

RESOURCES FOR QUEEN'S BENCH

San Francisco Law Library Services

By Ruth Goldstein, Reference Librarian, San Francisco Law Library

While perhaps we all have passwords to Lexis and Westlaw, there are even more and—believe it or not—sometimes better resources that can assist, and even cut to the chase, for San Francisco practitioners. The San Francisco Law Library, the oldest public law library in the State of California, and the second largest, can be a formidable ally in the constant research, work, education, and analysis that every attorney undertakes—and usually, under the shadow of a deadline.

Of course, the law library has books: a complete and circulating collection of all the core materials and secondary sources such as the Rutter Group, CEB, and other essential guides to California law, along with the broader range of materials for recurring legal subject matter and forms in American law, from real property to domestic partnerships, trial practice, transactional work, and law practice management. The law library catalog is on-line as part of the San Francisco Law Library website, at www.sfgov.org/sfl.

All attorneys are welcome to use the library, and those who live or work in San Francisco are further entitled to circulation privileges, to come in, browse, and check out what they like. Getting back, however, to the constant issue of time, the library also allows firms to call in advance for materials, have the materials pulled from the shelf, checked out to the firm account, and readied for a courier or bike messenger pickup. In other words, this can be done from your desk to our reference desk.

For solo practitioners to firms with fewer than 10 attorneys, this is a free program maintained for the benefit of these San Francisco practices. Larger firms may subscribe at a modest yearly fee. For more information on how to make use of this service and to enroll in our Solo and Small Firm Membership program, or our ILL program for larger firms, please contact me at 415: 554-6842, or ruth.goldstein@sfgov.org.

Our collection certainly does include electronic resources, including the CD-ROMs that complement CEB, Rutter Group, and other legal publisher's materials, often containing the form collection for the set. These may be borrowed as well. The library also offers free use of Westlaw, Shepard's, Fastcase, and most recently, HeinOnline, a

superb PDF archive of law reviews, a historical Federal Register database, Federal legislative history sources, and many other useful contents.

For attorneys managing the business of their own practices or contemplating starting their own, the law library also has a specific collection of law practice management materials, on such topics as client relations [see for example: *Lawyers are from Mercury, Clients are from Pluto*] to the very inclusive and practical foundations of *Law Office Procedures Manual for Solos and Small Firms* [with CD-Rom] and the 4 volume set of *The Essential Formbook*, addressing everything from calendar, docket, and file organization to the newer concerns around disaster management.

While we cannot go so far as to do your research for you, we do offer to you the combined knowledge base of the San Francisco Law Library reference staff. We invite you to call us with questions and quandaries at 554-6821. As reference librarians, we can and do think about the issues you may bring to us, so that we suggest or propose sources on where to go first and where to go for more. Since the application of the law as well as the facts seems to gravitate towards the new and undefined, we are glad to compare notes and think about what we could propose, either within our collection or beyond. If we don't have some particular text in our collection, we can try to find it elsewhere, or borrow it from another institution for your use.

Our director, Marcia Bell—who is also a Queen's Bench member—would also welcome your own suggestions and recommendations for what materials and services would be useful to you. We would like to know. Please feel free to contact her at 554-6824, or marcia.bell@sfgov.org.

We look forward to working with you and assisting in your practices, pro bono work, and all other aspects of work as a lawyer. The San Francisco Law Library has three locations: the largest of our libraries in Civic Center, a library with later hours in the Financial District, and a limited pocket library in the McAllister St. Courthouse—or four, if you consider the website, at www.sfgov.org/sfl as the portal into the whole.

San Francisco Law Library

www.sfgov.org/sfl

Civic Center

401 Van Ness, Room 400

Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Closed Weekends.

(415) 554-6821

Financial District Branch

685 Market St., Suite 420

Monday – Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Friday & Saturday 9:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

(415) 882-9310

Courthouse Reference Room

400 McAllister Street, Room 512

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday

8:30 am. To 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday 8:30 - 12:30

Closed Daily 12:30 to 1:30

(415) 551-3647