



County Law Libraries Survey 2021

81

Total Responses

About the Numbers

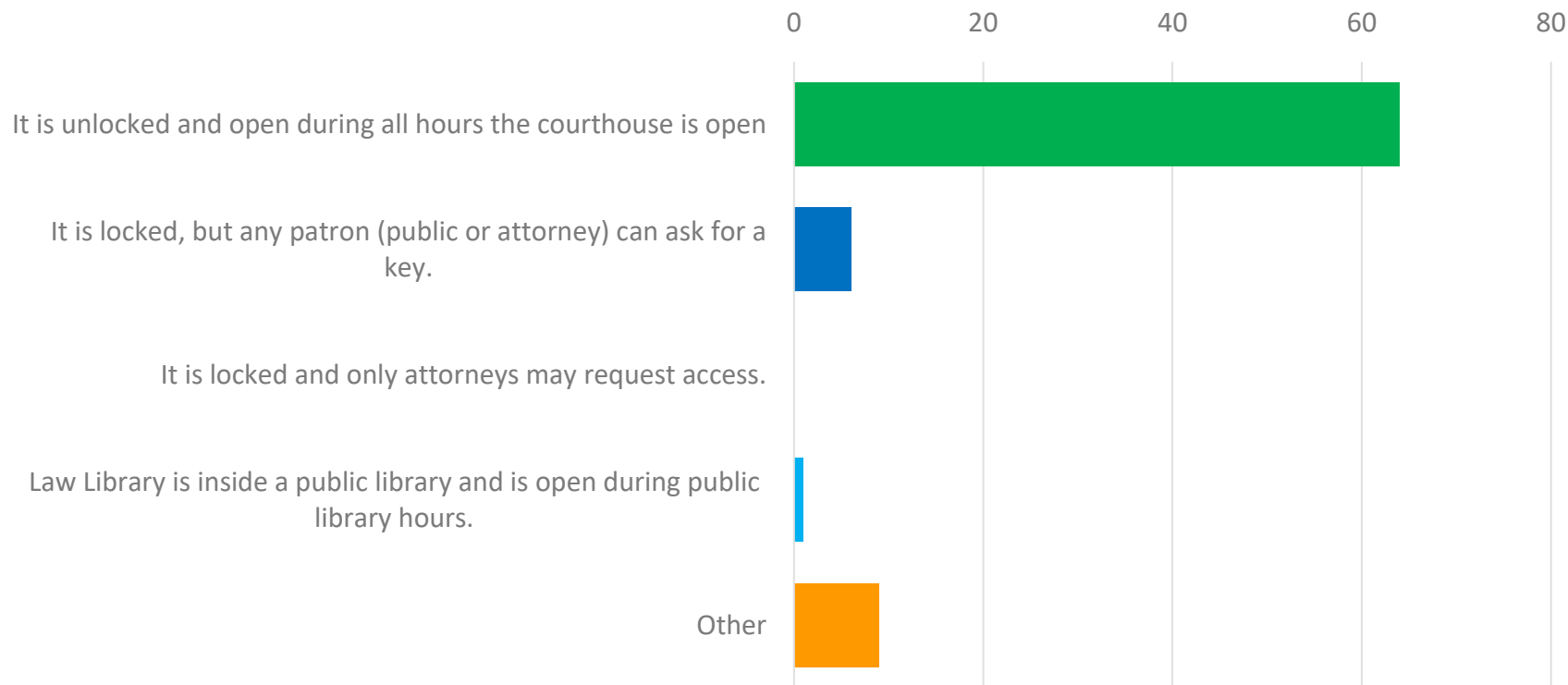
Dakota and St. Louis Counties have more than one location

Lyon/Lincoln and Chippewa/Lac Qui Parle/Yellow Medicine Counties have joint law libraries

Houston, Wabasha, and Waseca Counties do not have county law libraries

9 counties did not respond

Q2: When is your library open to the public?



Q2: When is your library open to the public?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It is unlocked and open during all hours the courthouse is open.	80.00%	64
It is locked, but any patron (public or attorney) can ask for a key.	7.50%	6
It is locked and only attorneys may request access.	0.00%	0
Law library is inside a public library and is open during public library hours.	1.25%	1
Other (please specify)	11.25%	9
TOTAL		80

Q2: When is your library open to the public?

Other:

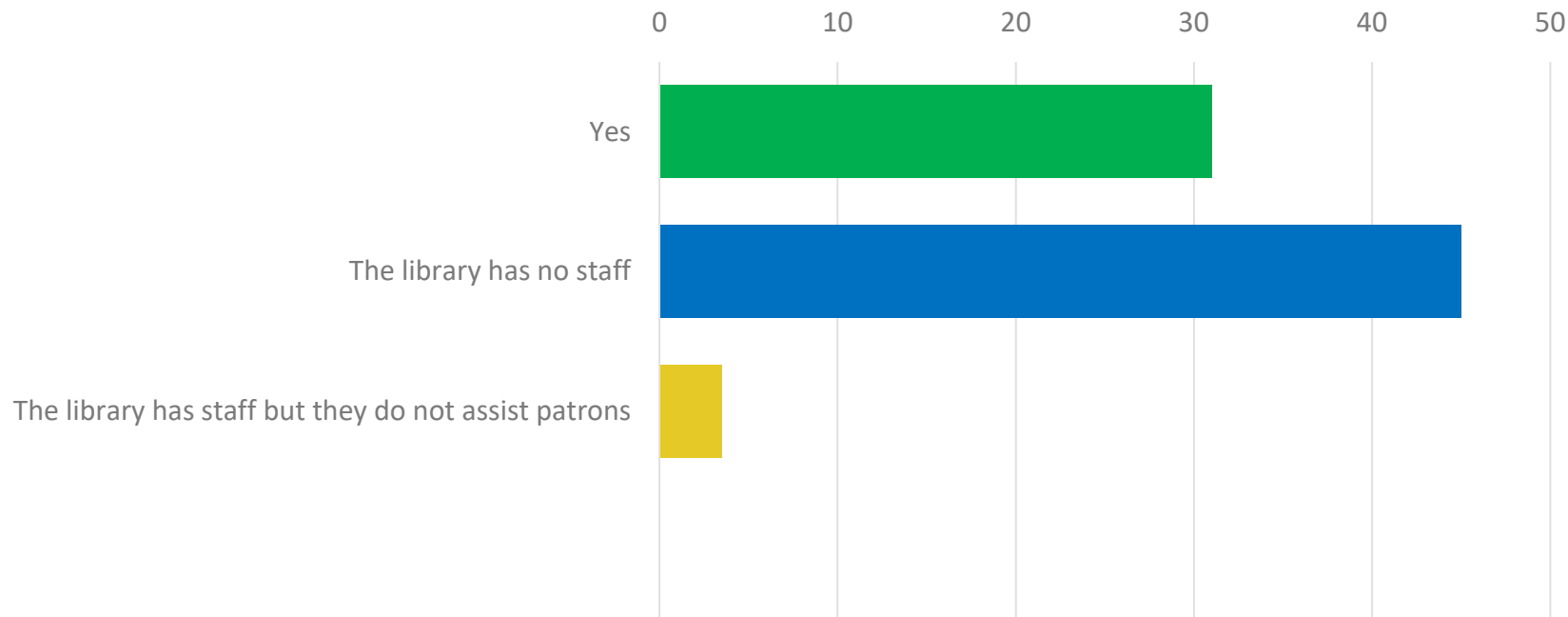
- Due to Covid, we are locked. When open, we are unlocked the same hours as the Courthouse.
- It is locked because we do OFP/HROs here. We are staffed full-time so we buzz people in as needed.
- We are open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We are usually unlocked except now during COVID; we have a 2 person room capacity limit (excluding the law librarians because it is a small space) and a mask requirement. Currently our door is locked and patrons ring the doorbell, alerting us to their presence. If they do not have a mask we have masks on-hand. If they do not wish to wear a mask we can still assist them as our door is glass and we speak to them through the glass door.
- Unlocked and open 8-5, M-F (slightly longer than court hours, but the Gov Ctr does remain open a bit longer although it can be difficult to get in due to weapons screening)

Q2: When is your library open to the public?

Other:

- Hastings locked from 11:30-12:30 for staff lunch; Apple Valley inside of public library
- It is locked, but anyone can ask staff at Court Administration to open it up when they need to utilize the room
- It is locked, but any patron can contact Court Administration staff and they will unlock the library
- It is locked, but any patron (public or attorney) and ask to be granted access. (We do not give them the key and it stays locked even when they are inside)
- I believe we only have a Westlaw terminal. It's available for use during normal courthouse hours.

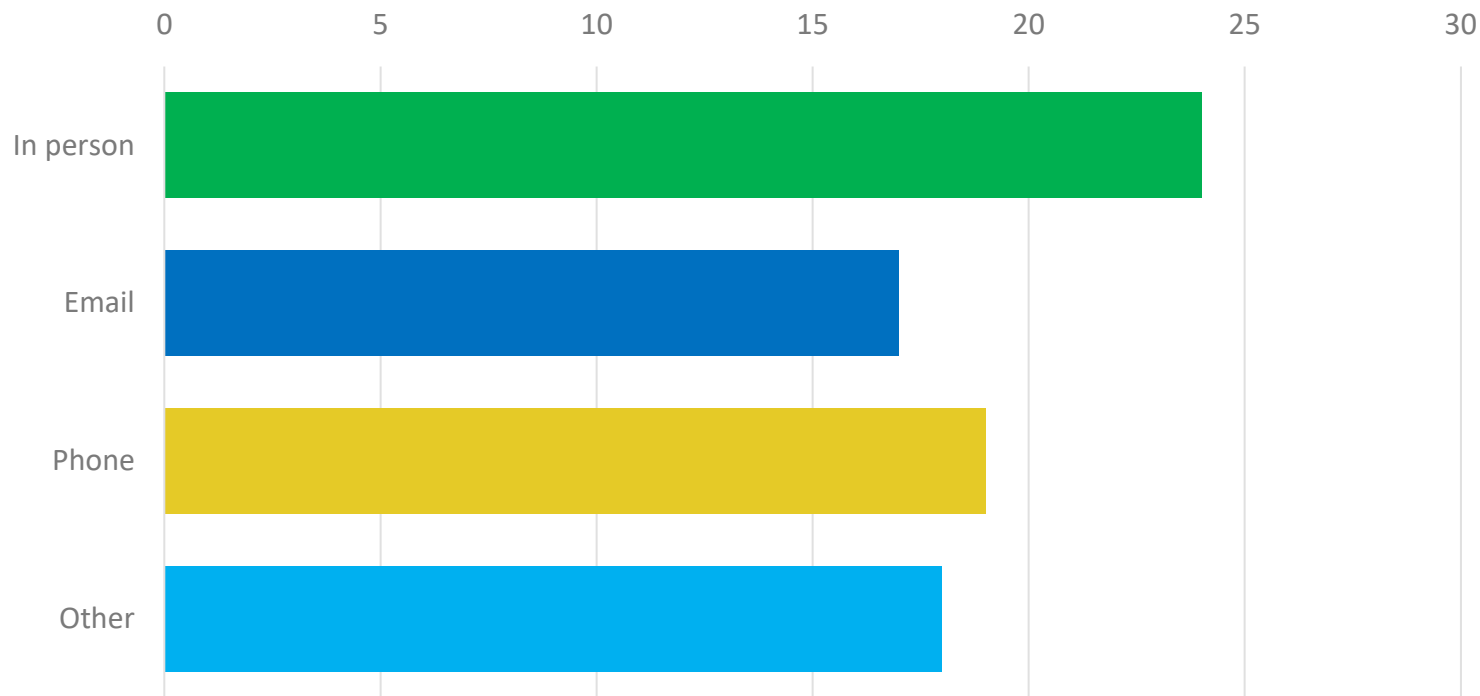
Q3: Does your library location have staff available to assist patrons?



Q3: Does your library location have staff available to assist patrons?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	39.24%	31
The library has no staff	56.96%	45
The library has staff but they do not assist patrons	3.80%	3
Comments	0.00%	0
TOTAL		79

Q4: If yes, how are they available?



Q4: If yes, how are they available?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In person	64.86%	24
Email	45.95%	17
Phone	51.35%	19
Other (please specify)	48.65%	18
Total Respondents: 37		

Q4: If yes, how are they available?

Other:

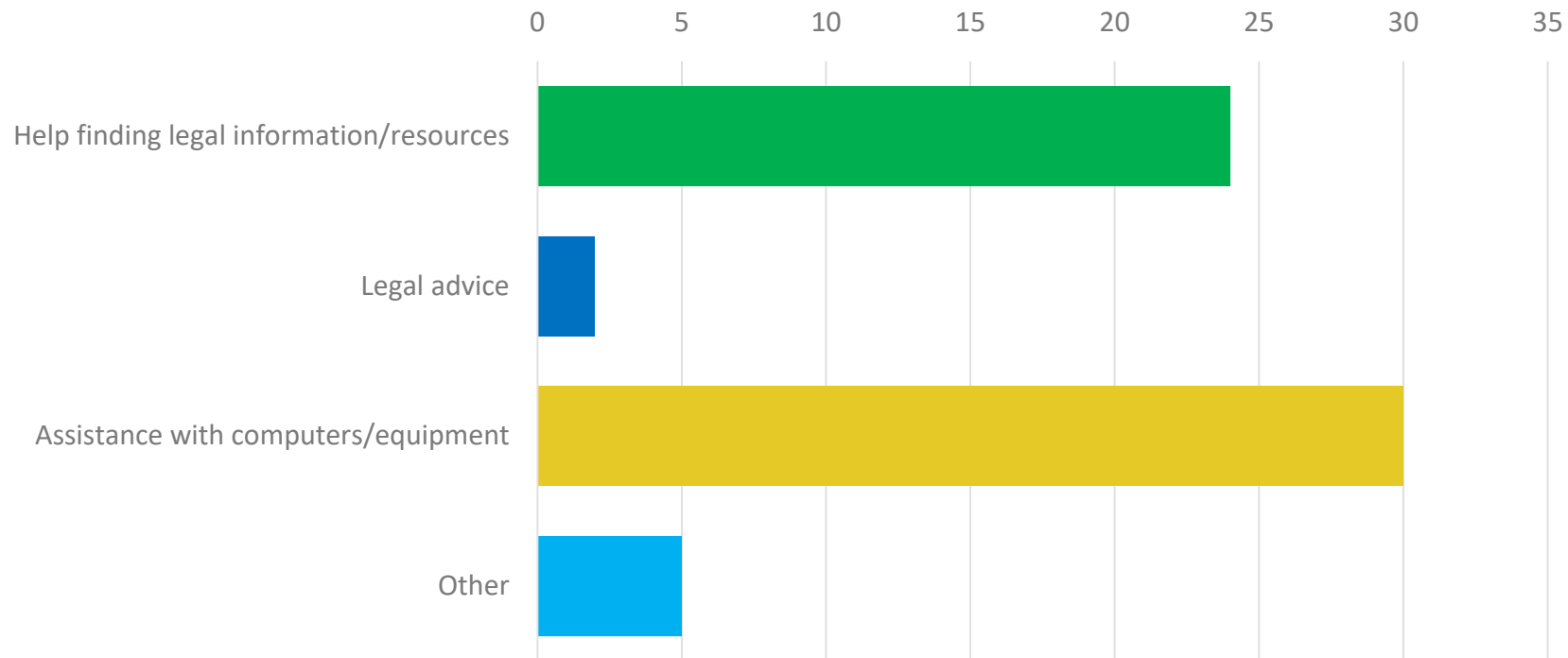
- Mail, mostly from inmates at County Jail
- Director goes to public libraries (on hold during pandemic)
- We usually would have our law clerk help the customer
- We are occasionally staffed with a part-time clerk, when one is available. Otherwise the email/phone are monitored by the current board President, who works in the courthouse.
- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month from 2-4 p.m. – Polk County Self-Help Clinic sponsored by Polk County Law Library Board and Legal Services of NW MN
- The part time librarian is available either in person or by phone from his home
- Pre Covid we had a local attorney that is contracted through the law library to assist pro se litigants. Since covid this has been done only by phone and not in person
- Depends on their calendar, but can be reached almost at anytime
- Self-help Center

Q4: If yes, how are they available?

Other:

- The library only has the law clerk to assist – they can request assistance by phone or email.
- Court staff are the only ones available to help in the law library.
- There is a PT law librarian but they are not always available
- The library is not staffed but our law clerks are always available to assist patrons
- Law clerks will assist patrons
- County Attorney's office or Court Administration may assist depending on what type of assistance is needed
- A law clerk sometimes but it's rare
- County Attorney and Court Administration staff if available assist depending on what assistance is needed
- Court staff can go help them if it's basic, otherwise there is no one else

Q5: What type of assistance does staff provide?



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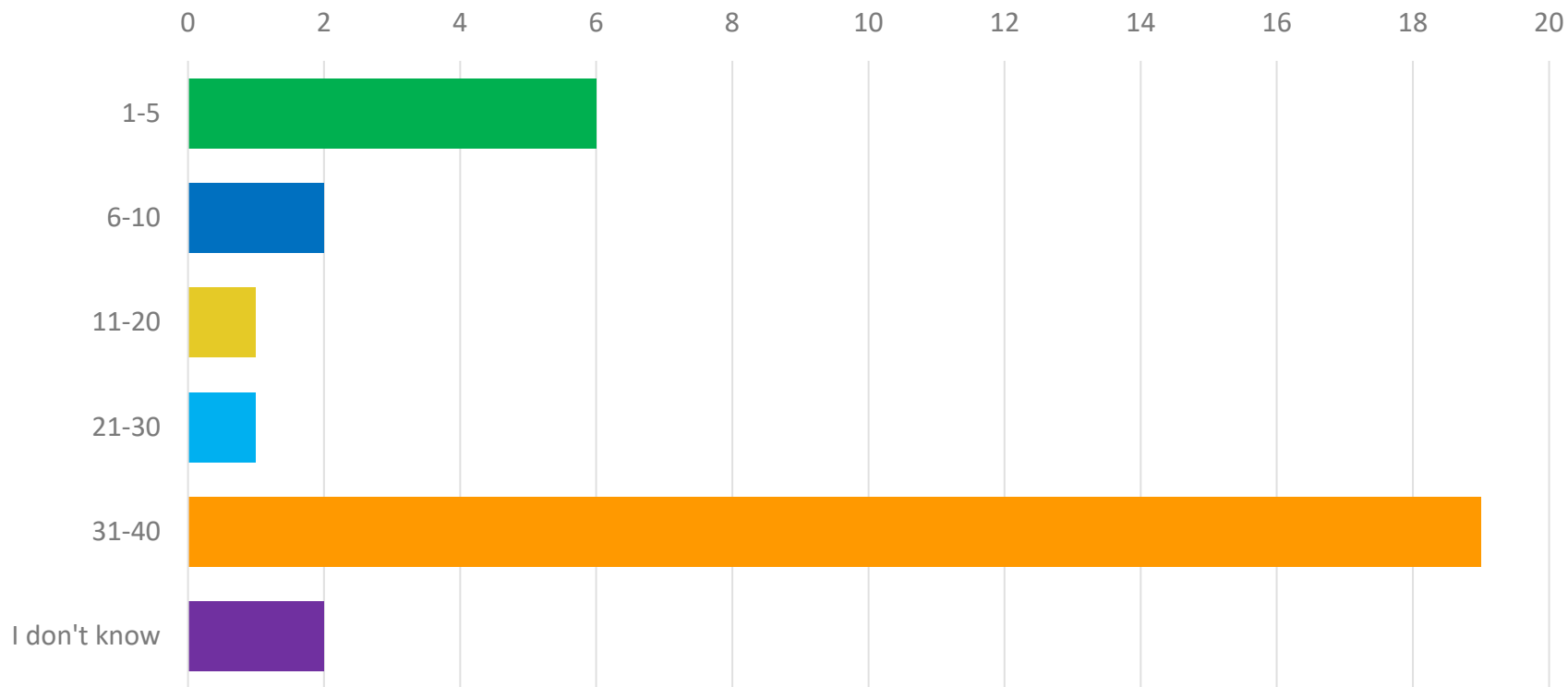
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Help finding legal information/resources	77.42%	24
Legal advice	6.45%	2
Assistance with computers/equipment	96.77%	30
Other (please specify)	16.13%	5
Total Respondents: 31		

Q5: What type of assistance does staff provide?

Other:

- Referrals and hosting pro bono clinics
- They do not represent parties, but make sure forms are complete and answer legal questions
- Legal information
- How to utilize the library
- We spend a significant amount of time providing documents drafted by the Minnesota Judicial Branch to patrons coming in the door. For some, we schedule them for one of the various clinics we host (family law 1x week, financial 1x month, expungement eomonth), helping them figure out what they need. For many of our patrons, English is a second language so we sometimes have to do a little investigative work on their behalf. We do not have the ability to provide legal advice. We can assist them in legal research but we cannot help them with the conclusion. Our library is used by attorneys, court staff and occasionally, the bench but much more so by community members who are unrepresented.

Q6: How many hours per week is this person (or people if more than 1) available to assist patrons?



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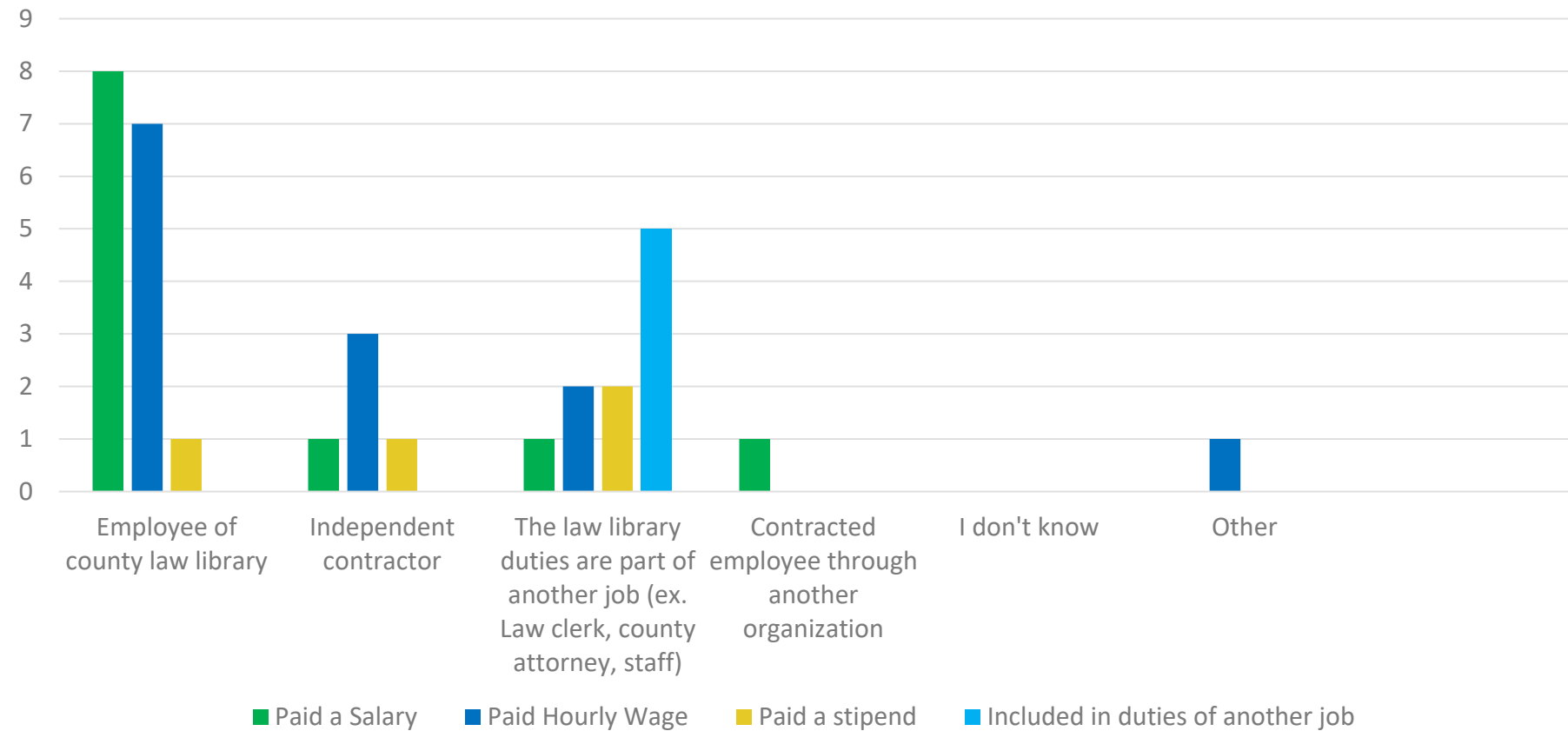
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-5	19.35%	6
6-10	6.45%	2
11-20	3.23%	1
21-30	3.23%	1
31-40	61.29%	19
I don't know	6.45%	2
TOTAL		31

Q6: How many hours per week is this person (or people if more than 1) available to assist patrons?

Comments:

- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month from 2-4 p.m.
- When staffed – it has been some time since we had a clerk, but we do have funds available to pay one.
- As needed
- Only by phone or email
- The librarian is most days of the week by phone, and an individual who assist self litigants is available four hours each week
- We have a full-time librarian available during our hours of operation
- We're available 45 hours per week.
- By request during business hours.
- As often as needed. Our library is rarely used.
- Would depend on staff availability.
- The person doesn't sit in the library, but can come and assist in person at most times when they are not in court.

Q7: The staff person(s) is(are)



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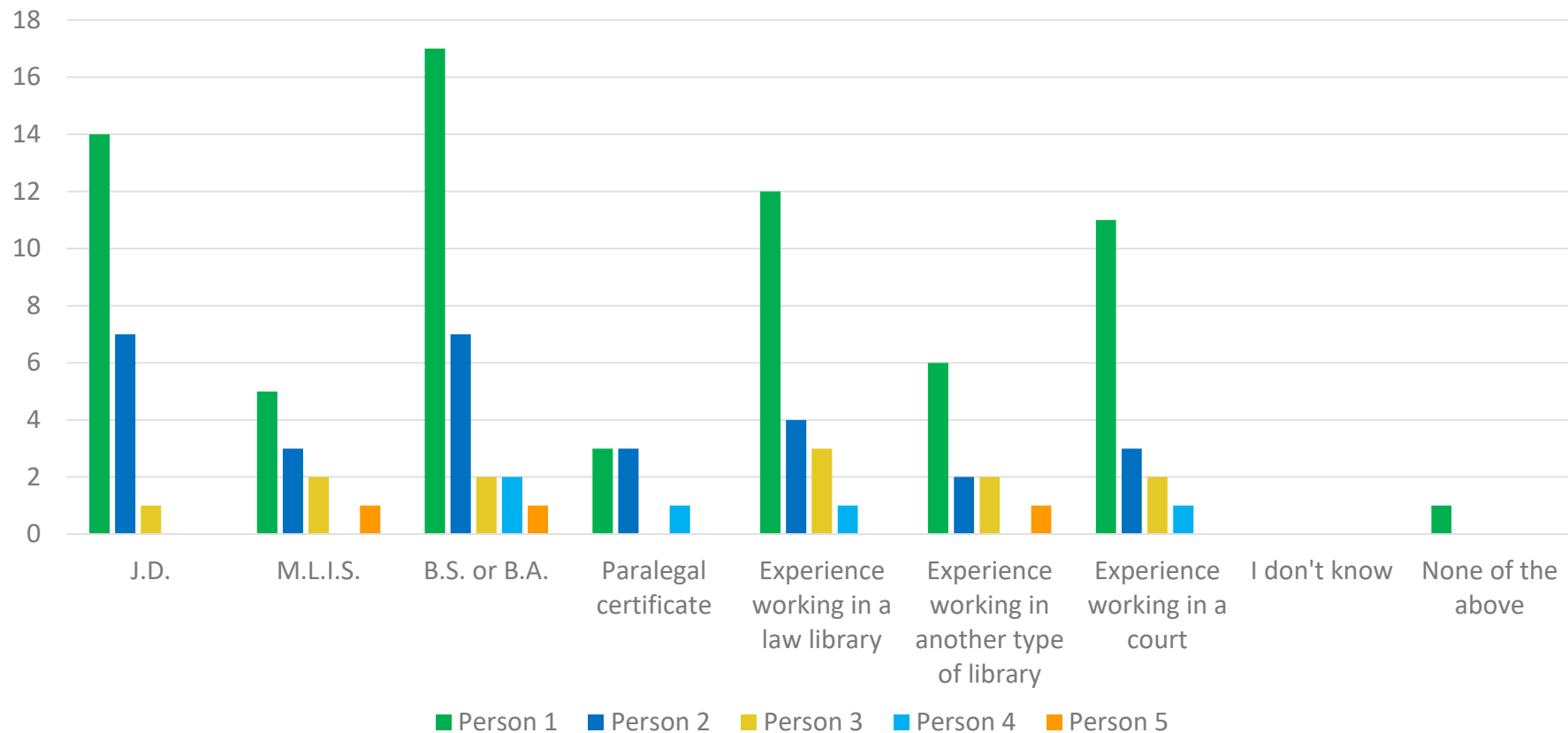
	PAID A SALARY	PAID HOURLY WAGE	PAID A STIPEND (CERTAIN SET AMOUNT PER MONTH FOR LAW LIBRARY DUTIES)	INCLUDED IN DUTIES OF ANOTHER JOB (NOT PAID EXTRA AMOUNT FOR LAW LIBRARY WORK)	TOTAL
Employee of county law library	50.00% 8	43.75% 7	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	16
Independent contractor	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	5
The law library duties are part of another job (ex. law clerk, county attorney staff)	10.00% 1	20.00% 2	20.00% 2	50.00% 5	10
Contracted employee through another organization (ex. St. Louis)	100.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1
I don't know	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0
Other	0.00% 0	100.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	1

Q7: The staff person(s) is(are)

Comments:

- I think what may differentiate us from many other law libraries is that we are not under the auspice of the county. We are a statutory entity run by a Board of Trustees. We are located in the Government Center and provided space, electricity, heat, etc. but nothing else from the County itself even though Olmsted County is in our title.
- I am pretty much an employee, but just labeled as a contractor to prevent me from getting benefits, unfortunately.

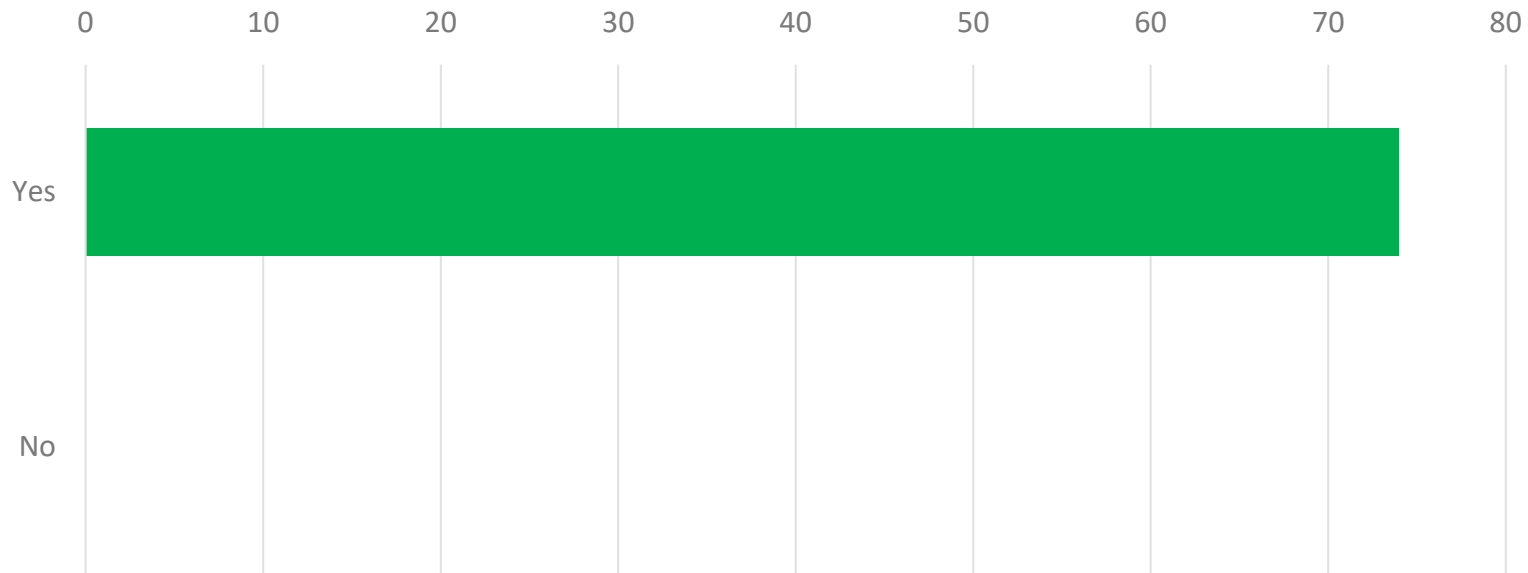
Q9: What education or experience does the staff have?



Q9: What education or experience does the staff have?

[illegible]

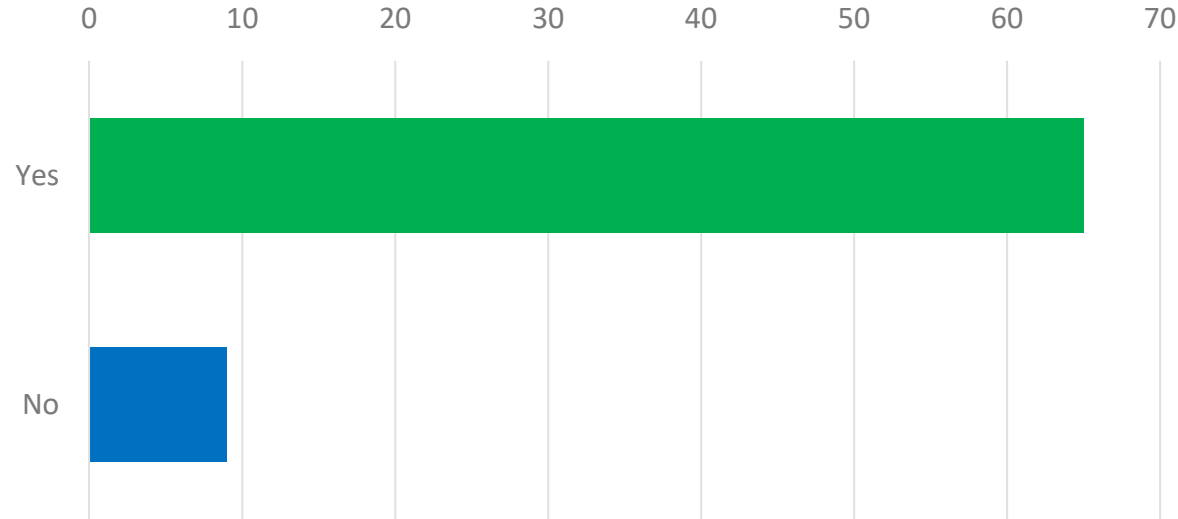
Q10: Does your library have a chair and table at which a patron can sit to work?



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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	74
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		74

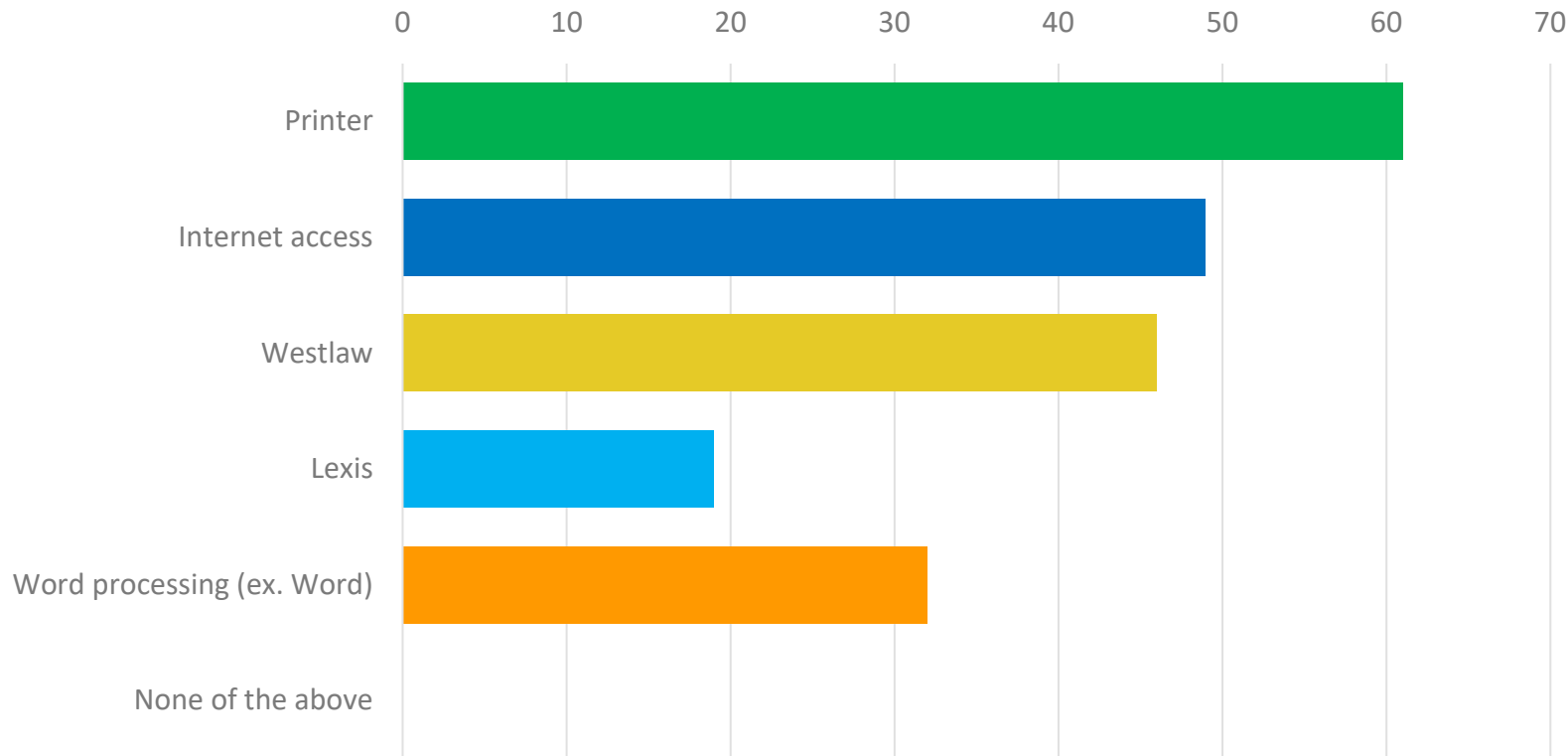
Q11: Does your library have a computer? (This computer would be different from the court-provided Self-Help terminal or the Legal Kiosk.)



Q11: Does your library have a computer? (This computer would be different from the court-provided Self-Help terminal or the Legal Kiosk.)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	87.84%	65
No	12.16%	9
Comment	0.00%	0
TOTAL		74

Q12: If there is a computer, does it have any of the following?



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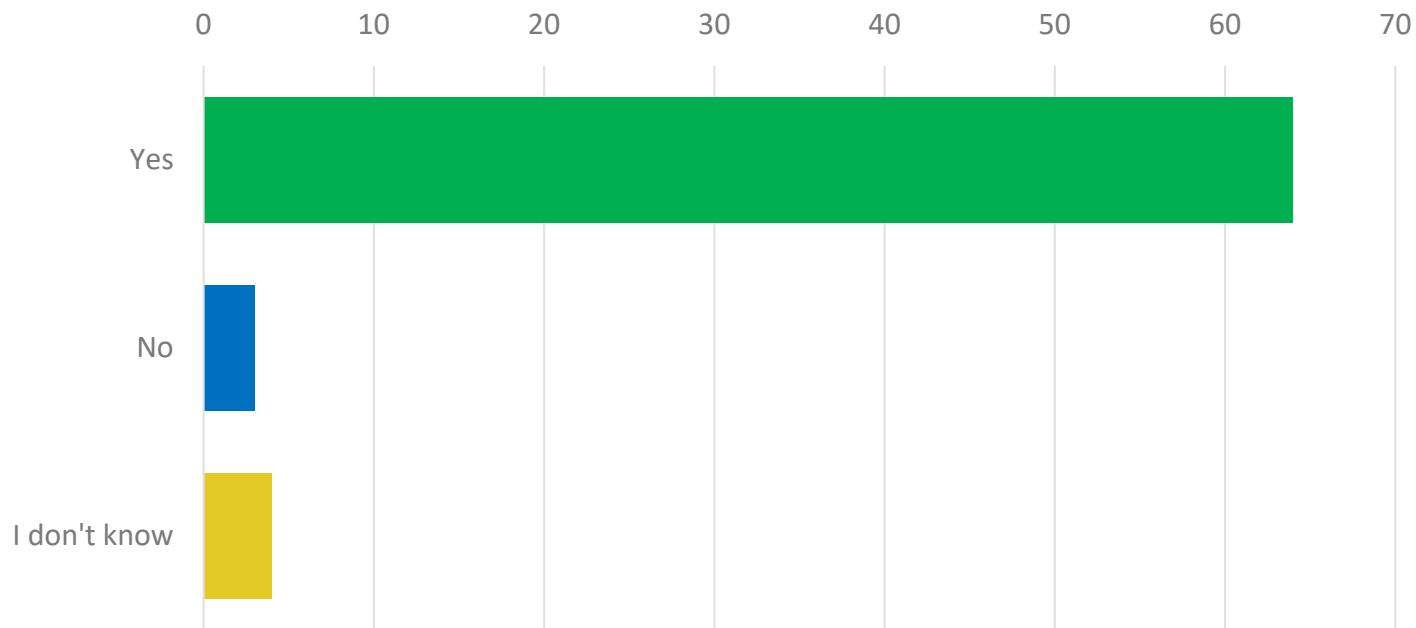
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
printer	89.71%	61
internet access	72.06%	49
Westlaw	67.65%	46
Lexis	27.94%	19
word processing (ex. Word)	47.06%	32
none of the above	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 68		

Q12: If there is a computer, does it have any of the following?

Comments:

- Fast Case
- It is compatible with fillable smart forms from the judicial branch website
- I don't recall if it has Westlaw. I think just Lexis.
- 6 computers plus a Legal Kiosk
- E-filing capability, scanning
- With an icon for the Minnesota Judicial Branch website
- One of our public computers has had Microsoft Office Suite on it; however we are getting new desktops and I don't believe we will be able to offer MS Word with the new computers

Q13: Does your Law Library Board of Trustees meet at least annually?



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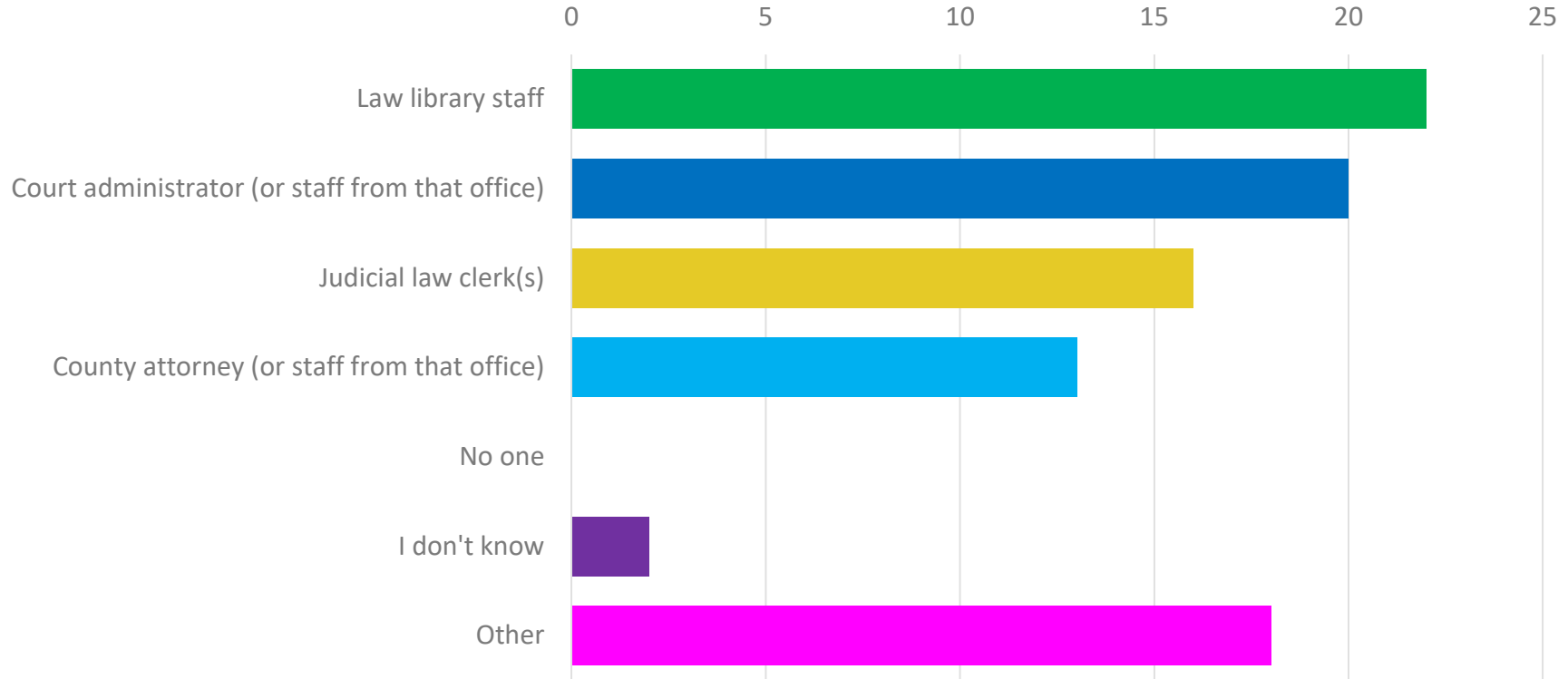
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.14%	64
No	4.23%	3
I don't know	5.63%	4
TOTAL		71

Q13: Does your Law Library Board of Trustees meet at least annually?

Comments:

- The last meeting was in November of 2019
- Quarterly

Q15: Who is in charge of oversight of the law library? (handling bills, updating materials, etc.)



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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Law library staff	30.99%	22
Court administrator (or staff from that office)	28.17%	20
Judicial law clerk(s)	22.54%	16
County Attorney (or staff from that office)	18.31%	13
No one	0.00%	0
I don't know	2.82%	2
Other (please specify)	25.35%	18
Total Respondents: 71		

Q15: Who is in charge of oversight of the law library? (handling bills, updating materials, etc.)

Comments:

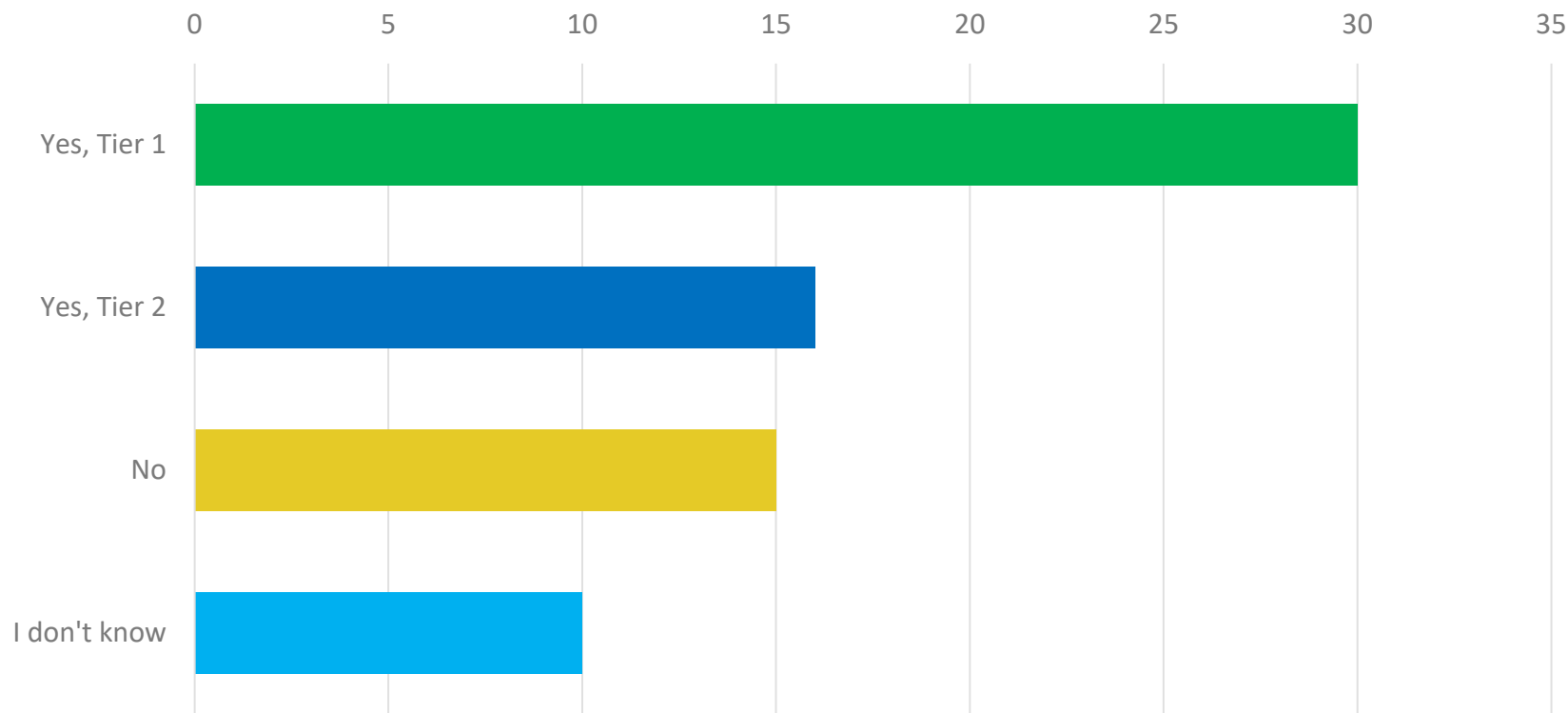
- President of the Board of Trustees
- The members on the law library committee
- The law clerk is also the secretary of the Law Library Board of Trustees
- We had a part-time law librarian but he retired and we need to find someone to fill that position
- The law clerk is also the board secretary
- One of the trustees – private bar member
- Polk County Law Library has a secretary to the board that handles those duties
- Executive Coordinator for the County Administrator Office
- We outsource our accounting but the law library staff do most of the work with oversight by our Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Q15: Who is in charge of oversight of the law library? (handling bills, updating materials, etc.)

Comments:

- Court reporter
- Independent contractor
- This was previously done by the judge's Law Clerk and is currently being done by the Court Administrator as a courtesy but the law library board is looking into hiring a law librarian
- County administrator handles the bills, county attorneys office updates the materials
- Our law library person is no longer doing it, so we need to find someone to fill this role

Q16: Does your library participate in the State Law Library County Law Library Program (CLLP)?



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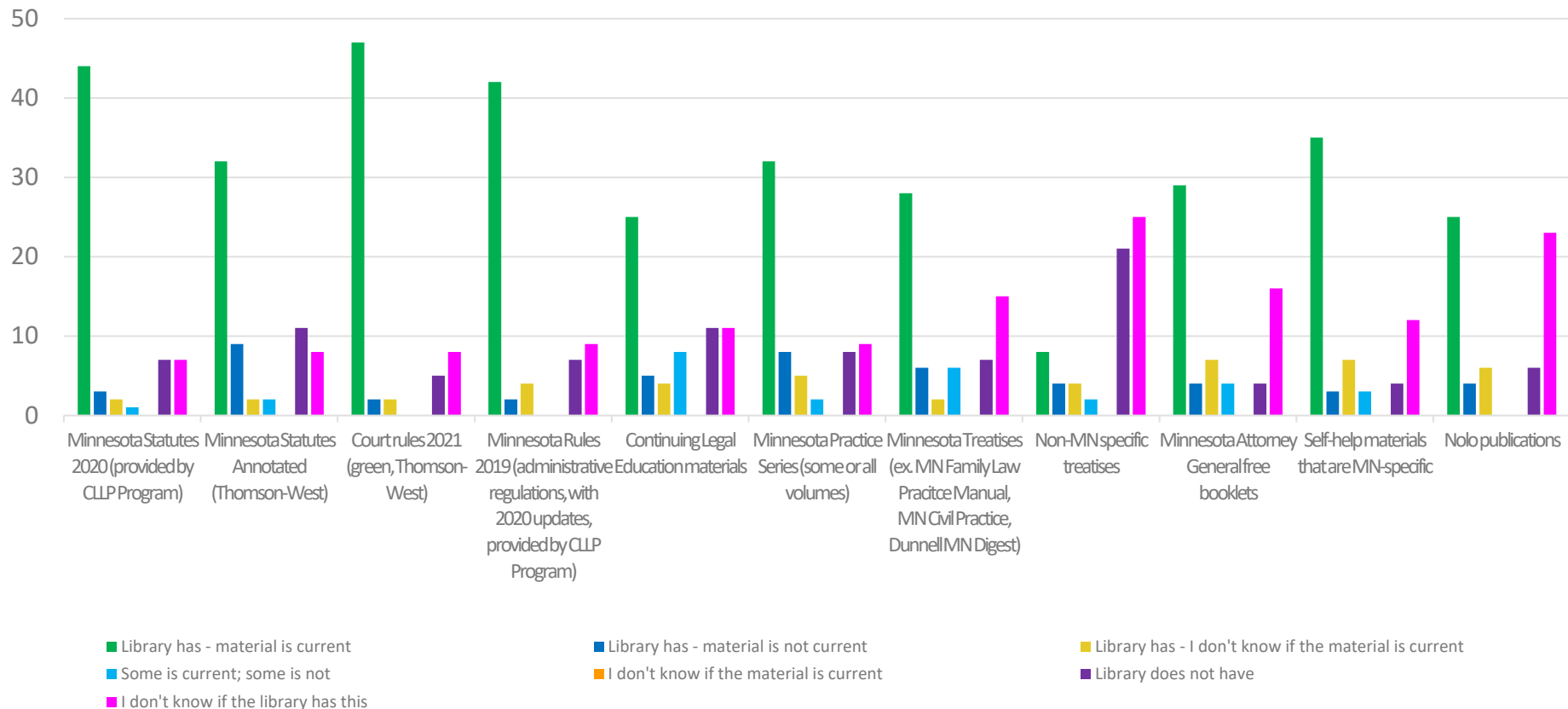
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, Tier 1	42.25%	30
Yes, Tier 2	22.54%	16
No	21.13%	15
I don't know	14.08%	10
TOTAL		71

Q17: In addition to the services already offered in the CLLP, what other assistance from the State Law Library would be helpful?

Comments:

- Letting us know if there are any on-line education programs that we could publish and the public could watch.
- Cooperative collection development or some type of consortium purchase proposal
- Instant access to documents and materials
- Help with setting up on-line seminars on issues like evictions, especially now with the pandemic.
- Advocating for law library staff to be considered employed by the county instead of an independent contractor
- Our law library is rarely used. Assistance I believe would be helpful for pro se litigants would be services they can access via the internet.
- Legal clinics

Q18: Does your library have any of the following materials? (Check all that apply)



Q18: Does your library have any of the following materials? (Check all that apply)

	LIBRARY HAS - MATERIAL IS CURRENT	LIBRARY HAS - MATERIAL IS NOT CURRENT	LIBRARY HAS - I DON'T KNOW IF THE MATERIAL IS CURRENT	SOME IS CURRENT; SOME IS NOT	I DON'T KNOW IF THE MATERIAL IS CURRENT	LIBRARY DOES NOT HAVE	I DON'T KNOW IF THE LIBRARY HAS THIS	TOTAL
▼ Minnesota Statutes (2020 blue set, official statutes provided by CLLP program)	68.75% 44	4.69% 3	3.13% 2	1.56% 1	0.00% 0	10.94% 7	10.94% 7	64
▼ Minnesota Statutes Annotated (large maroon set, from Thomson-West, updated annually)	50.00% 32	14.06% 9	3.13% 2	3.13% 2	0.00% 0	17.19% 11	12.50% 8	64
▼ court rules volume (green 2021 edition from Thomson-West)	73.44% 47	3.13% 2	3.13% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	7.81% 5	12.50% 8	64
▼ Minnesota Rules (administrative regulations, green 2019 set, with 2020 updates, provided by CLLP program)	65.63% 42	3.13% 2	6.25% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.94% 7	14.06% 9	64
▼ Continuing Legal Education materials	39.06% 25	7.81% 5	6.25% 4	12.50% 8	0.00% 0	17.19% 11	17.19% 11	64

Q18: Does your library have any of the following materials? (Check all that apply)

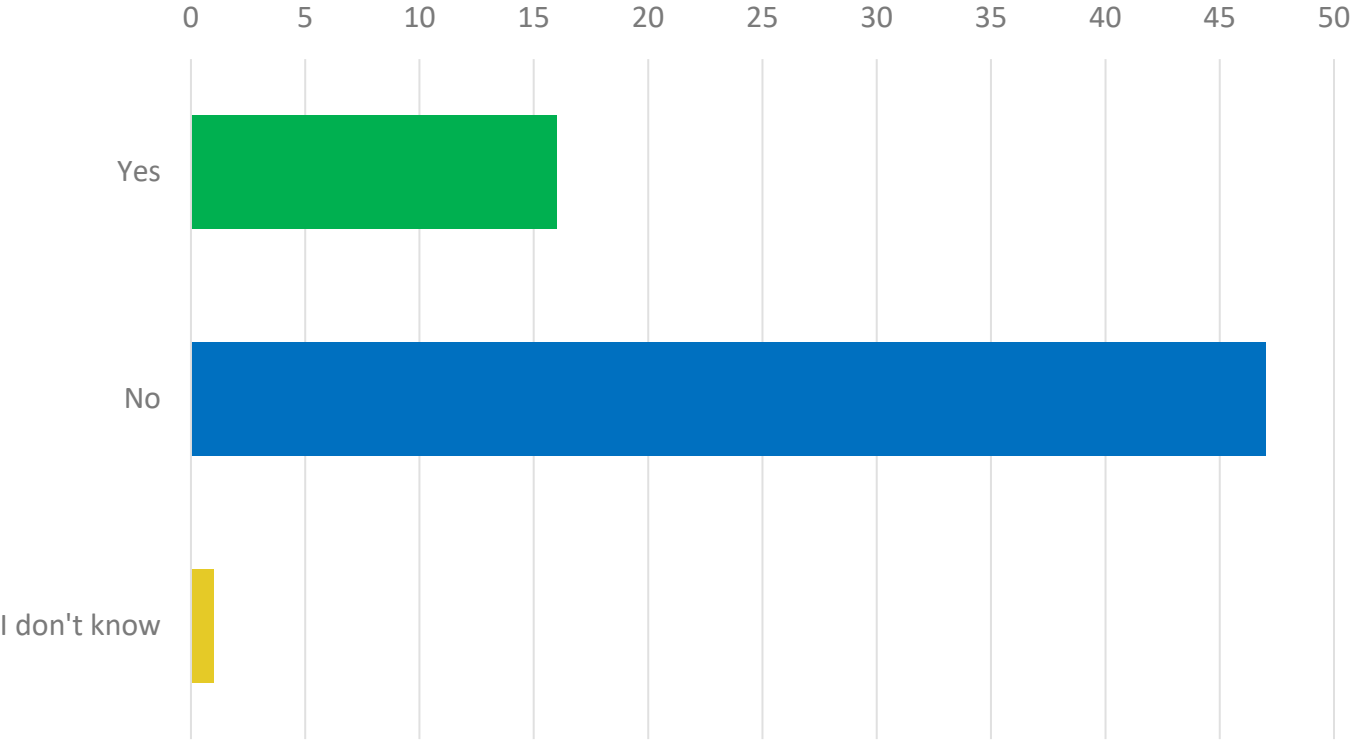
	LIBRARY HAS - MATERIAL IS CURRENT	LIBRARY HAS - MATERIAL IS NOT CURRENT	LIBRARY HAS - I DON'T KNOW IF THE MATERIAL IS CURRENT	SOME IS CURRENT; SOME IS NOT	I DON'T KNOW IF THE MATERIAL IS CURRENT	LIBRARY DOES NOT HAVE	I DON'T KNOW IF THE LIBRARY HAS THIS	TOTAL
Minnesota Practice Series (some or all volumes)	50.00% 32	12.50% 8	7.81% 5	3.13% 2	0.00% 0	12.50% 8	14.06% 9	64
Minnesota treatises (ex. Minnesota Family Law Practice Manual, Minnesota Civil Practice, Dunnell Minnesota Digest)	43.75% 28	9.38% 6	3.13% 2	9.38% 6	0.00% 0	10.94% 7	23.44% 15	64
Non-MN specific treatises	12.50% 8	6.25% 4	6.25% 4	3.13% 2	0.00% 0	32.81% 21	39.06% 25	64
Minnesota Attorney General free booklets	45.31% 29	6.25% 4	10.94% 7	6.25% 4	0.00% 0	6.25% 4	25.00% 16	64
self-help materials that are MN-specific	54.69% 35	4.69% 3	10.94% 7	4.69% 3	0.00% 0	6.25% 4	18.75% 12	64
Nolo publications	39.06% 25	6.25% 4	9.38% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9.38% 6	35.94% 23	64

Q18: Does your library have any of the following materials? (Check all that apply)

Comments:

- We are working on adding self-help and Nolo materials
- We will be purchasing some of the Minnesota Treatises listed above before the end of the year.
- Nolo publications are at the public library only
- Some of the materials are both current and not current.
- Some of our publications/materials were allowed to lapse in 2018 and it is expensive to become current. With the impact COVID has on our income stream, we are exploring to see if it is possible to update.
- Library staff is waiting for Attorney General's office to resume providing free booklets.

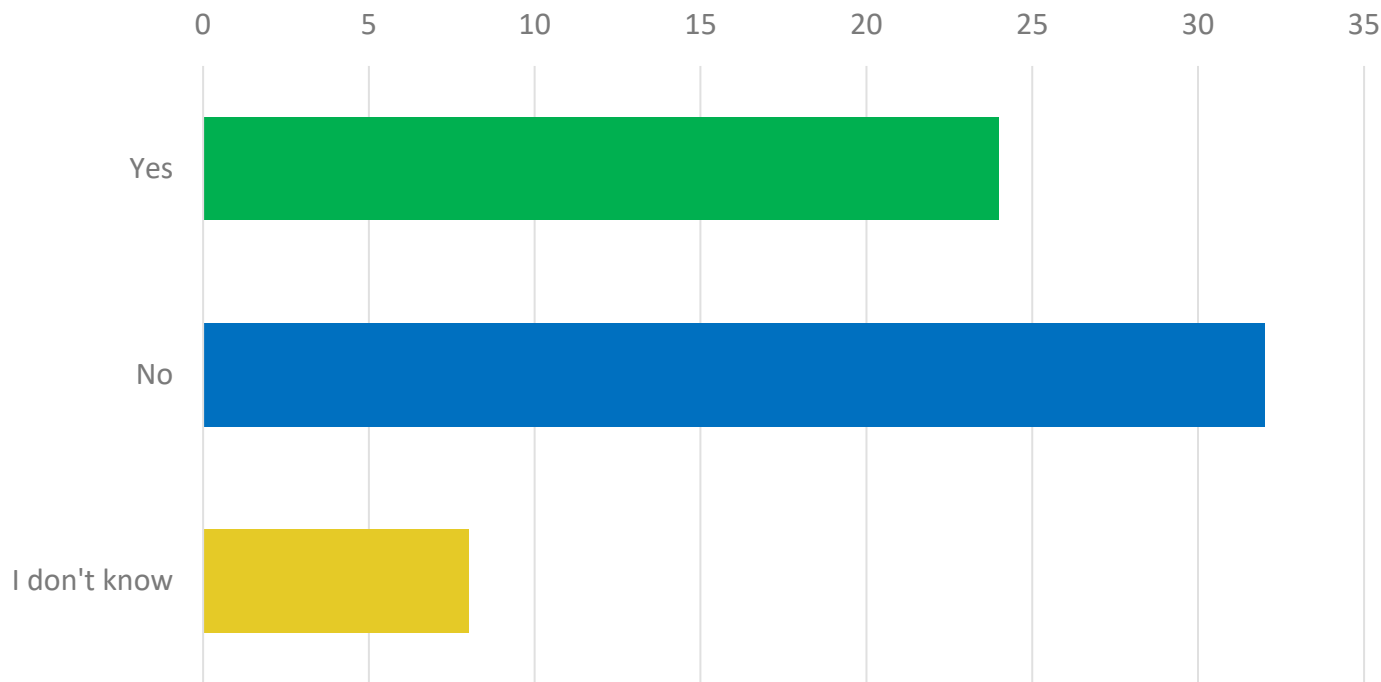
Q19: Does your library have a website?



Q19: Does your library have a website?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.00%	16
No	73.44%	47
I don't know	1.56%	1
TOTAL		64

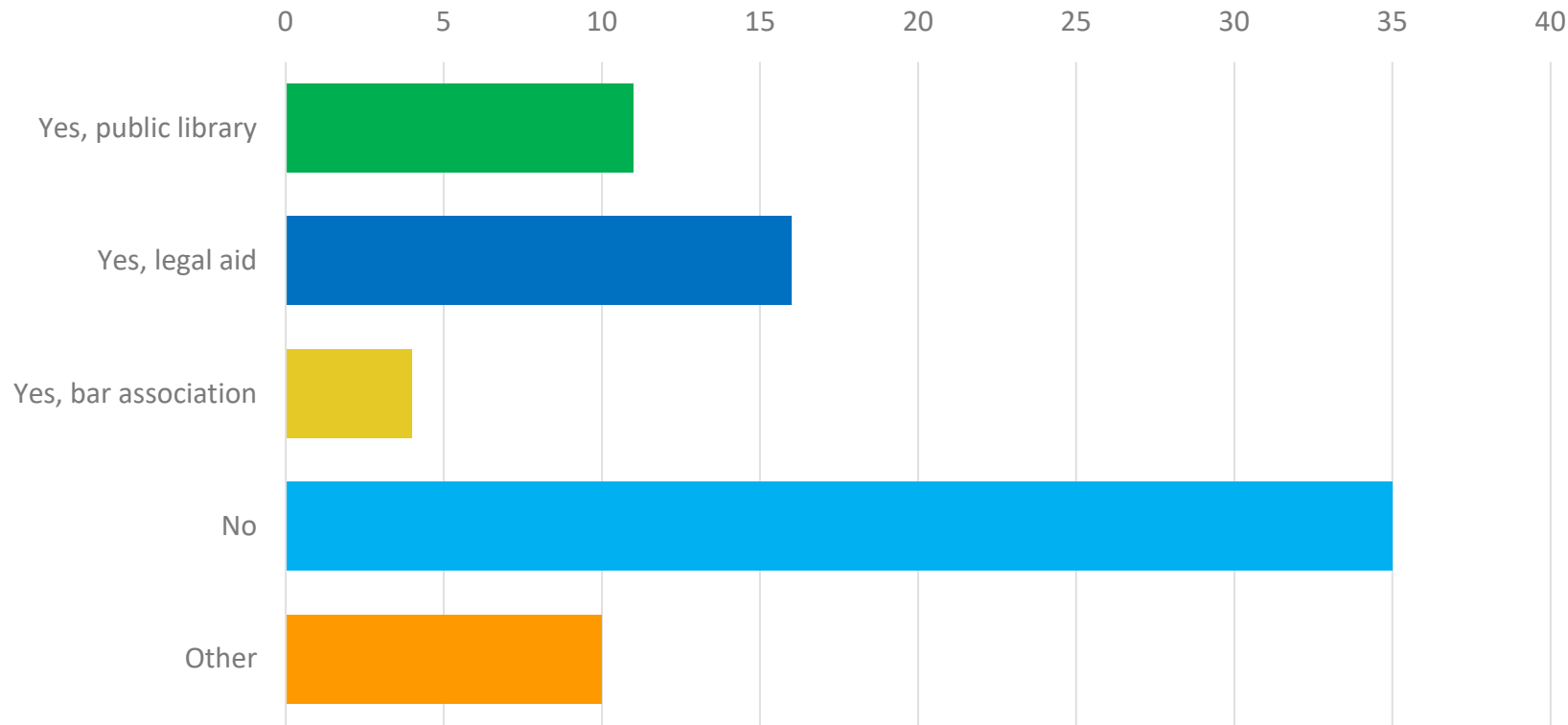
Q20: Is your library listed as a department on your county's website?



Q20: Is your library listed as a department on your county's website?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	37.50%	24
No	50.00%	32
I don't know	12.50%	8
TOTAL		64

Q21: Does your library partner with another organization for expanded services?



Q21: Does your library partner with another organization for expanded services?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, public library	17.19%	11
Yes, legal aid	25.00%	16
Yes, bar association	6.25%	4
No	54.69%	35
Other (please specify)	15.63%	10
Total Respondents: 64		

Q21: Does your library partner with another organization for expanded services?

Other:

- Court administration
- Private attorneys in the area
- We host our clinic in partnership with Legal Assistance of Olmsted County. They find the volunteer attorneys, arrange the dates of the clinic and sometimes funnel possible registrants our way. We sign the registrants up for the clinics, communicate with the volunteer attorneys (send names for conflict checks, summaries, MPA docs if desired, and gather any documents the registrants want to review with the attorney and provide to the attorney).
- Other organizations – VLN, CAIR, LCL, LPRB, and others for CLEs
- County Attorney's Office
- Pre-pandemic the 10th District Self-Help Center held an in person day in the law library once a week.