



2009-057

STATE OF ALABAMA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

March 26, 2009

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ATTORNEY GENERAL

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Honorable Charles A. Graddick  
Presiding Judge  
13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit  
Mobile Government Plaza  
Courtroom 8600  
205 Government Street  
Mobile, Alabama 36644

Courts – Law Library – Counties –  
Funds – Circuit Judges – Mobile  
County

The Mobile County Law Library may  
purchase and install trial aids, such  
as courtroom media systems, for use  
in the courtrooms.

Dear Judge Graddick:

This opinion of the Attorney General is issued in response to your  
request.

QUESTION

May Mobile County Law Library funds be  
used to purchase and install trial aids in the  
courtrooms?

FACTS AND ANALYSIS

Your request states that the trial aids involved are courtroom media  
systems. Each system consists of input ports, switching box, remotes,  
televisions, projection camera, and DVD/VCR equipment. The system is  
designed, among other things, to allow the judge, witnesses, attorneys,  
and parties to see enlarged pictures of written exhibits simultaneously  
without the need for passing the documents around by hand. The system  
also allows for projection of DVD and VCR images to the jury.

Section 11-25-1, *et seq.*, of the Code of Alabama provides for the establishment of a county law library and states, in pertinent part, as follows:

The governing body of each county by resolution thereof shall have the power to establish and maintain a county law library for each courthouse in their respective counties for the use and benefit of the county and state officials, court system and the public; and shall have the power to appropriate and set aside for the establishment, maintenance and support of said libraries, such space and funds as it shall deem necessary and appropriate.

ALA. CODE § 11-25-1 (2008). This section gives the county the authority to appropriate funds necessary for the establishment, maintenance, and support of the county law library. In addition, section 11-25-8 allows county law libraries to furnish materials, books, and copies to county officials and circuit, probate, and district court officials at no cost. ALA. CODE § 11-25-8 (2008). The presiding circuit judge administers the county law library and disburses the funds. ALA. CODE § 11-25-6 (2008).

This Office has previously concluded that these provisions of the Code allow county law library funds to be used to purchase a public address system for a courtroom used by one of the circuit courts and to purchase trial aids, such as projectors, screens, charts, and skeletons necessary for trying a case. Opinions to Honorable L. Scott Coogler, Circuit Court Judge, Tuscaloosa County, dated February 27, 2001, A.G. No. 2001-103 and to Honorable Claude Harris Jr., Circuit Court Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit, dated December 9, 1980, A.G. No. 81-00121. The courtroom media system to be used in the courtroom, as described in your request, falls within the types of materials that may be furnished to court officials as set forth in section 11-25-1, *et seq.*, of the Code.

#### CONCLUSION

The Mobile County Law Library may purchase and install trial aids, such as courtroom media systems, for use in the courtrooms.

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I hope this opinion answers your question. If this Office can be of further assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely,

TROY KING  
Attorney General

By:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda F. Smith".

BRENDA F. SMITH  
Chief, Opinions Division

TK/BFS

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