

Preamble and Explanatory Notes

Core Collections:

The Recommended Titles for the Core Collection (RTCC) has been developed by the Maryland Conference of Circuit Court Law Library Directors (CMCLLD) as a guide for Maryland Circuit Court law libraries in the assessment and acquisition of materials to meet the Maryland County Public Law Library Standards 2009 (CMCLLD, adopted June 2009, www.lawlib.state.md.us/audiences/courtlibs/conference/mdfinalcountystandards2009.pdf).

The Standards include as Part VII. County Public Law Library Collection, the recommended collection for a Maryland Circuit Court law library. The Collection breaks down generally as:

- A. Maryland Publications
- B. Federal Publications
- C. General United States Publications

Parts A and B are the primary sources of law and critical finding aids to those sources. Part C includes standard secondary sources. Among the resources listed are:

- A.11. Significant state-oriented legal treatise and practice materials (Maryland Titles Recommended for County Law Libraries can be found at the Maryland State Law Library Website);
- C.10. A basic collection of legal texts, treatises, practice materials and looseleaf services of contemporary value on subjects of interest to the legal community and the public (Recommended General Treatises for the Core Collection can be found at the Maryland State Law Library Website); and
- C.16. A collection of general legal and self-help titles on subjects of interest to the public and self-represented litigant.

The RTCC list contains three areas for collection development: titles on Maryland law; titles on general law; and titles for self-help collections. Materials are grouped under major subject headings, with subtopics where it is helpful to make a distinction. In this manner, someone seeking resources for a particular subject area will be able to see immediately if there is a self-help, Maryland or general title related to that topic. If there isn't a Maryland title, for instance, they can easily move to the general title option.

It is strongly recommended that all Maryland court libraries have a copy of the text *The Legal Information Buyer's Guide and Reference Manual*, by Ken Svengalis (Rhode Island LawPress, published annually). The text contains descriptive as well as pricing and update information, to aid in determining which title will best suit the needs of a library. Also helpful is Georgetown Law Library's *Treatise Finders*, www.law.georgetown.edu/library/research/treatise-finders/, a series of lists by general topic with descriptions of multiple text options. The Finders do not substitute for the Svengalis text; only descriptive information is included, not update and pricing information. However, the additional narrative may assist in narrowing choices.

The lists should not be considered exhaustive, but rather a base level (core collection) for which to aim, and from which to further develop. Once a satisfactory collection has been acquired, libraries should consider further additions to the collection.

Where materials are available in multiple formats, libraries should choose the format for each title that is best suited to the library's situation and needs.

Maryland Collection List

The Maryland Collection List (MCL) contains specific titles recommended for the core collection. Additional titles beyond those listed, specific to Maryland and on a variety of topics, may be available. For MCL texts, the titles should be retained while current. Once a subscription has been cancelled, a new edition has been published, or the timeliness of a publication has lapsed, the title should be discarded or labelled appropriately as *superseded*, *no longer updated*, or *retained for historical purposes*. One or two titles in the list are not currently published; however, their continued usefulness for the area of law they represent necessitates continued inclusion in the list.

General Collection List

The General Collection List (GCL) contains suggested titles for each topic and subtopic rather than recommending a single title. As there are often numerous text choices within each topic, the determination and selection of a specific title to purchase rests with the individual library. In a few instances, where a particular title is the standard for that area, that unique title has been specified.

The Svengalis text and the Georgetown site (above) are both excellent resources for understanding the differences between the title options. Both resources provide explanations to help a library determine the best option for their collection and user population. The Svengalis text includes publishing information such as prices, update frequency, volumes and more, to aid in the selection of appropriate material for a library's collection.

Self-Help Collection List

The Self-Help Collection List (SHCL), like the GCL, provides topics for which a library should have at least one title, as well as some materials uniquely identified as being strongly recommended for a Self-Help Collection.

A fully useful self-help collection will contain not only the materials in the SHCL, but also an internet connection where websites on the list can be viewed. Self-Help Collections should include a user-friendly dashboard, interface, or start page to connect users to resources.

Updates:

The lists will be updated regularly to reflect new information. Titles and topics may be added or removed as their relevancy changes.

Selection Criteria:

The following criteria are weighed when determining the adoption of a resource into the Maryland and General recommended collections:

- Reliability, including citation frequency in case law and other legal texts, and broad acceptance as an authority on a topic
- General topical coverage
- Ease of contact with the publisher
- Currentness
- Update frequency, reliability and regularity

For Self-Help materials, the following were weighed in addition to the above:

- Purposefulness of the text (how the resource meets the need)
- Readability
- Relevance of content