

Introduction to Library Laws of New Jersey, Sixth Edition, January 1997

Compiler's Introduction to the Sixth Edition

Library Laws of New Jersey is intended to be a current, comprehensive reference tool for the library community. Its scope and application pertain to all types of libraries. The sixth edition is current to December 31, 1996. (Note: the online version contains updated information.)

Scope

Several types of legal materials are included in this volume. The majority of this volume is comprised of materials from the *New Jersey Statutes Annotated* and the *New Jersey Administrative Code* which are specific to libraries.

There are also numerous laws affecting libraries that are not specifically considered library legislation but which are extremely important to the library community. Examples are the **Open Public Meetings Act** and the **Public School Contract Law**. For this reason, many of these laws or relevant portions of them have also been included in this volume.

The volume also encompasses formal **Attorney General's Opinions**. The Attorney General, as legal advisor to State agencies, interprets statutes. These interpretations are advisory in nature and may or may not be issued as formal opinions. Only three formal opinions relating directly to libraries have been issued. Only opinions which are issued as formal opinions can be reprinted.

A feature of this volume is the annotated section of references to **related laws**. Major legislation in areas such as Civil Rights, Civil Service, Employer-Employee Relations, etc. have implications for libraries statewide. In this section, brief summaries of the content of more than thirty major laws appear with their citations.

Another important feature is the **Citation Location Tables**. When the user knows the citation of a law or code, the tables will indicate the page on which it appears. The tables are particularly useful for quick reference.

A useful aspect of this volume is an **extensive Index**. There are numerous ways to use the index. Information can be accessed by type of library, by broad subject, and by specific term.

Methodology

There were several steps involved in the production of *Library Laws of New Jersey*.

First, the contents of the previous edition of *Library Laws of New Jersey* were reviewed. Every citation was checked to see if any amendments or revisions had been passed since the last edition. New legislation which had been passed since the publication of the last edition was added to this original material.

A data base search of the *New Jersey Statutes Annotated* was conducted for the terms "library," "libraries," and "librarians" to locate additional relevant materials for this edition. Each citation from this data base search was reviewed and considered for inclusion. The full text of each law was checked for revisions or amendments.

Those materials which specifically related to libraries formed the initial core content for this edition of *Library Laws of New Jersey*.

The next step in the process was the identification of laws which impact on libraries but are not specifically considered library legislation.

To identify these materials, all legislative files of the Library Development Bureau were reviewed. In addition, the Bureau of Law and Reference of the New Jersey State Library, the Office of Legislative Services and the library of the Office of the Attorney General were also consulted for their suggestions. Each suggestion was reviewed and considered. Judgment and experience were the final determinants for selection of materials to be included.

During this reviewing process, the current activities of the legislature had to be monitored closely for new legislation to be added and for amendments to laws which had been chosen for inclusion. After all materials for inclusion had been identified, organizational and editorial decisions were made regarding the arrangement and format of the text. When the arrangement was completed, the entire contents were word-processed.

The final stages of preparation included extensive proofreading, editing and indexing.

Editorial Policy

The compilation of a volume of this nature necessitates numerous editorial decisions. For example, compilers realized that further explanation of material presented was often needed. Therefore, editorial notes are included to provide additional explanations for the reader.

Readers should be advised that the actual text of the statutes and regulations have been reproduced. Inconsistencies in style, format, wording, and spelling have been reproduced without editorial changes in the text by the compilers. As an example, the New Jersey State Library is consistently cited in the *Library Laws of New Jersey* as the Division of the State Library, Archives, and History, a division of the New Jersey Department of Education. Through a reorganization plan authorized by Governor Thomas Kean in 1983, some responsibilities of the State Library were transferred to the New Jersey Department of State. A second reorganization plan by Governor Christine Whitman in 1996 transferred all

remaining State Library responsibilities from the Department of Education to Thomas Edison State College. Since the statutes have not been revised to reflect these reorganizations, they are also not reflected in *Library Laws*.

Thomas M. O'Malley
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NOTE: We would like to thank the West Publishing Company for permission to use the *New Jersey Statutes Annotated* citations (N.J.S.A.) and headings in the compilation of the *Library Laws of New Jersey*. These citations are the most common means of identifying the statutes for the general public.

Last updated: March 15, 2000.