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Compensation, Budgets, and Staffing in a New Era for Law Libraries

Comprehensive American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) survey looks at salaries, benefits, and staffing within the legal information profession amid many changes

CHICAGO – November 22, 2021 — The newly released *2021 AALL Biennial Salary Survey & Organizational Characteristics* report (*AALL Salary Survey*) conducted by the [American Association of Law Libraries](http://www.aallnet.org) (AALL) features extensive compensation data for law librarians and legal information professionals.

The 15th edition of the survey report provides the only comprehensive, comparative salary information designed by and for legal information professionals serving in academic, law firm/corporate, and government settings. The *2021 AALL Salary Survey* continues to be updated based on the current environment. Organizations were asked if library salary budgets as well as benefits were impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The *AALL Salary Survey* provides a thorough overview of compensation and benefits for the profession—including data on the impact of COVID-19. In a time of tremendous change in both the job market and law librarianship, this publication provides essential information for experienced, new, and potential law librarians,” noted Diane M. Rodriguez, president of AALL. “It’s a valuable resource for organizations and individuals alike as they continue to assess, plan, and move forward during a challenging and pivotal time.”

Among other key findings from this edition of the survey were the differences in compensation for law librarians across library types and positions. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](http://www.bls.gov), the average annual salary for librarians across all library types overall was \$60,820 in 2020. The *2021 AALL Salary Survey* found that the average salary for reference/research law librarians was \$91,431 in firm/corporate, \$74,227 in academic, and \$71,393 in government law libraries. Additionally, the average annual salary for a director or chief law librarian was \$162,558 in academia, \$144,460 in firm/corporate, and \$107,255 in government law libraries.

The *AALL Salary Survey* has been tracking expenditures on electronic resources since the 1990s, and the 2021 findings showed that those expenses continue to claim a greater

portion of the budget for all three types of law libraries relative to 2019. On average, firm/corporate law libraries used 85 percent of their total information budgets on electronic resources, while academic and government law librarians spent 59 and 34 percent, respectively.

Additional data detailed in the report included institutional benefits for professionals and other legal information personnel working in law libraries, staffing numbers, hard copy information budgets, educational characteristics, and more.

The survey was distributed to 651 law libraries around the country with 308 surveys completed for a response rate of 47.3 percent. The complete survey report is available as a complimentary digital edition to AALL members. Print and digital editions are also available for sale to nonmembers. Details are available at bit.ly/AALL-salary.

About AALL

The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) is the only national association dedicated to the legal information profession and its professionals. Founded in 1906 on the belief that people—lawyers, judges, students, and the public—need timely access to relevant legal information to make sound legal arguments and wise legal decisions, its more than 3,500 members are problem solvers of the highest order. AALL fosters the profession by offering its members knowledge, leadership, and community that make the whole legal system stronger. For more information, visit www.aallnet.org.