make that continue to increase our value.

The Supreme Court Law Library fulfills thousands of legal research requests each year for patrons statewide. During the past two years, the Nevada Supreme Court Law Library has focused its collection-development efforts on increasing its digital collection to expand its reach beyond Carson City. The law library's statutory mandate to make the library "accessible for public use to all users in all parts of the state," NRS 2.410, is a challenge under current copyright and licensing permissions. Providing statewide access to more than 3,500 digital titles from several legal publishers

through our LexisNexis Digital Library (LNDL) is a solid start. This collection includes titles published by LexisNexis (Nevada Civil and Appellate Practice Manuals, Moore’s Federal Practice, Corbin on Contracts, etc.), the State Bar of Nevada (37 titles), the American Bar Association (61 titles including The ABA Spanish Legal Phrasebook), James Publishing (245 titles), and West Academic (including Brian Garner’s Redbook). Check it out at <https://nvstclawlib.libguides.com/LNDL>.

Highlights of other digital collections available onsite in Carson City include Bloomberg Law (for searching state and federal dockets by keyword, topic, and resolution), HeinOnline (digitized facsimiles of content published before 1926), ProView (Thomson Reuters, West Publishing, and Rutter Group eBook titles such as LaFave’s Criminal Procedure), and VitalLaw (Aspen/Wolter Kluwer’s eBook titles such as Wigmore on Evidence).<sup>2</sup> These collections of primary and secondary sources provide a wealth of materials to begin the critical analysis necessary for legal research. Sadly, not everything is available on Westlaw – i.e., you’ll never find content published by other legal publishers. Legal publishers produce their own content on their own platforms, hence the need to collect and provide multiple sources. Legal treatises are not always available on a shared platform like all the legal fiction you enjoy through Amazon, and far less is available for free on the internet. Secondary sources are a great starting point for research – they direct you to the binding or persuasive primary sources that are inherently harder to find.

Some of those harder-to-find sources are unique to each law library’s collection. The Supreme Court Law Library holds the only collection of all 50 state statutory codes from inception to current, and the only collection of historical Nevada Administrative Codes. Anything published after 1926 is only available in print (and copyrighted) and content that is “born digital” after 1990 may only be available through expensive subscriptions to legal research platforms like Lexis or Westlaw. This is what makes the Nevada law library collections so valuable – the staff does the heavy lifting by securing the content and negotiating subscriptions to ensure the collections offer comprehensive content.

While content is often what drives patrons to Nevada’s law libraries, it’s the services that are offered and physical spaces that often support the work of the judiciary. Washoe County provides a popular “Lawyer in the Library” program that is about to celebrate 25 years of serving the community. In 2023, this program assisted

1,438 people with their legal questions, but had 640 people on the wait list who did not receive help, due to a lack of attorneys. If you would like to volunteer, family law issues are the most in demand, but patrons also need help with probate, landlord tenant, and general civil law questions. The program is hosted through Zoom, so attorneys can volunteer from anywhere in the state. It’s a two-hour commitment on a Tuesday or Wednesday evening, where you will help up to eight participants during a 15-minute period. While there is no minimum obligation, you could earn up to four CLE credits for volunteering (three hours equals one general CLE credit). For information, call 775-328-3250 or email [lawlibrary@washoecourts.us](mailto:lawlibrary@washoecourts.us).

The Clark County Law Library partners with Nevada Legal Services (NLS), which conducts monthly intake consultations at the law library.<sup>3</sup> Interested attorneys can volunteer their time with NLS and may collaborate with the law library on providing free legal education classes on various topics when the new training room is complete in 2025.

The Supreme Court Law Library has also partnered with NLS on the Nevada Legal Kiosk project led by Susan Myers. The kiosks provide a curated mix of legal resources and services, aimed at self-represented litigants and designed to address the most common legal needs.<sup>4</sup> The kiosks are placed in rural public libraries that have broadband internet access and an existing connection with their communities. Supreme Court law librarians visit these libraries to educate public librarians on available legal content and services for their patrons.

Additionally, the kiosks provide links to the 71 standardized self-help PDF-fillable forms that have been translated into Spanish, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Vietnamese thanks to federal grant funding. Three grants were awarded to the Supreme Court of Nevada Law Library from the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records. The law library partnered with Stephanie McDonald of the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada and Twin Translations. For a full list of forms, please visit the state of Nevada’s Self-Help Center’s website at <https://selfhelp.nvcourts.gov/forms>.

Another access to justice project we are working on is the digitization of historical Supreme Court case files (1862-1999) with the William S. Hein Co.<sup>5</sup> The case files are being converted from microfilm, are organized by year and docket number, and are keyword-searchable. Currently,

the case files from the late 1980s-1999 are only available to court personnel or onsite at the law library. It is our goal to make this collection available statewide when it is complete in November 2025 through the HeinOnline platform. If you need a case file before then, please email us at [reference@nvcourts.nv.gov](mailto:reference@nvcourts.nv.gov).

In an age of AI, law libraries will continue to serve as a trusted resource for the judiciary and all Nevadans in understanding and fulfilling legal research needs. Where AI can only interpret questions literally, law librarians can understand the nuances of the law. Our print collections will endure when global internet outages occur, and we’ll be here to support you long after the initial excitement of AI fades into memory. Law librarians are the original search engine (and they are not artificial!).



**ANN WALSH LONG** has more than 30 years of experience working as a law librarian, the last two years proudly serving as the law librarian of the Supreme Court of Nevada. She is the author of the Short & Happy Guide to Advanced Legal Research and forthcoming co-author of Nevada Legal Research. Originally from Colorado, she has a B.A. from Colorado College, a M.S.L.S. from Catholic University of America, and a J.D. from Lincoln Memorial University Duncan School of Law.

#### ENDNOTES:

1. For website and contact information for each law library, please visit <https://nvstclawlib.libguides.com/nvlawlibraries>.
2. For more information on these collections, please call 775-684-1640 or visit our website at <https://nvstclawlib.libguides.com/aboutthelibrary>.
3. Visit the Clark County Law Library’s website for more information at [https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/government/departments/law\\_library/index.php](https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/government/departments/law_library/index.php).
4. There are now 30 legal kiosks placed in rural public libraries throughout Nevada. See Nev. Dept. of Health & Human Servs., Nevada Launches Legal Kiosks to Expand Access to Justice (Jun. 20, 2023), [https://dhhs.nv.gov/Reports/Press\\_Releases/2023/Nevada\\_Launches\\_Legal\\_Kiosks\\_to\\_Expand\\_Access\\_to\\_Justice/](https://dhhs.nv.gov/Reports/Press_Releases/2023/Nevada_Launches_Legal_Kiosks_to_Expand_Access_to_Justice/).
5. This project was funded by a State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds grant secured by the AOC.