

LA Law Library Prison Mail Policy

In-State and Out-of-State Inmate Requests

LA Law Library serves incarcerated and other institutionalized individuals (“inmates” herein) located in California. Material is provided at no cost for up to two requests per month to in-state inmates.

Due to limited staff resources, we are unable to respond to inmates incarcerated out-of-state, unless the inmate can show that they have ongoing litigation in a court in California (state or federal). We refer an out-of-state inmate to a law library that serves their institution based on the AALL list of Law Libraries Serving Prisoners.¹

Services Provided

LA Law Library provides inmates with legal reference services and material from our legal databases and other online resources, as well as copies of print material when no electronic equivalent is available. We will send up to 50 pages per response.

LA Law Library does not provide printed material from PACER.

We provide limited non-legal reference service for requests such as contact information for businesses or non-profit organizations. When an inmate asks for extensive non-legal information, we suggest they contact a local public library. For example, in California, the San Francisco Public Library has a program that provides reference services to incarcerated persons.²

Letters from an individual inmate received within a short period of time are combined into a single response.

LA Law Library does not provide copy or filing services if an inmate should mail their legal filings or other personal paperwork to us; the inmate must use their local institutional library or other resources for this service. We do not mail out letters on an inmate’s behalf (sometimes called “piggy-backing”).

LA Law Library does not accept stamps or stamped envelopes from inmates. Frequently, the amount of postage sent is not sufficient for the cost and/or the envelope provided is not properly sized. If an inmate sends stamps or a stamped envelope, they are returned to the inmate with an explanation in the response letter that we do not accept these items.

¹ <https://sites.google.com/view/sr-sis/services-for-incarcerated-patrons-standing-committee>

² The SFPL program’s mailing address is: Jail and Reentry Services, 100 Larkin St, San Francisco, CA 94102.