

Academic Law Libraries COVID-19 Response

May 2020 Survey Results

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Survey Overview

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- Characteristics of Participating Academic Law Libraries

Survey Overview

Survey Purpose & Approach

On May 4, 2020 the 201 academic law libraries in the United States were sent an invitation via the ALL-SIS and NELLCO list-servs to participate in a brief, online survey. The 23-item survey asked libraries about the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on their library and staff and what ideas are being considered as they plan to reopen. While the survey was developed and analyzed by NELLCO, NELLCO membership was not a requirement for survey participation or receipt of the results.

The invitation asked that the survey only be completed once per library. A total of 122 academic law libraries (61%) answered at least one question on the survey. Of the 122 participants who started the survey, 100 (82%) completed the survey.

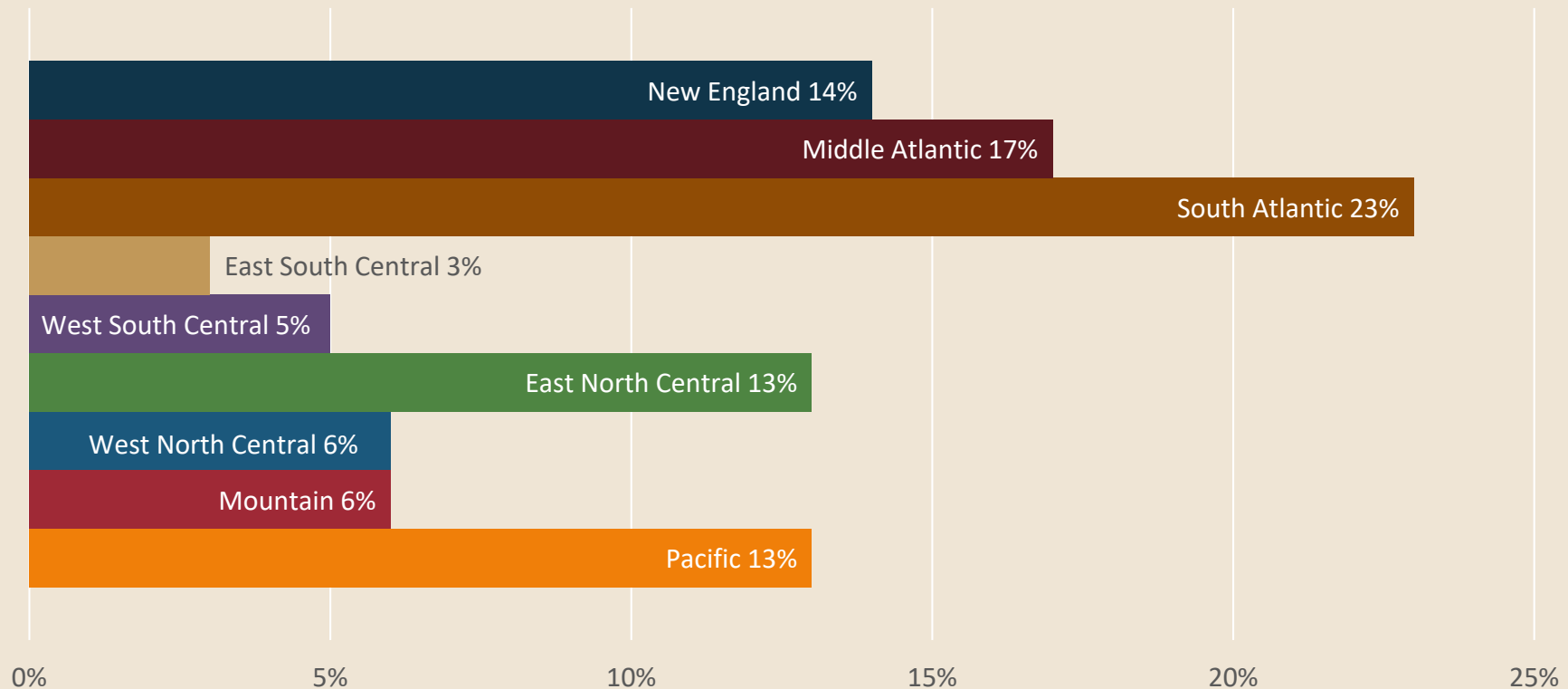
Please note, not all responses presented in this report total 100%. This may occur due to rounding or the ability for participants to select multiple responses on some questions.

Characteristics of Participating Libraries

Location by Region

Region

Responded: 108



Regional Definitions:

New England (VT, NH, ME, MA, CT, RI)

South Atlantic (DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL)

West South Central (TX, OK, AR, LA)

West North Central (ND, MN, IA, MO, KS, NE, SD)

Pacific (WA, OR, CA, AK, HI)

Middle Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA)

East South Central (KY, TN, MS, AL)

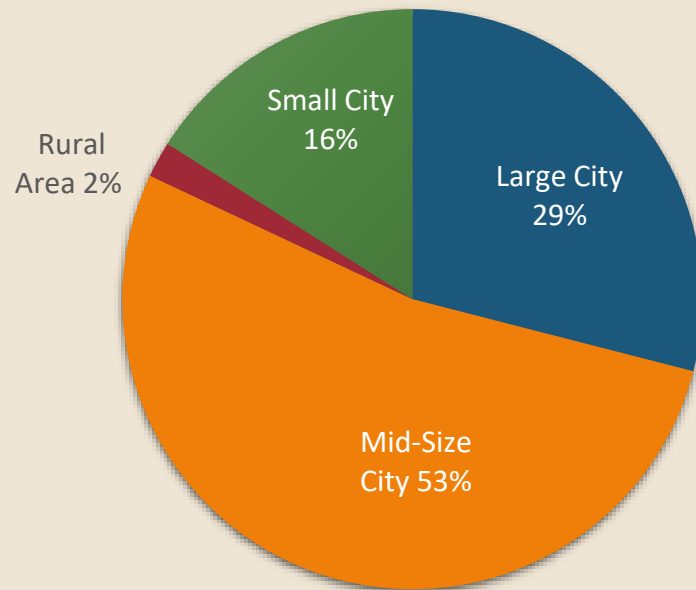
East North Central (WI, MI, IL, IN, OH)

Mountain (MT, ID, WY, NV, UT, CO, AZ, NM)

Characteristics of Participating Libraries

City Size & Stay-at-Home Order

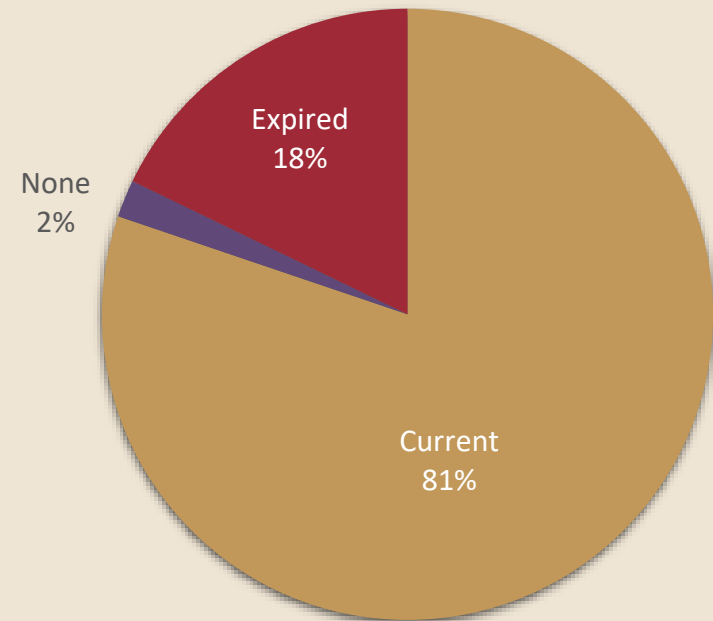
City Size
Responded: 107



Size Definitions:

- Large City 1,000,000+
- Mid-Size City 100,000-999,999
- Small City 10,000-99,999
- Rural Area Less than 10,000

Stay-at-Home Order from
City/State
Responded: 108

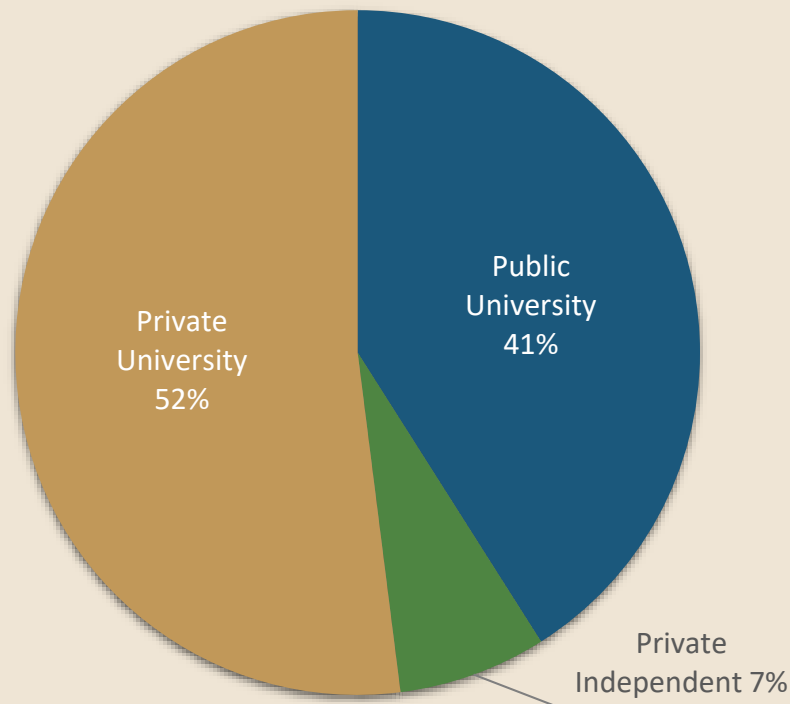


Characteristics of Participating Libraries

Law School Affiliation & FTE

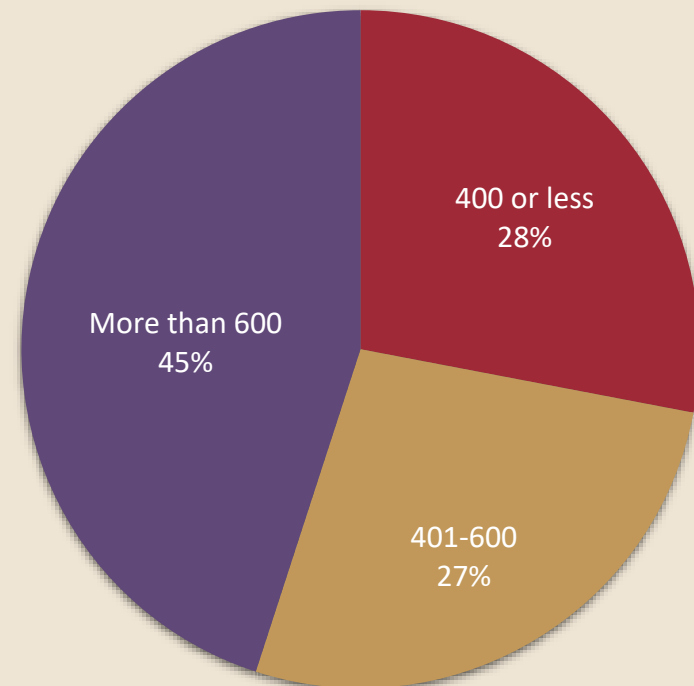
Law School Description

Responded: 107



Law Student FTE

Responded: 108



Full-Time Equivalent for FY20

Summer & Fall Course Formats

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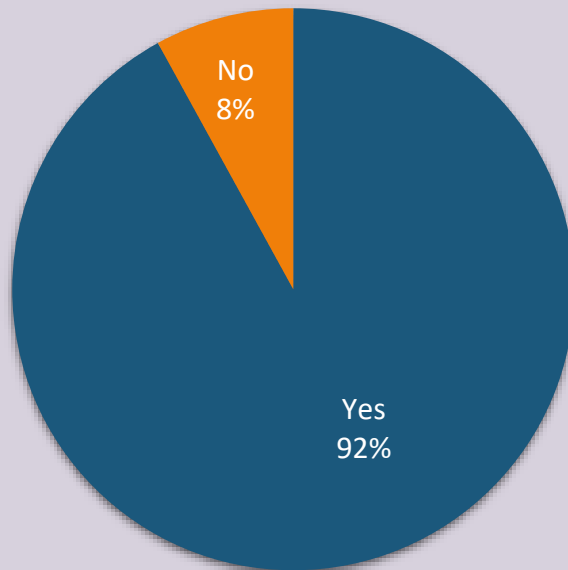
- Summer & Fall 2020 Course Decisions
- Summer 2020 Course Formats
- Fall 2020 Course Formats
- Online Instructional Support by Law Libraries

Summer & Fall 2020 Courses

By and large, schools have made official decisions on holding summer courses but not decisions on fall courses

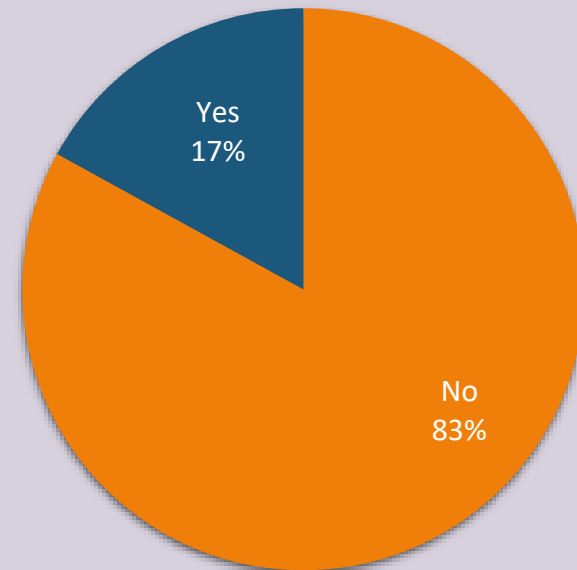
Official Decision Made on
Holding Summer 2020 Courses

Responded: 121



Official Decision Made on
Holding Fall 2020 Courses

Responded: 121

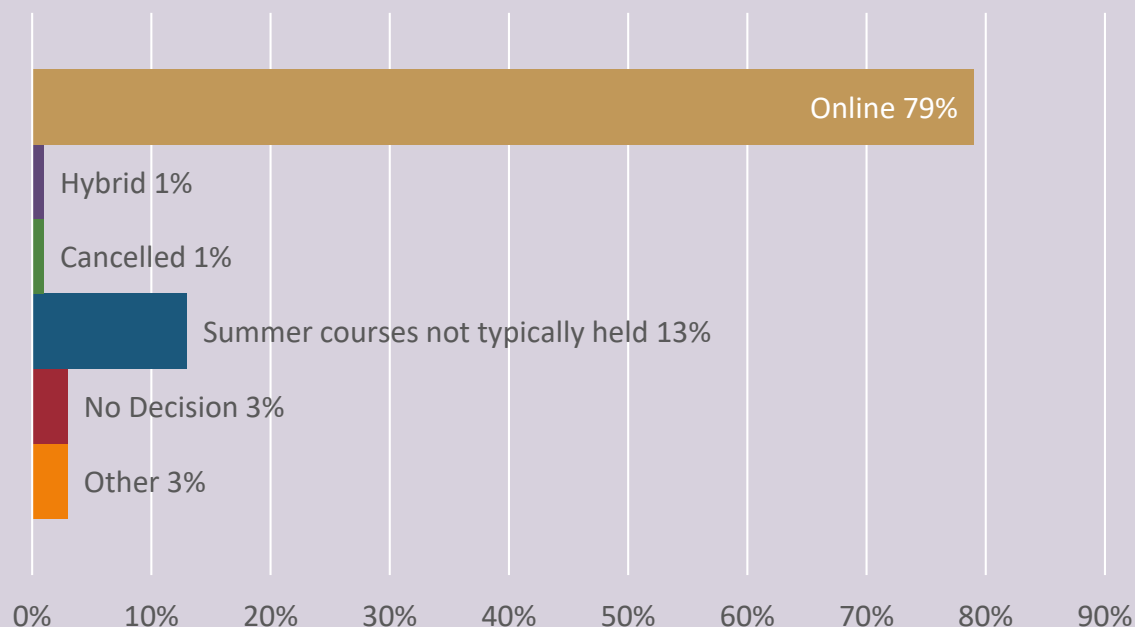


Summer 2020 Courses

The vast majority of law schools have officially decided to hold classes online in Summer 2020

Summer 2020 Course Format

Responded: 121



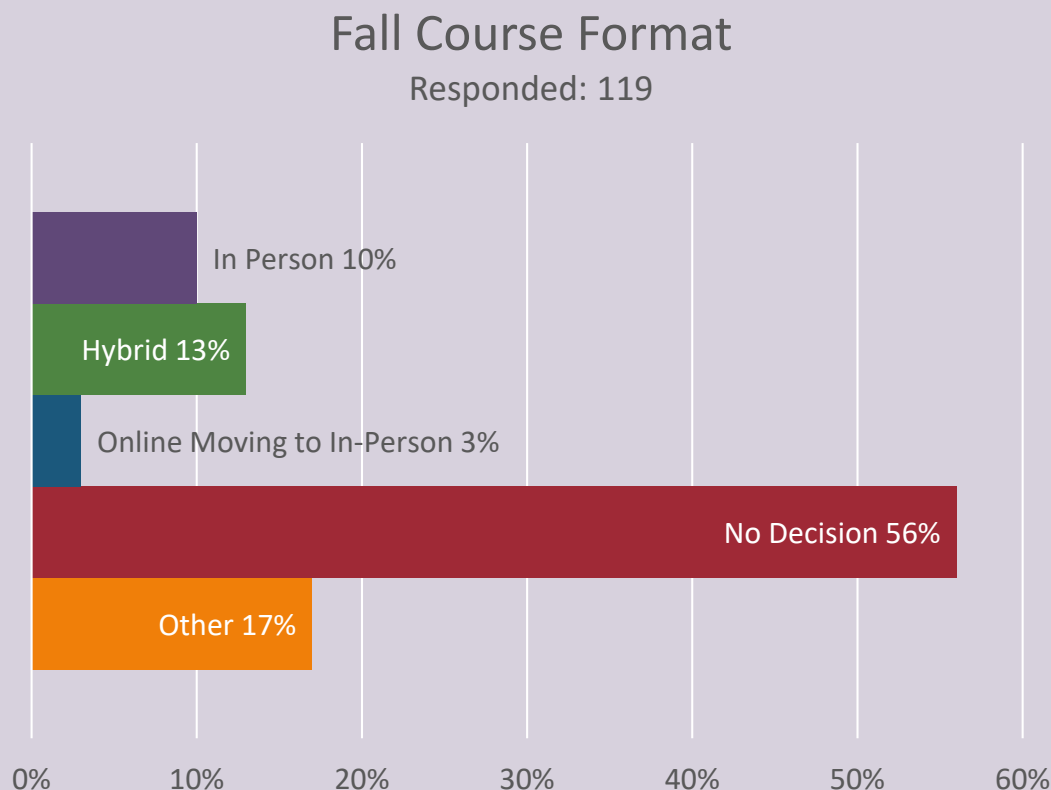
Option with no responses: Classes will be held in-person

Key takeaways from the respondents' "Other" comments include:

- Considering face-to-face courses later in the summer
- No final decision has been made, but considering in-person "experimental offerings"
- Despite not traditionally offering summer JD courses, the law school developed online summer courses to support students impacted by the evolving job market

Fall 2020 Courses

Most schools have not yet made an official decision on the format for Fall 2020 classes



Options with no responses: Classes will be held online; Classes are cancelled

Key takeaways from respondents' "Other" comments illustrated different options for Fall, including:

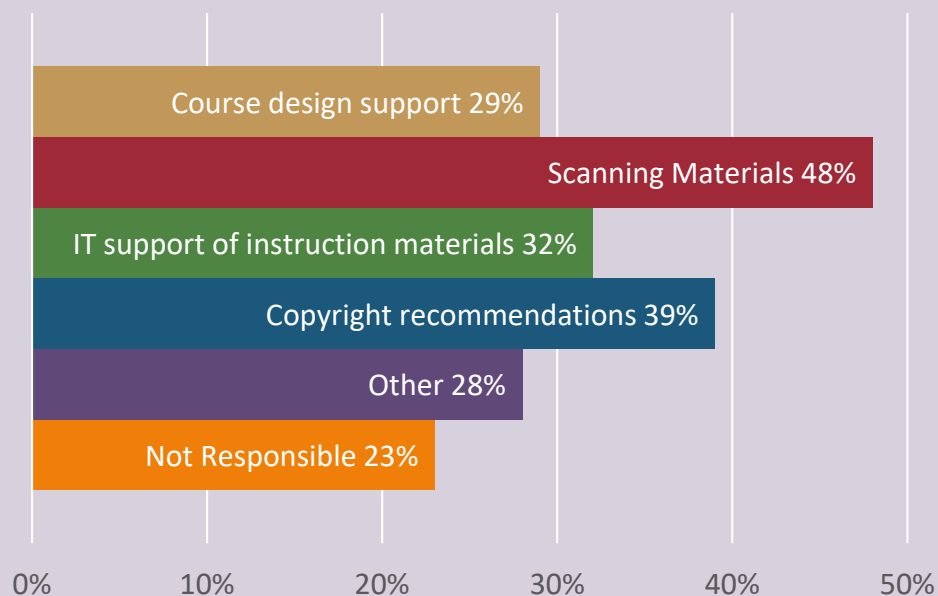
- Hold in-person courses, but online courses are the contingency plan
- Many institutions/law schools are planning for a full range of scenarios
- Some schools are prioritizing holding 1L courses in-person, with upper-level courses hybrids or solely online
- Some plan to hold Fall courses online and move to in-person when possible. In this plan, courses will also continue online for people who cannot/have not returned to campus
- Cancelled fall programs abroad

Online Instructional Support

Over three-quarters of law libraries are responsible for providing some online instructional support

Online Instructional Areas Supported by Law Libraries

Responded: 122



71% of libraries provide two or more online instructional support services for their law schools

Themes derived from respondents' 39 "Other" comments.

Theme	Percent	Number
Locating/acquiring/posting materials or resources to support online courses (e.g., online course reserves, e-books, lecture recordings)	33%	13
Train faculty or assist faculty in their teaching	18%	7
Legal research instruction or assistance for students (e.g., courses, workshops, research guides, consultations)	15%	6
Not directly responsible but provide a wide range of online course support as requested	13%	5
Support TWEN or other platforms (e.g., zoom) for online instruction and exams	10%	4
Provide online teaching resources/information	10%	4

Financial Implications

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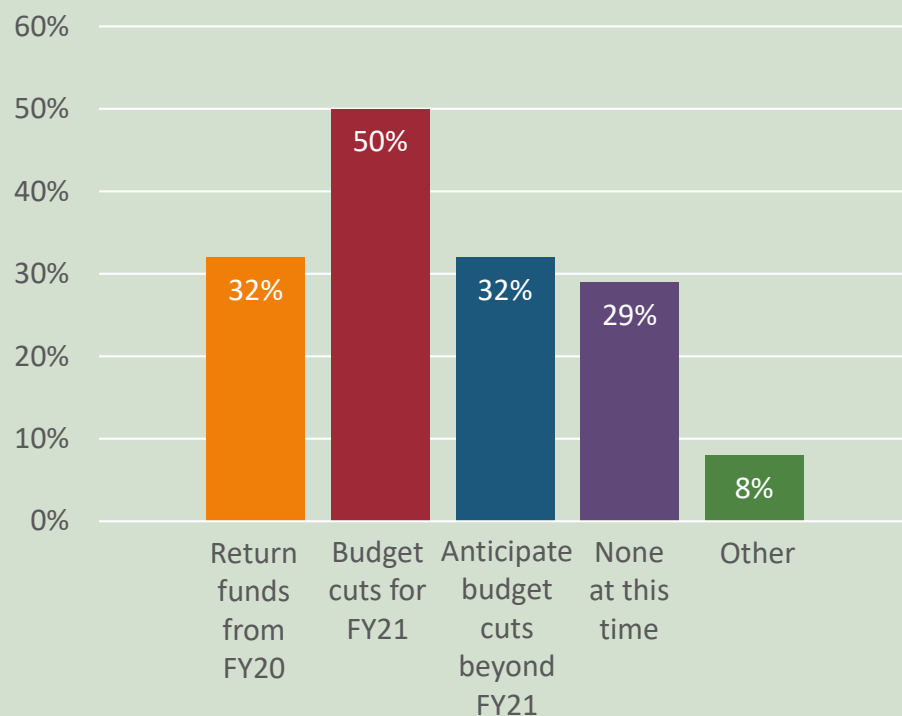
- Pandemic Implications for Law Library Budget
- Pandemic Implications for Law Library Faculty & Staff
- Pandemic Implications for Law Library Collections

Financial Implications on Budget

More than two-thirds of libraries reported negative impacts on library budgets

Libraries with Budget Changes

Responded: 113



Approximately 40% of libraries reported experiencing two or more of these implications.

Themes derived from respondents' 45 "Other" comments.

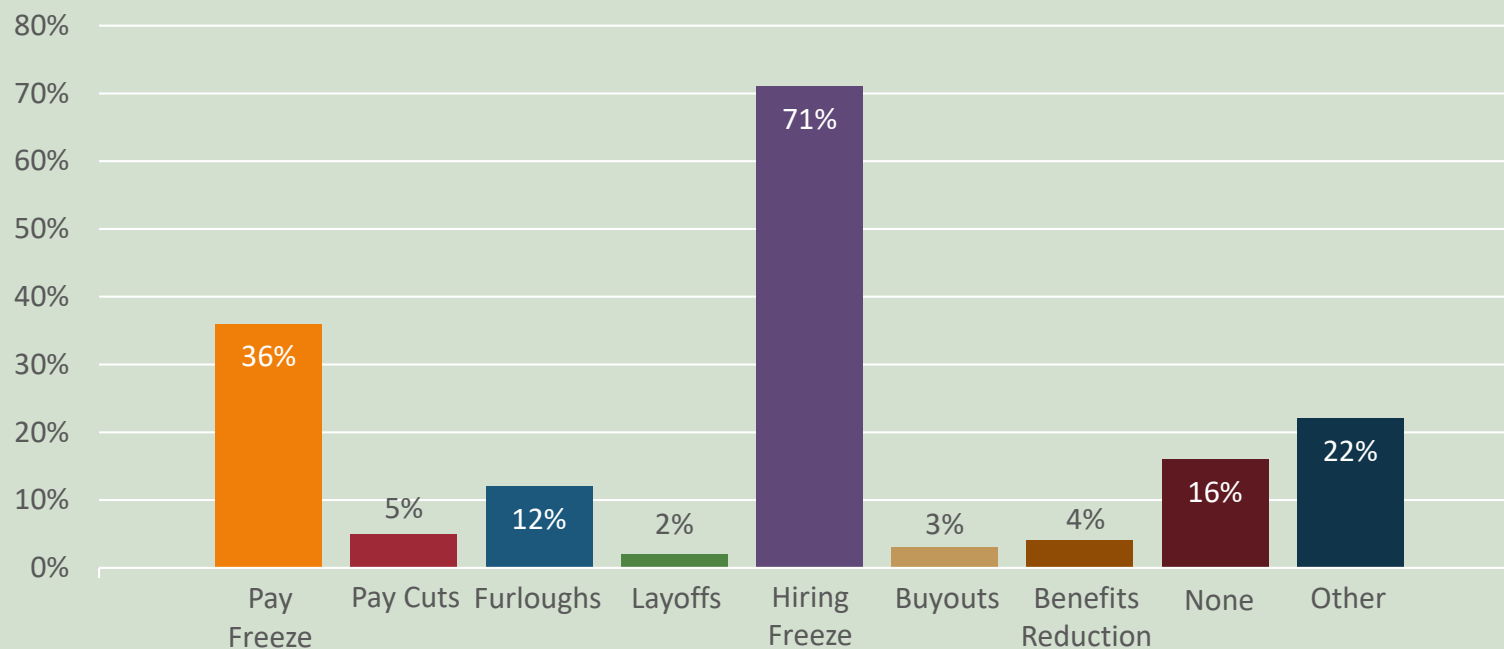
Theme	Percent	Number
Final determination on budget cut implementation or size is pending	53%	24
Identified percent of the budget cut (average of 13%)	33%	15
Restrictions or freezes on discretionary spending for current and/or future fiscal years	4%	2
Budget freeze implemented	4%	2
No official cut at this time; engaging in contingency planning for a potential cut	2%	1
Budget cuts were implemented prior to the pandemic	2%	1

Financial Implications on Library Staff

Over three-quarters of respondents indicated negative financial implications for library faculty and staff.

Library Faculty & Staff Financial Impact

Responded: 113



Approximately half of participating libraries reported experiencing a combination of two to four financial implications for library faculty and staff.

Key takeaways from respondents' "Other" comments include:

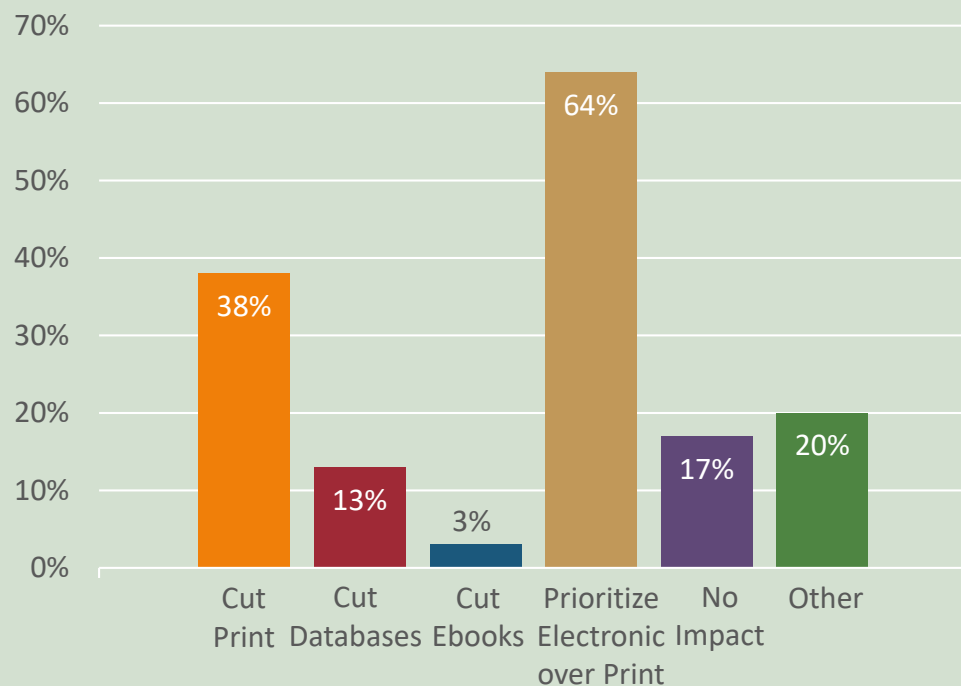
The majority indicated that at least one of these actions are being considered for segments of the staff, but no final decision has been made. Other responses included suspension of merit increases; temporary or voluntary pay cuts; reduced work weeks; and implications focused on part-time or student staff.

Financial Implications on Collections

The majority of libraries are focusing funds on electronic purchasing over print resource purchasing

Library Collection Implications

Responded: 112



Forty-two percent of libraries reported implementing two or more of these changes to the library collection.

Themes derived from respondents' 25 "Other" comments.

Theme	Percent	Number
Pause new purchasing, only commitments	20%	5
Anticipate future cuts/Future is unknown	16%	4
Paused print purchases until on-site to receive and process orders	16%	4
Scrutinizing collection/CD processes (e.g., review subscriptions, consider DDA, stop print purchase, reduce discretionary acq)	16%	4
Prioritize electronic purchases/duplicating the print with electronic copies	12%	3
Changes and cuts to collection development were occurring prior to COVID-19; pandemic accelerated implementation	12%	3
Identifying methods to provide non-law patrons with access to restricted eresources	4%	1
Obtained temporary free access to eresources from vendors	4%	1

Collections & Services

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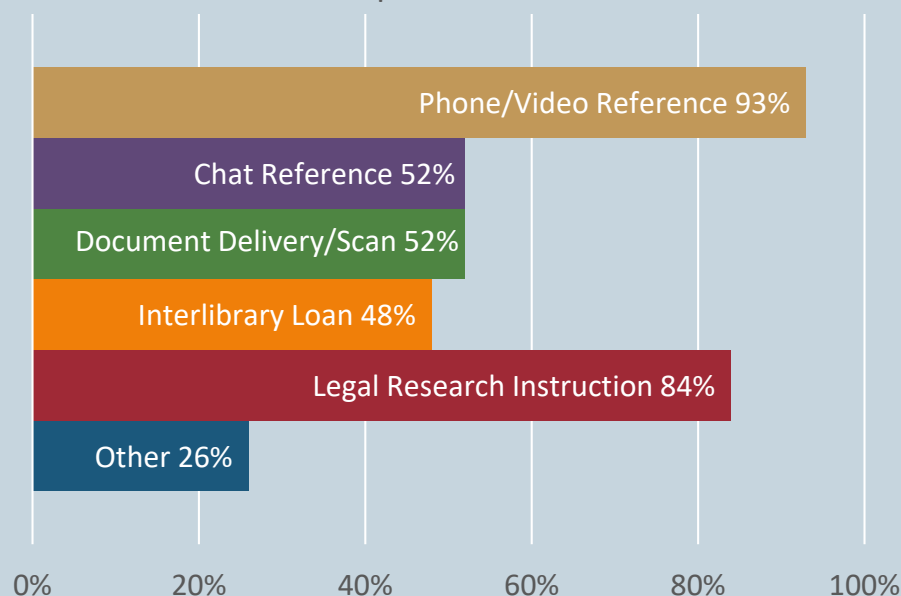
- Provision of Virtual Services
- Electronic Resource Purchasing

Virtual Services

Law libraries are offering a robust set of services through virtual platforms

Libraries Providing Virtual Services

Responded: 113



Libraries are providing an average of 3.5 virtual services.

Themes derived from respondents' 34 "Other" comments.

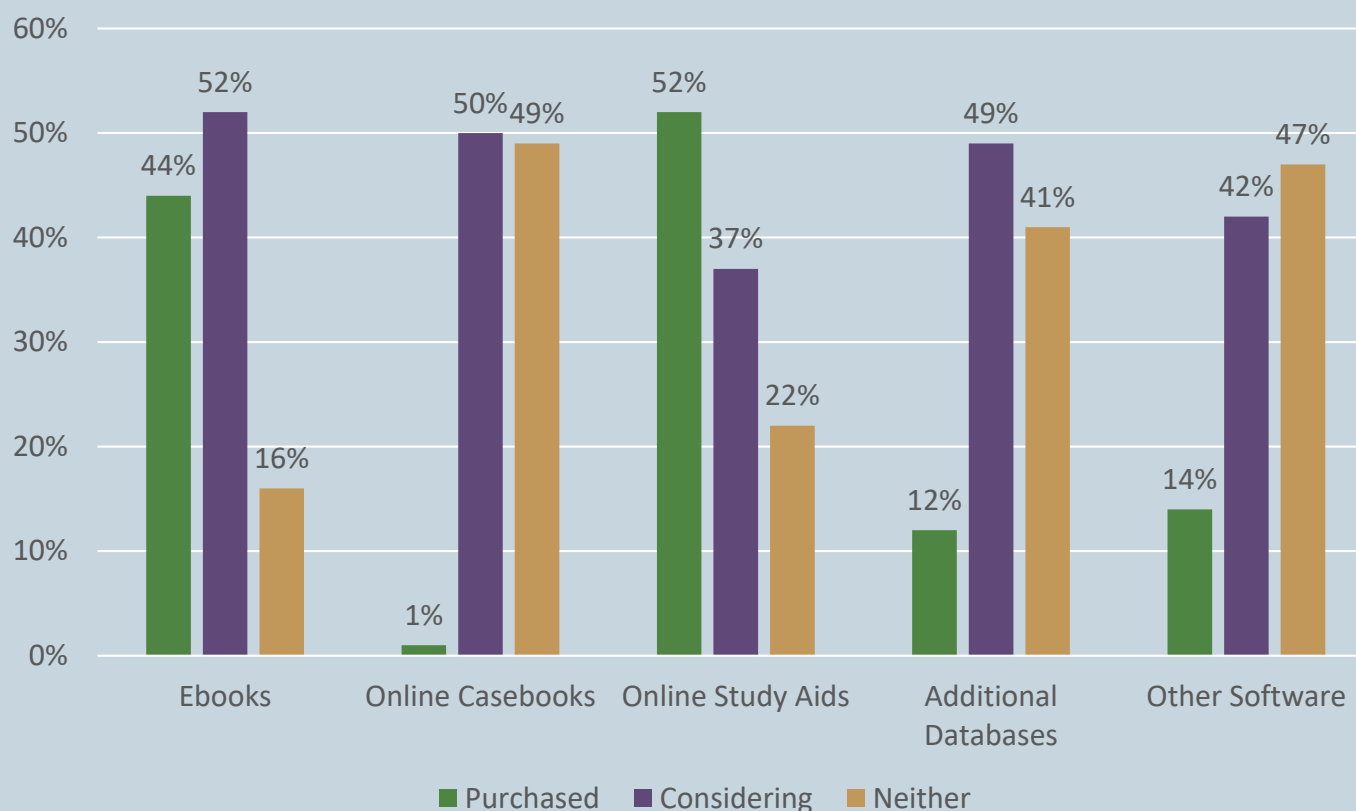
Theme	Percent	Number
Email reference	28%	10
Faculty support (e.g., research assistance, purchase/mail materials)	17%	6
Research assistance and instruction for students, RAs, and journals	11%	4
Provide and resolve issues with electronic access to materials, including e-reserves	11%	4
Limited ILL	8%	3
Maintain and update key resources (e.g., website, catalog, research guides, IR)	8%	3
Purchase needed materials	6%	2
Support online teaching platforms	6%	2
No contact circulation for materials	3%	1
Library week activities	3%	1

Electronic Resources

For many online resources, respondents have purchased or are considering purchasing additional resources.

Additional Electronic Resources to be Purchased

Respondents: 111



Key takeaways from respondents' "Other" comments include:

Libraries focused their discussion on study aid packages. Discussion of partnering with an institution's main library and publishers to expand access to databases and casebooks for free also occurred.

Health & Safety Enhancements

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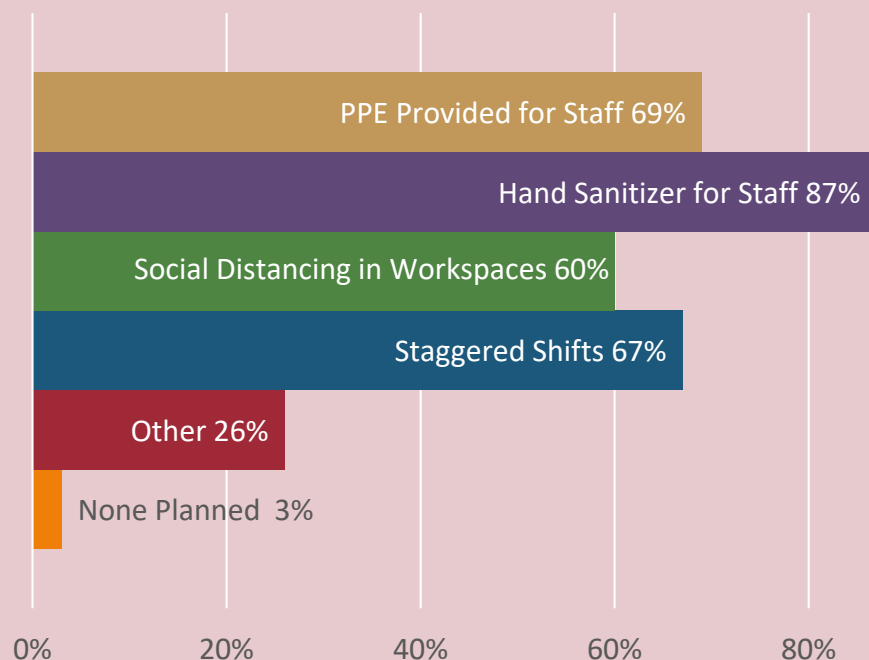
- Safety Enhancements for Staff
- Safety Enhancements for Shared Staff/Patron Spaces
- Alterations to Patron Spaces
- Alternations to Expectations for Patrons

Staff Safety Enhancements

97% of responding libraries plan to implement staff health and safety enhancements

Planned Staff Safety Enhancements

Responded: 108



Among libraries considering safety enhancements for staff, these libraries are considering implementing on average 3.2 of these types of safety enhancements.

Themes derived from respondents' 29 "Other" comments.

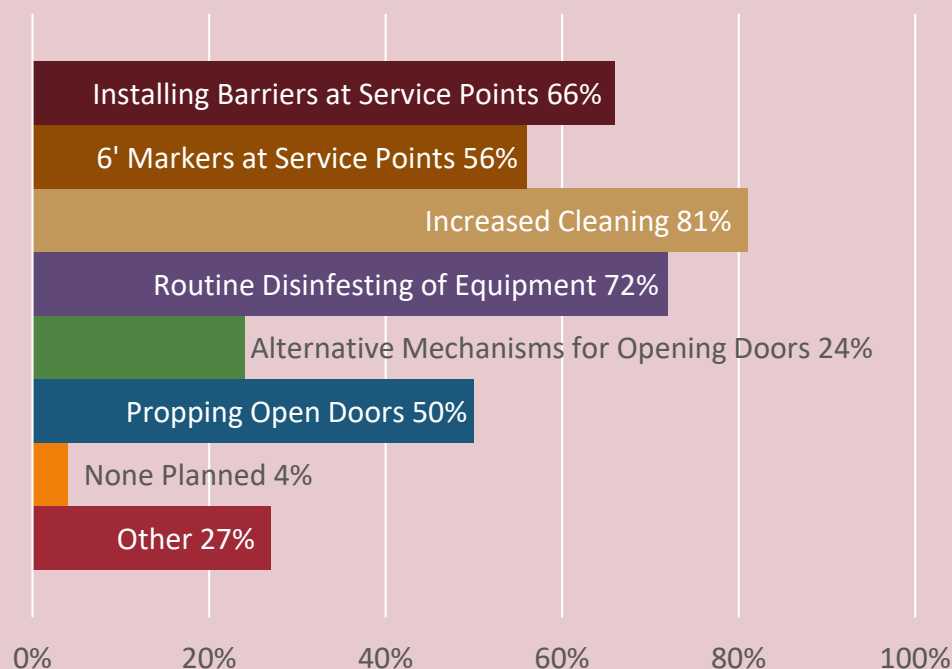
Theme	Percent	Number
Many options under consideration but no final decisions have been made	48%	14
Follow guidelines or directives set by state/university/university libraries	17%	5
Continuation of remote work by staff	10%	3
Have not yet begun planning in this area	7%	2
Quarantine circulated materials	3%	1
Closing areas in the library to patrons	3%	1
Reduce exposure to patrons at service pts	3%	1
Hold meetings online over in-person	3%	1
Some safety enhancement were in place prior to implementation of remote work	3%	1

Patron/Staff Safety Enhancements

96% of responding libraries plan to implement safety enhancements to shared patron/staff spaces

Planned Patron/Staff Safety Enhancements

Responded: 109



Themes derived from respondents' 30 "Other" comments.

Theme	Percent	Number
Many options under consideration but no final decisions have been made	57%	17
Follow guidelines or directives set by state/university/university libraries	13%	4
Add or utilize only self-checkout machines	10%	3
Have not yet begun planning in this area	7%	2
Leave study room doors unlocked	3%	1
Create alternative classrooms, student study spaces	3%	1
Limit number of patrons in library	3%	1
Limit use of high-touch equipment	3%	1

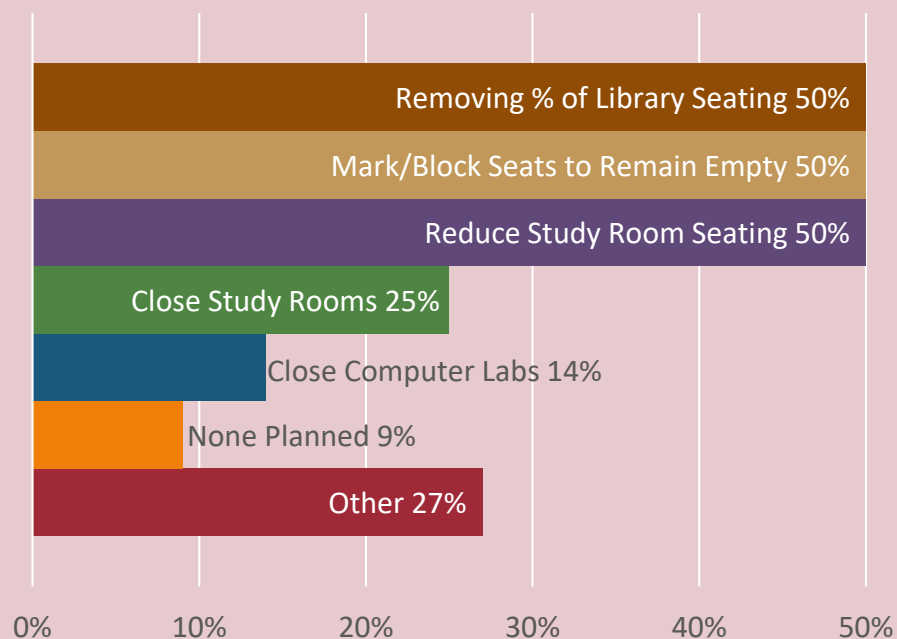
Among libraries considering safety enhancements for patron/staff spaces, these libraries are considering implementing on average 3.9 of these types of safety enhancements.

Patron Space Safety Alterations

Nine in ten libraries indicated that they will alter patron spaces to enhance patron safety.

Plans for Adjustments to Patron Space

Responded: 109



Among libraries considering safety enhancements for patron spaces, these libraries are considering implementing on average 2.4 of these types of safety enhancements.

Themes derived from respondents' 30 "Other" comments.

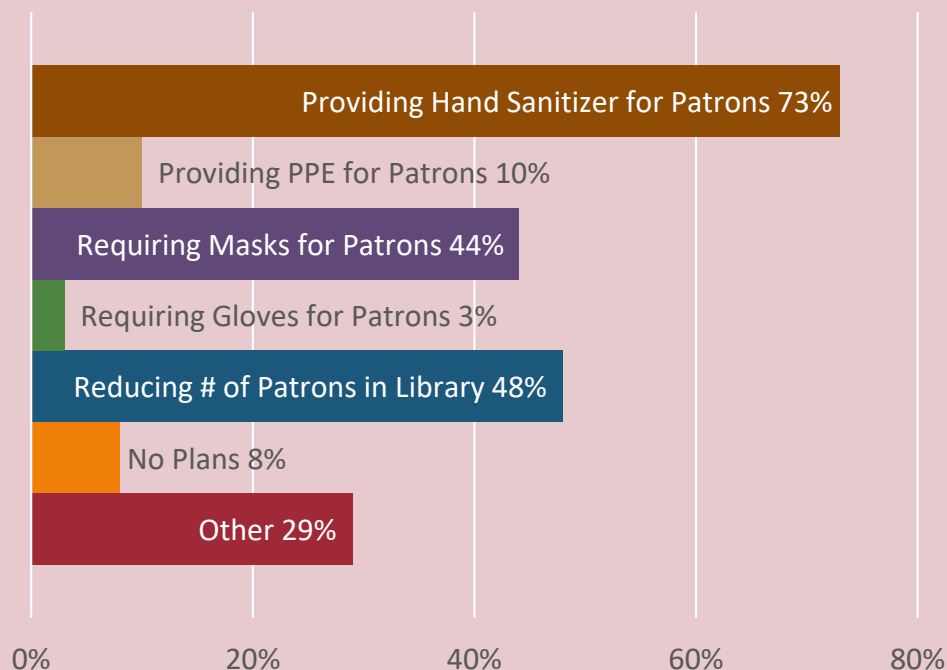
Theme	Percent	Number
Under consideration but no final decisions	48%	15
Follow guidelines or directives set by state/university/university libraries	10%	3
Reduce number of people in spaces	10%	3
Have not yet begun planning in this area	6%	2
Assign carrels to patrons	6%	2
Open a portion of the library & reevaluate	3%	1
Rearrange furniture	3%	1
Recommend social distancing to patrons	3%	1
Library study rooms as classroom space	3%	1
Close areas of library to reduce cleaning needs, allowing for Increased cleanings.	3%	1
Close areas in library to store furniture	3%	1

Patron Expectations

Almost all libraries plan to alter expectations for patrons in regard to health and safety.

Altered Expectations for Patron Health & Safety

Responded: 109



Among libraries considering altering expectations for patrons, these libraries are considering implementing on average 2.3 of these types of alterations.

Themes derived from respondents' 31 "Other" comments.

Theme	Percent	Number
Many options under consideration but no final decisions have been made	43%	15
Follow guidelines or directives set by state/university/university libraries	37%	13
Implement access restrictions (e.g., prohibit patrons in certain areas of the library, limit non-law school patrons)	9%	3
Have not yet begun planning in this area	6%	2
Reduce hours library is staffed	3%	1
Increase signage	3%	1

Reopening Plans

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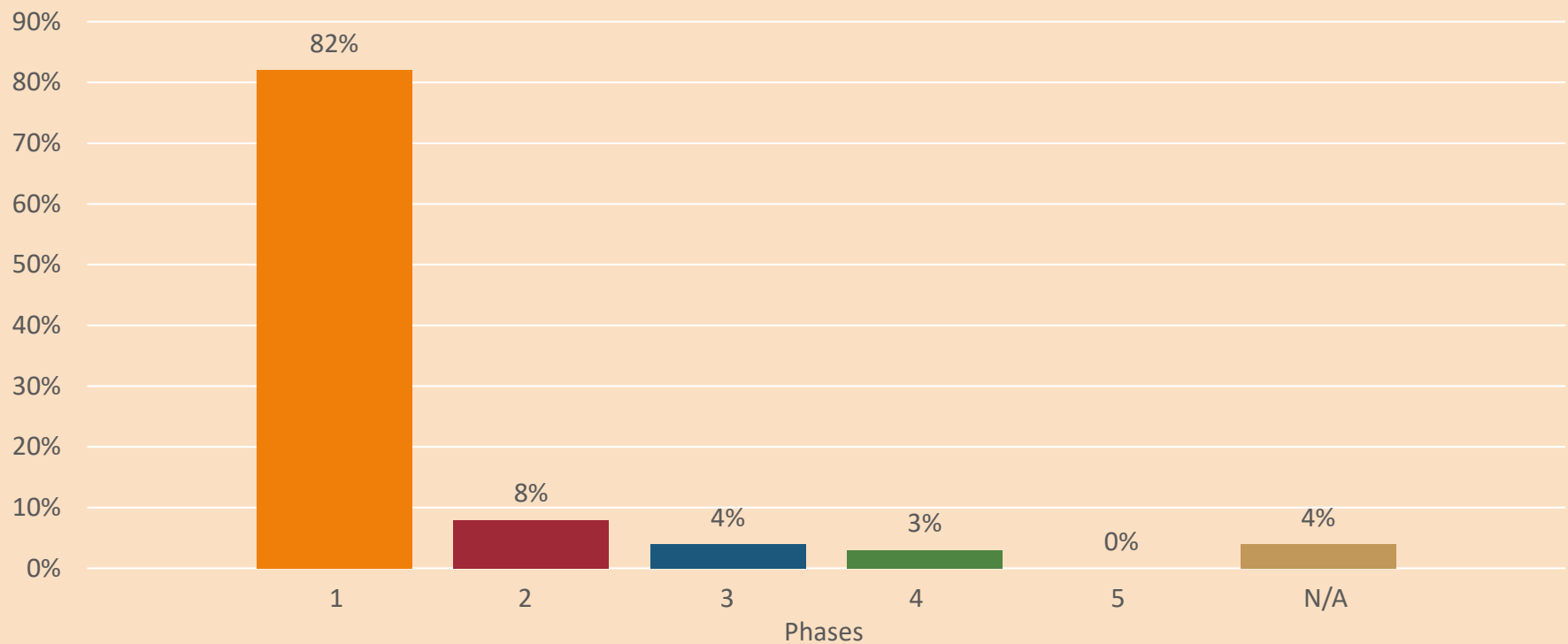
- Staff Return to Library
- Phased Reopening of Library to Patron Groups

Staff Return to Library

82% of responding libraries' staff will return to the library in Phase One of the reopening plan

Library Staff

Responded: 76

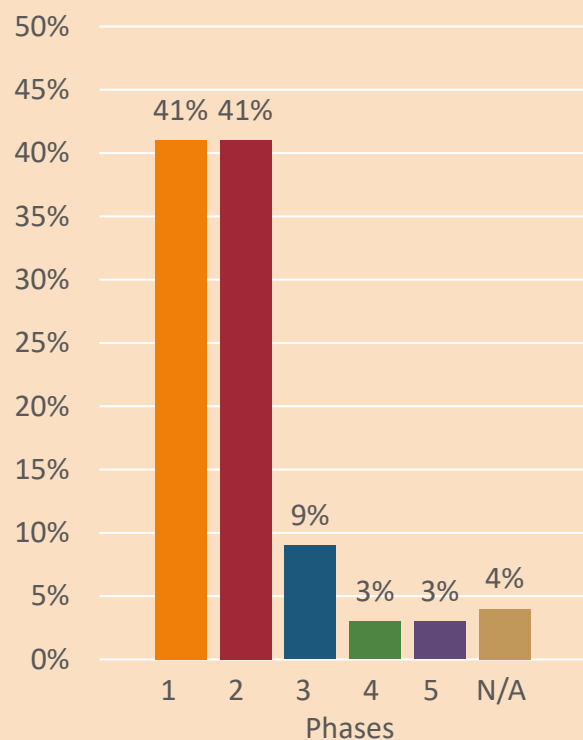


Phased Reopening to Patron Groups

92% of responding libraries plan to reopen in phases rather than all at once

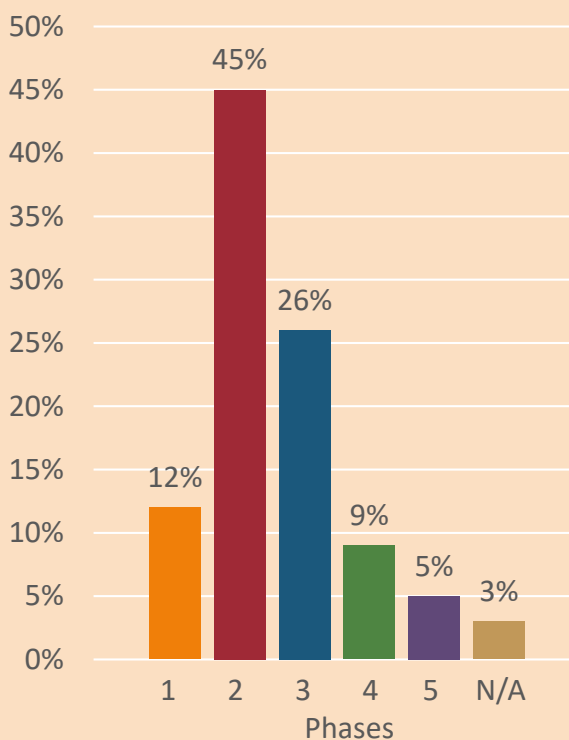
Law Faculty & Staff

Responded: 76



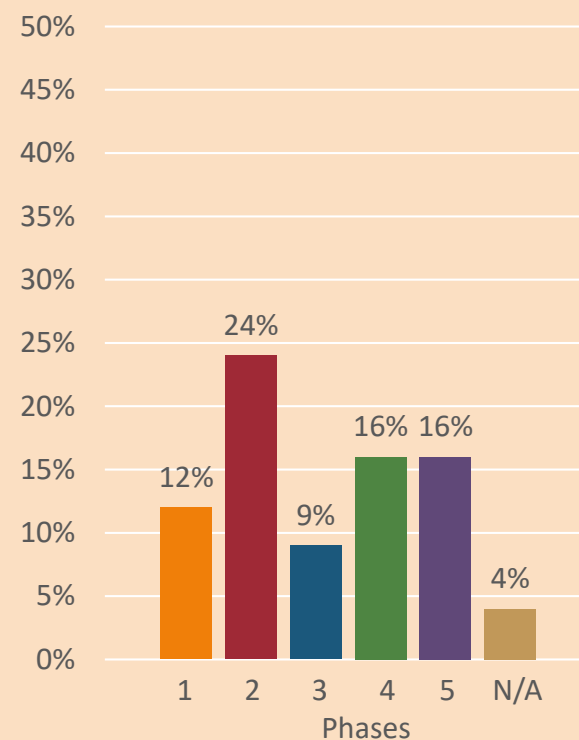
Law Students

Responded: 74



Bar Prep/Alumni

Responded: 76

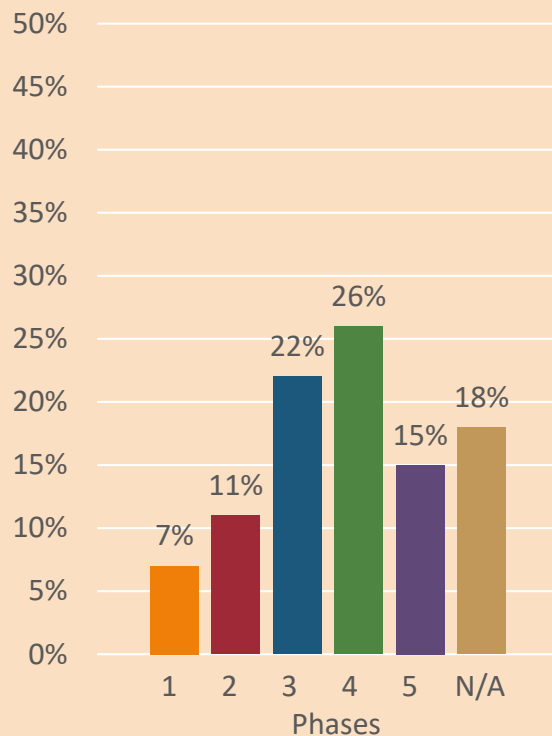


Phased Reopening to Patron Groups

Patrons who are not members of the law school community tend to return in later phases of reopening

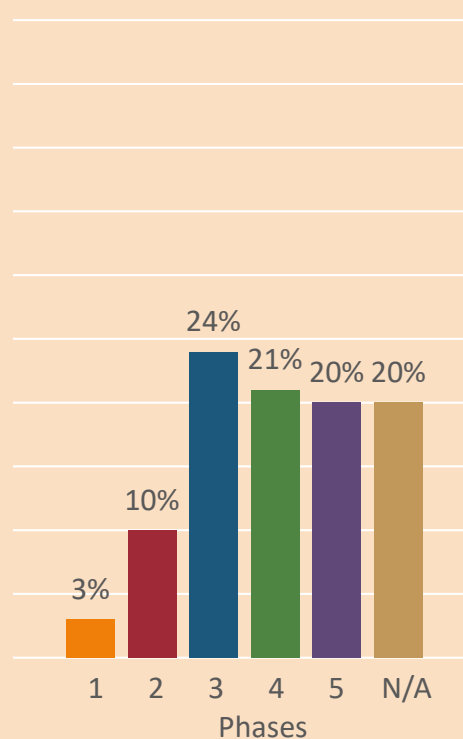
University Faculty & Staff

Responded: 72



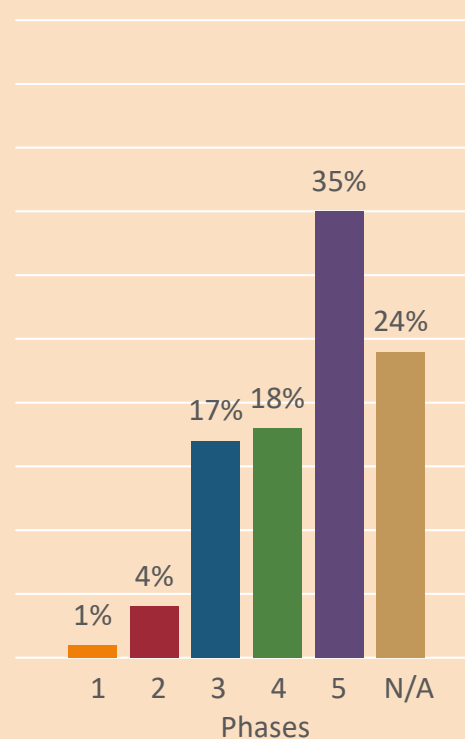
University Students

Responded: 71



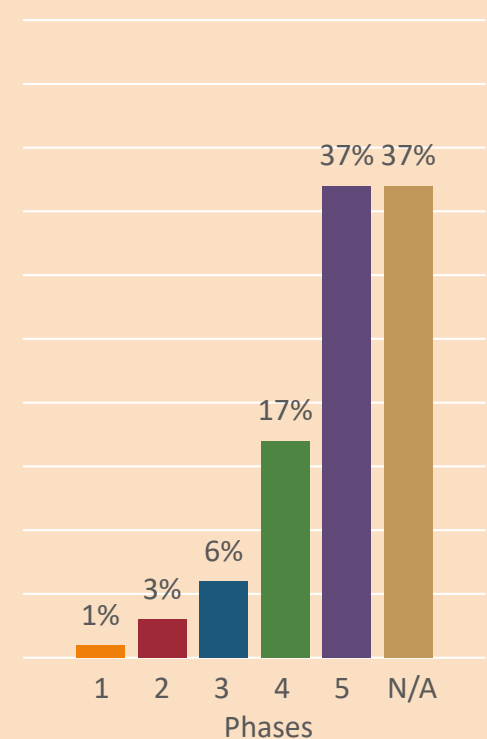
Legal Community

Responded: 71



Pro Se / Public

Responded: 71



Phased Reopening Commentary

Themes derived from the respondents' 55 "Other" Comments

Theme	Percent	Number
Phase opening and order of access by patron type under consideration, but no final decisions have been made	31%	17
Follow guidelines or directives set by state/university/university libraries	13%	7
Have not yet begun planning reopening process	11%	6
Unknowns makes planning hard (e.g., increase in COVID cases, lack of guidance from state/county/university/university libraries)	11%	6
Library staff may delay return by a phase or be spread across multiple phases	5%	3
Considering changing who may access library (e.g., only law school community members, only alumni attorneys not all attorneys)	4%	2
Phase opening with public users returning last	4%	2
Planning to reopen in or close to Fall	4%	2
Reopen with social distancing rules	4%	2
Prioritizing allowing alumni to study for the bar at the library	4%	2
Planning an intermediary step prior to restoring student access where students may check out materials	2%	1
Provide protections only to staff with elevated risks or staff who live with elevated risk people	2%	1
Library is currently unstaffed but open to members of the law school community	2%	1
Staff are coming into the library on an as-needed basis	2%	1
Considering revoking 24/7 access and closing library overnight	2%	1
Assign seats to people studying for bar to reduce cross-contamination	2%	1

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