



How Law Libraries Leverage CEB's Resources to Become Hubs for *Accessible Legal Research in California*



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Under Larry Meyer's leadership, the San Bernardino County Law Library became a trusted source of legal information for solo attorneys, judges and community members across California.

Solo attorneys who are stretched thin, litigants navigating court cases without legal representation and judges managing fast-paced dockets all rely on public law libraries to access reliable information. These institutions often fly under the radar, but their role is essential, especially when led by someone who sees access to legal knowledge as a community obligation.

That was Larry Meyer's perspective throughout his career as director of the San Bernardino County Law Library. With more than two decades of public service, he helped maintain one of the largest public law libraries in the state, offering resources for everyone from experienced attorneys to pro se litigants. His focus was on making legal information not only available but practical and easy to understand. In July, Meyer received the American Association of Law Libraries' Marian Gould Gallagher Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his commitment to open access and community service.

Making legal information usable, not just available

For law libraries serving a wide range of patrons, expanding access to legal tools and information doesn't just mean putting books on the shelves — it's about making sure people can use those resources effectively. In San Bernardino, Meyer and his team served attorneys, paralegals, judges, court staff and everyday Californians trying to navigate legal issues on their own.

"This was a key reason why CEB's [OnLAW® platform](#) became one of the library's most-used digital tools: Patrons could easily navigate it and apply the information to real issues," Meyer said.

"OnLAW was probably, at least in our case, the most used of our electronic databases. This was mostly because it had the practitioner material that was used by both attorneys and self-represented litigants."

What Meyer found most crucial was the structure of the content, especially its use of plain language, examples and step-by-step guidance. This matters because many people who visit the law library — especially those without a legal background — aren't just looking to read the law. They need to understand what it means and what steps to take.

Among the most frequently referenced titles were the [Civil Procedure Before Trial](#) and [Civil Procedure During Trial](#) volumes, which serve as foundational resources for legal education and practical guides for patrons preparing to represent themselves.

Expanding access in underserved areas

Meyer saw CEB not just as a legal publisher, but as a partner in expanding access to information. Through collaboration with public law librarians, Meyer worked with CEB to introduce options that made OnLAW more widely available, especially in smaller, resource-limited jurisdictions. One approach was a shared subscription model that allowed two or three county law libraries access to OnLAW under a single account. This made it possible for rural communities, which often lacked the budget for legal research tools, to access California-specific content at no cost to users. Another effort focused on improving access to archived pamphlets. After librarians flagged that back issues weren't available online, CEB digitized and hosted them on the platform, expanding historical reference options for patrons statewide.

In addition to serving its local residents, the San Bernardino County Law Library became a resource hub for the broader California legal ecosystem. Law students, court staff and even retired attorneys used CEB resources to stay informed or assist with volunteer legal services.



Larry Meyer with his brother Patrick Meyer, Library Director and law professor at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. Larry received the Bethany J. Ochal Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession.



“It really ran the full spectrum of law students, paralegals, attorneys, court staff and even retired lawyers who came back to help with legal aid,” Meyer said.

By offering CEB access at no cost, the library helped level the playing field for those without commercial subscriptions. Whether preparing for trial or navigating a legal process, patrons could access California-specific, practitioner-oriented content that bridged critical knowledge gaps.

When libraries serve as hubs of information and connection, they extend the reach of legal knowledge and support a more inclusive legal system. Beyond providing resources, the library connected people and organizations across the wider region, linking attorneys, self-represented litigants and legal aid volunteers to create a network that amplified access to justice.

Under Meyer's leadership, the San Bernardino County Law Library earned national recognition, including designation as Federal Depository Library of the Year. But his focus remained on the everyday impact: equipping the public with tools to understand and navigate the law with confidence.

His advice to today's law librarians? Stay active, be collaborative and lead with a commitment to service.



“My philosophy is to always do what's right,” he said. “It's not always a popularity contest, but that's the job.”

Want to learn how CEB can support your law library's mission?

▶ [Schedule a demo](#) or contact us to discuss OnLAW access options for your institution.

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