

Locating Legal Information on the Web

2004

**Curriculum Developed by Minnesota
Association of Law Libraries Consulting
& Community Outreach Committee**

Locating Legal Information on the Web

Introduction

Goals:

- To familiarize you with legal system in general, online legal websites
- To provide hands-on experience using some online legal websites.
- To discuss what you can and can't do for patrons looking for legal help or information

Today's schedule

- Overview of legal system – this is a difficult task even if we took all four hours! But we'll give you a capsule summary of some of the basic foundations. (Review for some of you.) **(1 hour)**
- Discuss some common legal information requests in public libraries and how/when to refer a question to an attorney. **(30 minutes)**

(Break)

- ID a legal citation and retrieving some documents by citation online **(30 minutes)**

(Lunch)

- Take a 'tour' of some of the most helpful legal portals **(30 minutes)**
- Visit some interesting legal websites **(30 minutes)**

(Break)

- Exercises & Discussion **(40 minutes)**
- Forms and Print Materials **(20 minutes)**

Locating Legal Information on the Web

Overview of the United States Legal System

Familiarizing Yourself with Legal Abbreviations

Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations: www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk

Overview of the United States Government

The United States was set up to have fourteen separate governments: the federal government, well as a government for each state. The United States Constitution grants specific, enumerated powers to the federal government, but any powers not granted to the federal government are reserved for the states under the Tenth Amendment. While each state has its own government, the federal constitution is considered to be the supreme law of the land, and therefore no state law can conflict with the U.S. Constitution. U.S. Const. art. VI, sec. 1, cl. 2.

There are 3 branches of government for the federal government and each of the states. Each branch creates its own type of law. The legislative branch creates statutes. The executive branch creates regulations and the judicial branch creates case law.

Types of Legal Authority

When you do legal research, you are searching for authority to back up your position. Authority can be primary or secondary. Primary authority is actual law. Examples of primary authority are constitutions, cases, administrative regulations, statutes and court rules. Secondary authority is material that describes, explains or helps you find the law.

Primary Authority

Constitutions

Constitutions set forth the functions and powers of a government, and guarantee rights to its citizens. Constitutions may be written or unwritten, and they may be made up of a single document or several. In the United States we have a written federal constitution that is generally considered to be the oldest in the world. A copy of the U.S. Constitution can be found at the beginning of the federal statutes. It is also reprinted in most state statutory compilations and in the back of Black's Law Dictionary.

In addition, each state has its own constitution that defines the powers of the state. The state constitutions tend to be longer and more detailed than our relatively short U.S. Constitution. No state law or constitution can contradict the federal constitution. However, a state may convey more rights to its citizens than the federal government does. You can find state constitutions in the state's statutory compilation. Note that constitutions exist on a city and county level as well. These are called charters.

Statutes

Statutes are legislative law. They exist on a state and federal level. The federal statutes are grouped in 50 Titles. Each title represents a broad subject area. For example, all of the statutes in Title 7 pertain to Agriculture. Each Title is further broken down into sections. A typical citation to a federal statute appears as: 7 U.S.C. § 401 (year). The 7 represents the Title and the 401 represents the section within that Title. You can access the U.S. Code on the web at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html>

Minnesota statutes are grouped into 645 numerical chapters, each dealing with a different topic. For example, Chapter 518 contains statutes which pertain to marriage dissolution. Each chapter is further broken down into sections. A typical citation a Minnesota statute appears as: Minn. Stat. § 518.04 (year). To locate this statute you would go to the volume that contains Chapter 518 and look for your section. You can access Minnesota Statutes on the web at:

<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp>

Legislative law also exists at the city and county level. These are called **ordinances**. Most law libraries and many large public libraries will collect local ordinances in print. Many Minnesota ordinances are available on the internet at:

<http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/ordinance.html>.

Court Rules

Court rules set forth the procedure of the courts. They cover details such as time limitations, formats for pleadings, and who can be party to a case. They exist on a federal, state and sometimes local level. Court rules are generally created by the highest court of the state, or on the federal level, by the U.S. Supreme Court. However, they are generally subject to amendment by the legislature. In addition to the general rules created by the highest court, each court is entitled to make its own rules, provided they do not conflict with the general rules. These are called local or special rules. It is crucial that legal researchers are aware of the rules, so they don't miss important deadlines.

Minnesota court rules:

In Minnesota, there are several sets of general rules. These include:

- Minnesota Rules of Civil Procedure - govern the procedure for civil cases in the district (trial) courts.
- Minnesota Rules of Criminal Procedure – govern the procedure for criminal cases in the district (trial) courts.
- Minnesota Rules of Evidence – govern proceedings in the courts of Minnesota.
- Minnesota Rules of Civil Appellate Procedure – govern procedure in the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals in civil appeals. Govern procedure in criminal appeals as long as the rules do not conflict with the Minnesota Rules of Criminal Procedure.
- General Rules of Practice for the District Courts – govern procedure in the district (trial) courts of Minnesota.

In addition, there are several sets of special rules for specific courts. These include:

- Supreme Court Rules of Decorum
- Special Rules of Practice for the Minnesota Court of Appeals
- Special Rules of Practice for the District Courts - 2d Judicial District (Ramsey), 4th Judicial District (Hennepin) and 10th Judicial District (Anoka).
- Rules of Juvenile Procedure
- Tax Court Rules of Procedure

You can locate Minnesota court rules in the print version of the Minnesota Statutes. In addition, you can find SOME on the web at:

http://www.courts.state.mn.us/rules/crt_rules.html

Federal rules of court – As with the state, there are several sets of general rules for the federal court. These include:

- Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
- Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure
- Federal Rules of Evidence
- Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure

In addition, there are separate local rules for the U.S. Supreme Court, each federal Court of Appeal, each U.S. District Court, and each of the U.S. Bankruptcy Courts.

Cases

Overview of Court System

Sometimes a case may involve state and federal issues. Where you bring a case depends on what court has jurisdiction.

You can bring a case in federal court if:

- if it arises under federal law
- if the case involves parties from 2 different states and the amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000

Federal court structure:

- trial courts (U.S. District Court – each state has at least 1)
- Intermediate Appellate Court - Circuit Courts of Appeal – hear appeals from trial court
- Court of last resort - U.S. Supreme Court

Otherwise, you bring the case in state court. State courts generally have the same structure as the federal system.

In Minnesota:

- We have 10 geographic judicial districts. Trial courts in MN do not publish decisions. You must go to the Clerk of Court to get information about trials.
- 1 Court of Appeals – cases from the trial courts are appealed to this court. Some cases are published, but most are unpublished
- 1 Supreme Court – all decisions are published
- In addition, there is Conciliation Court (small claims, \$7500 or less) – can bring your case in district court if you are not happy with your conciliation court decision. Decisions of the conciliation court are not published.

The Minnesota courts' webpage has a wonderful information booklet on the courts' structure and functions. <http://www.courts.state.mn.us/cio/incourt99.doc>
Minnesota Supreme Court and Court of Appeals decisions (published and unpublished) are available on the web back to May of 1996. <http://www.courts.state.mn.us/home/>

- There is one federal district in Minnesota. It is called the United States District Court, District of Minnesota. This is a federal trial court. Cases are heard in Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth. A very small percentage of these cases are published. Recent decisions are available at the court's website: <http://www.mnd.uscourts.gov/>.
- The 8th Circuit Court of Appeals includes Minnesota. (See circuit map at: <http://www.law.emory.edu/FEDCTS/>.) Cases from the U.S. District Court in Minnesota are appealed to the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals. Some of these decisions are published, but most are not. Recent decisions of the federal courts of appeal can be found online at the courts' websites. See <http://www.uscourts.gov/> for links.
- The United States Supreme Court is the court of last resort. Cases from the federal circuit courts of appeal and state courts can be appealed to this court. Review is discretionary; the U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear a very small percentage of the requests for appeal it receives. All U.S. Supreme Court cases are published. You can find these decisions online at: <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html>. See also the Court's website at: <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>.

Regulations

Administrative regulations (also called rules) are created by administrative agencies. Agencies are given their rule making power by the legislature. Agencies are given this power because the legislature doesn't have the time or expertise to create all of the details needed to govern what the agencies do. Generally the legislature will enact a law about a subject (such as water pollution). Then it will grant an agency (such as the EPA) rule making power over that area. The agency can then fill in the details that the statute does not include. Regulations exist on a state and federal level.

Minnesota state regulations are first published in the State Register. It is published every Monday and contains information for the public about the actions of Minnesota state agencies. It includes proposed rules, adopted rules, notices, executive orders of the governor, and other agency actions. It can be accessed on the web at:

<http://www.comm.media.state.mn.us/bookstore/stateregister.asp>.

After rules appear in the State Register, they are grouped together by topic in the Minnesota Rules. This set is revised every other odd year and is kept up to date with pocket parts. Use the index volume at the end of the set to locate regulations on a particular topic. A typical citation to Minnesota Rules appears as: Minn. R. 1000.2000 (year). You can access Minnesota Rules online at:

<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp>

Federal regulations are first published in the Federal Register. It is published every business day.

In addition to final regulations, it includes proposed regulations, presidential documents and notices. The Federal Register (back to 1994) can be accessed online at:

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>

Federal regulations are codified (grouped by topic) in the Code of Federal Regulations. They can be accessed online at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

Secondary Authority

Secondary sources are materials written about the law. They may explain, describe or help you locate the law. Secondary sources are the best place to start your legal research if you are unfamiliar with the topic or issue. Examples of secondary sources are:

- Law dictionaries
- Legal encyclopedias
- Legal periodicals

You will not find much secondary authority on the free web. A few places where you can look for legal periodical articles are:

- MN Legal Periodical Index -
www.lawmoose.com/index.cfm?Action=MLPI.ShowArticleFinder
- Law Reviews Online
www.loc.gov/law/guide/lawreviews.html
- University Law Review Project
www.lawreview.org/

Mandatory and Persuasive Authority

As you do legal research, you need to be aware of what type of legal authority a judge must follow and what type of authority he/she can choose to follow. Primary authority is mandatory for a judge to follow it comes from the same jurisdiction and it deals with the same or similar facts and legal issues. If there is no authority from your jurisdiction that is “on point”, you can go outside of your jurisdiction. You can cite to a case or statute from another state, but it can only be persuasive authority. The judge can choose to follow it, but does not have to. Secondary authority can only be persuasive, never mandatory for a judge to follow.

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Typical Legal Information Requests in Public Libraries

Patrons use public libraries to answer many legal questions. The greatest number of requests fall into the following areas:

1. Family law—divorce, marriage, custody, visitation, guardianship, paternity, grandparent’s rights
2. Traffic law—tickets, driver’s licenses, dui/dwi
3. Real estate law—landlord/tenant, purchasing real estate, title searches
4. Estate Planning—probate, wills, trusts, estates, power of attorney, living will, health care directive
5. Employment law—worker’s compensation, Family and Medical Leave Act, wrongful termination
6. Business/consumer law—incorporation/corporation, tax, consumer complaints
7. Court procedures in general—Small claims court, subpoena, motions, judgments
8. Criminal law—theft, assault, harassment

Typical search strategies are a starting point in responding to these types of requests and include the following familiar types of resource—the only difference is the legal content of the tool:

1. Dictionaries: Black’s Law Dictionary; nolo.com’s online legal dictionary
2. Encyclopedias: West’s Encyclopedia of American Law; nolo.com’s online legal encyclopedia, Zimmerman’s legal encyclopedia available at lexisone.com
3. Books: library catalogs; nolo.com; sphinxlegal.com
4. Periodicals: Minnesota Legal Periodical Index (online at LawMoose.com); ELM resources such as Infotrac
5. Pamphlets: see the Minnesota Attorney General website (www.ag.state.mn.us); Minnesota Legal Services Coalition website (www.mnlegalservices.org; www.lawhelpmn.org)
6. Primary and Secondary legal sources: see other sections of this guide

KEY MESSAGE: Patrons may press a librarians for “answers”; librarians can offer information sources and referrals.

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What/When to refer a question to a law library and/or attorney

A. What a librarian CAN do

- Perform legitimate reference activities
 - If someone knows the name or subject or other identifying characteristics of a case, you can assist with retrieval
 - If someone knows a citation or topic or other identifying characteristic of a statute, you can assist with retrieval
 - If someone knows the name of a particular form, you can assist with retrieval
 - Show where the statutes are; explain how an index works; keep a list of handy URLs
- Adhere to general principles and ethics of library reference services (From the ALA Code of Ethics)
 - Provide the highest level of service to all library users
 - Provide accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests
 - Protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality
 - Distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties
- Remember that you are the expert in *retrieving information*, not in the meaning of the information itself

B. What a librarian CANNOT do

- Anything that would harm a patron
- Advise on legal matters----
 - You don't prescribe controlled substances; you shouldn't prescribe legal remedies
 - You don't explain the lymphatic system to a patron; you shouldn't try to teach divorce law
- Involve oneself with the legal problems of patrons
- Act as an expert on any area of law
 - Even if you just bought a house, got a divorce, collected a judgment....
 - We cannot select which form
 - We cannot assist with completing a form
 - We cannot determine which statute
 - We cannot interpret a case
- Engage in situations where there is a potential conflict of interest
 - If both parties (on opposite sides) to a legal situation seek your assistance, they must be able to count on your information seeking assistance
 - A lawyer can generally only assist one party; a librarian must stand ready to assist any patron.

The nearest we may come to offering legal advice is to suggest that the patron may wish to consult a lawyer or, if a government entity is involved, the agency issuing the rule.

C. Referrals

Rules and regulations interpretation

Minnesota Agencies: www.state.mn.us/cgi-bin/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=NorthStar
(Select *Government* text box and then select 'State Agencies')

Law Libraries (for additional resources, NOT legal advice)

- Local County Law Libraries --- many have established pro se centers
 - Directory of Minnesota County Law Libraries:
www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/clldir.html
- State Law Library
 - Minnesota State Law Library: www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/

Legal Services (to find a lawyer)

- Lawyers Referral Service (Minnesota State Bar Association)
www.mnfindalawyer.com
- Minnesota Legal Services Coalition directory www.mnlegalservices.org
(Select 'Quick Reference Directory')
- Law Help Minnesota, a website providing help to low-income citizens with civil legal problems www.lawhelpmn.org

Self-Help Centers

- Now being established in many centers around the state---usually county law libraries
- Check with:
 - County bar associations
 - Legal Aid offices
 - Courts---district court administrators
 - If there's not a center, you may encourage the establishment of one.
- For an example, check Hennepin county:
www.courts.state.mn.us/districts/fourth/SelfHelp/shmain.htm

Attorney Information

- Martindale-Hubbell, <http://www.martindale.com/xp/Martindale/home.xml>
- Find Law, www.findlaw.com
- Law Moose, www.lawmoose.com
- Minnesota Lawyer's Professional Responsibility Board,
<http://www.courts.state.mn.us/lprb/index.asp>
- Minnesota Attorney Registration System,
<http://www.courts.state.mn.us/mars/default.aspx>

D. Some Hypothetical Reference Questions for Class Discussion

“I have a letter from my grandmother that deeds the family farm to me. She died last month. Do I own it now?”

“I've been trying to get back together with my ex-girlfriend. I've been leaving her messages, but she won't return my calls and I don't understand why. Yesterday the cops came by my place. They didn't arrest me, but they gave me some papers that say I have to go to court next week and mention section 609.749. But I haven't done anything wrong! Can you help me?”
(two days later)

“Can you help me find out how to file for a restraining order on my ex-boyfriend?”

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Identifying and Retrieving Online Documents with a Citation

How to read a legal citation:

citation	Document / Publication	volume/title	page/section
Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113	U.S. Supreme Court Case / <i>U.S. Reports</i>	410	113
<i>AFSCME Union Local 3456 v. Grand Rapids PUC</i> , 645 N.W.2d 470 (Minn. App. 2002)	Minnesota Court of Appeals Case / <i>North Western Reporter, Second Series</i>	561	919
42 U.S.C. § 1983	U.S. Statute / <i>United States Code</i>	42	1983
26 C.F.R. § 1.501(c)(3)-1	Federal Regulation / <i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>	26	1.501 (search to the section)
Minn. Stat. § 624.714	Minnesota Statute		624.714
Minn. R. 6212.1700	Minnesota Rule		6212.1700
Fed. R. Civ. P. 12	<i>Federal Rules of Civil Procedure</i>		12
Minn. R. Civ. P. 56	<i>Minnesota Rules of Civil Procedure</i>		56

Where to find documents:

a. Statutes, Codes and Legislation:

United States Constitution:

www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate/constitution/toc.html#92ed

Federal Statutes:

Official U.S. Code: uscode.house.gov/usc.htm

Legal Information Institute: www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/

Federal Legislation:

thomas.loc.gov/

Minnesota Statutes, Legislation, and Constitution:

www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp

b. Courts and Case Law:

Federal courts:

United States Supreme Court: www.supremecourtus.gov/

Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals: www.ca8.uscourts.gov

U.S. District Court Minnesota: www.mnd.uscourts.gov/

Minnesota Courts:

www.courts.state.mn.us/home/

Minnesota Appellate Case Law:

www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/archive/

Federal and State Case Law:

LexisOne (free registration): www.lexisone.com/caselaw/freecaselaw

Findlaw: www.findlaw.com/casecode/

c. Agencies and Administrative Law:

Federal Agencies: www.washlaw.edu/doclaw/executive5m.html

Code of Federal Regulations: www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr

(Beta site—more current) www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/

Federal Register: www.gpoaccess.gov/fr

Minnesota Agencies: www.state.mn.us/cgi-bin/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=NorthStar
(Select *Government* text box and then select ‘State Agencies’)

Minnesota Rules: www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/
(searching) www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp

Minnesota State Register: www.comm.media.state.mn.us/bookstore/state_register_archives.asp

d. Municipal Ordinances

Minnesota www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/ordinance.html

Other states www.bpcnet.com/codes.htm

www.municode.com/Resources/online_Codes.asp

www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=collection_municodes

Find a document by citation:

Federal statute	Your patron wants to see the federal civil rights statute: 42 USC 1983	1. Go to http://uscode.house.gov/usc.htm 2. Enter title 42 and section 1983 in search boxes. 3. Read section.
Federal legislation	Your patron wants to read the Medicare prescription drug bill— Public Law No: 108-173.	1. Go to Thomas http://thomas.loc.gov/ 2. Choose Public Laws 4. Choose 108-151—108-199 5. Scroll down to 173

Federal court rule	Your patron has just been handed a motion to dismiss according to Fed. R. Civ. P. 12.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (Cornell) http://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/frcp/overview.htm 2. Scroll down to Rule 12. 3. Click on the link to the text of the rule. 4. Note the advisory comments—right column: Notes.
Federal case	Your patron wants to see the opinion for Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S. 113	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to FindLaw http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html (or LexisOne---though this one requires a free registration) 2. Scroll down on the page and enter the cite. 3. Open the case
Federal administrative rule	Your patron wants to see what a “501-c-3” organization is. 26 C.F.R. § 1.501(c)(3)-1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the regular CFR site: http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html 2. Select “Retrieve by CFR Citation” link 3. Enter title 26; part 1; section 501 Sometimes this works; sometimes not. <i>BETTER</i>: if you want an up-to-date version... 1. Go to http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr/ 2. Select Title 26 from the browse list 3. Select 1.501-1.640 4. Check the third line of the results
State statute	Your patron wants to read the conceal/carry statute: Minn. Stat. § 624.714	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the Minnesota Legislature page: http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp 2. Choose Retrieve a Section 3. Key: 624.714 and click get section

State legislation	Your patron wants to read the bill with the conceal/carry amendments: Chapter 28 of the 2003 regular session	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the same Minnesota Legislature page: http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp , 2. Scroll down to Minnesota Session Laws 3. Select 2003 Regular Session from the dropdown bar and click Go. 4. Scroll to Chapter 28.
State court rule	Your patron has just received a notice that the other side has filed for summary judgment: Minn. R. Civ. P. 56	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the Minnesota Court page: http://www.courts.state.mn.us/ 2. From the drop down menu under Court Rules, select the top link. 3. Scroll down to Minnesota Rules of Civil Procedure 4. Scroll down to Rule 56 and open the applicable links.
State case	Your patron wants to read the opinion in AFSCME Union Local 3456 v. Grand Rapids PUC, 645 N.W.2d 470	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to LexisOne http://www.lexisone.com/index.html 2. Select cases for free 3. Select search by citation 4. Enter 645 N.W.2d 470, scroll down, and click search for free 5. Open link to the retrieved case
State administrative rule	Your patron wants to see the regulation that permits his neighbor to raise deer as pets: Minn. R. 6212.1700	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go to the Minnesota Legislature page: http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/statutes.asp 2. Scroll down to Minnesota Rules 3. Choose Retrieve a specific rule 4. Enter 6212.1700 in the search box

Locating legal information on the web

Starting Point for Retrieving Legal Information

There are many great websites out there that provide links to primary authority. Instead of trying to remember them all, try just one – lawmoose. Go to: www.lawmoose.com. There are 3 main links on this page you may find useful: Minnesota Research, Federal Research and Local Research. From these 3 links you can get to any of the material that was discussed in section 1.

1. Click on **Minnesota Research**. Then click on **Minnesota Statutes**, then **Minnesota Statutes – Search**. From this page you can do a keyword search through the statutes. Let’s say you wanted to locate the statute that requires cars to stop for pedestrians. What would you search for? Do a sample search. In the text field select “contains all”. The search “pedestrian rights” OR “pedestrian yield” both work well. The correct statute is 169.21.
2. Go back to lawmoose. Click on **Minnesota Research** again. (If your page doesn’t automatically go there.) This time select **Minnesota Appellate Court Decisions**. Scroll to the bottom and select Minnesota State Appellate Courts Archive. Here you can search by release date, party name, docket number or keyword. Click on “Full-Text search of all archived opinions”. In the search box you can type your terms.

Do a sample search. Let’s say you want to find a case that deals with whether a search warrant is required to search a fish house. (You may want to show Help and Advanced.) Type “fish house” AND “search warrant” in the box. You should get 4 cases.

3. Go back to lawmoose. This time click on **Local Research**. Click on **MN City Ordinances and Charters**. Scroll down to **St. Paul**. Here you can search the Legislative Code (ordinances), the City Charter (constitution), or the administrative code (rules made by city departments). Do a sample search in the ordinances for how long a homeowner has to clear snow from his/her sidewalk after a snowfall. In the search box type: snow and sidewalk. The correct ordinance is 113.02. Homeowners have 24 hours to clear public sidewalks of snow.

4. Go back to lawmoose. This time click on **Federal Research**. Click on **Code of Federal Regulations**. Click on **Code of Federal Regulations** again. Click on **Search the entire set of CFR databases by keyword**. The Library of Congress is a federal agency. I'd like to know about whether the public can use the collection there. Do a sample search. In the search box type "library of congress" and "public use". You will come up with 9 results. Number 7 is the one you want – 37 CFR 701.5.

5. Go back to lawmoose, and click on **Federal Research** again. Then click on **U.S. Code** and scroll down to **U.S. Code Search** and click on that. I'm interested in the law library. Do a sample search. (You may want to click on "help" to show how searches are put together here.) In the search box type 'law library' and click Search. Click on 2 USC sec. 137 to see who can use the law library.

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Interesting Legal Websites

Name	Website	What's so great about it
Statistical Resources on the Web	http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html	Provides searchable databases of statistics re. consumers, health, housing, education, environment, etc. (Sample search: Select Environment and scroll down to 'environmental maps,' search for your zip code.)
Directory of Federal Government Agencies	www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html	Searchable portal for all federal agency websites
Oyez Project	http://www.oyez.org/oyez/frontpage	US Supreme Court multimedia website. Listen to US Supreme Court oral arguments.
Patent Cafe	http://www.patentcafe.com/	Patent Information for new inventors and small businesses
Minnesota Conciliation Court	http://www.ag.state.mn.us/consumer/con_court/default.htm	Users Guide to small claims court Forms and samples Court phone numbers

MN Department of Corrections, Level 3 Sex Offenders	http://www.doc.state.mn.us/level3/level3.asp	Can search for offenders by zip code, city or name
Dakota County Jail Roster	http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/sheriff/jailsearch/	Search for people currently in custody in Dakota County (e.g., search for Philip Vance)
Minnesota Board on Aging	http://www.mnaging.org/	Organization that helps seniors find community services (e.g., transportation, housekeeping and home care) Also information on Medicare and prescriptions
Wacky and/or Obscure Patents	http://www.patent.freeseve.co.uk/ or http://www.delphion.com/gallery	Select <i>Contents</i> at the top for a list of funny patents
Directory of Minnesota Government Agencies	http://www.state.mn.us/cgi-bin/portal/mn/jsp/home.do?agency=NorthStar	To access a directory of state agencies, select the <i>Government</i> tab and click on <i>Agencies</i> on the left side-bar.
General Minnesota Information Portal	http://www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/links/	A subject list of Minnesota-related Internet resources. Topics include banking and insurance, transportation and veteran's affairs.

Flexible Buster	http://home.wanadoo.nl/pos/warp.htm	Picture of a yellow lab retriever that you can distort with your cursor
Open Secrets.Org	http://www.opensecrets.org/	Research on campaign finance issues for the news media, academics, activists, and the public at large. Campaign contributions tracked by industry and candidate.
Employment Labor	http://www.worksonwork.irc.umn.edu/	WorksOnWork currently indexes over 70,000 employment-related books, journal articles, working papers, proceedings, and web. Information may be accessed via author, title, keyword, or by unique subject headings developed by the Reference Room staff.

Locating legal information on the web

Helpful Websites

Miscellaneous:

Bankruptcy www.bankruptcyaction.com/

Courts

Conciliation Court

www.ag.state.mn.us/consumer/con_court/default.htm

Forms:

www.courts.state.mn.us/ctforms/

(also check individual district courts)

Minnesota System Guide

www.courts.state.mn.us/mncourts.htm

Daily life information

www.abalawinfo.org/

www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/links/

Department of Corrections

www.doc.state.mn.us/level3/level3.asp

Family Law issues

Child Support Enforcement

www.dhs.state.mn.us/ecs/ChildSupport/Default.htm

Children, Youth, and Family Consortium www.cyfc.umn.edu/welcome.html

DivorceNet Minnesota

www.divorcenet.com/mn/mn.html

Divorce Source

www.divorcesource.com/

Elder Issues

www.mnaging.org/

Medicare

www.medicare.gov/

Finances

finance.yahoo.com

Forms:

www.alllaw.com/forms/

www.ilrg.com/forms/index.html

www.lawsmart.com/

www.lectlaw.com/form.html

General legal web sites:

Findlaw

public.findlaw.com/?lid=Public_button

LawMoose

www.lawmoose.com/index.cfm

Legal Information Institute (Cornell)

www.law.cornell.edu/

LexisOne

www.lexisone.com/

Nolo Press

www.nolo.com/

Zimmerman's Guide

www.lexisone.com/zimmermanguide

Housing

Consumer Guide

www.ag.state.mn.us/consumer/housing

Mortgages

www.mortgage-x.com

Property values

www.indorgs.virginia.edu/portico/personalproperty.html

Laws of other states

www.legalengine.com/lawsearchstatelocal2.html

Lawyer Referral Service (MSBA)

www.mnfindalawyer.com

LawHelpMN.org

www.lawhelpmn.org/

Statistics

www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html

Taxes---federal

www.taxesos.com/

WWW Virtual Library—Law

www.law.indiana.edu/v-lib/

Other useful sources:

Minnesota Law Libraries and Library Associations:

American Association of Law Libraries (AALL): www.aallnet.org/index.asp

Directory of Minnesota County Law Libraries:
www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/clldir.html

Hamline University Law Library: web.hamline.edu/Law/library/

Hennepin County Law Library: hclaw.co.hennepin.mn.us/

Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL): www.aallnet.org/chapter/mall/

Minnesota Legislative Reference Library: www.leg.state.mn.us/lrl/lrl.htm

Minnesota State Law Library: www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/

Special Libraries Association (SLA) Legal Division: www.slalegal.org/

University of Minnesota Law Library: www.law.umn.edu/library/home.html

especially the research guides:
www.law.umn.edu/library/tools/pathfinders/pathfinders.html

University of St. Thomas Law Library: www.stthomas.edu/libraries/law/

William Mitchell College of Law Library: www.wmitchell.edu/library/index.html

especially the Internet resources portal: www.wmitchell.edu/resources/index.html

Locating legal information on the web

Exercises

1. I want to file a claim in conciliation court and want to get the form you use to file a complaint. Do you know where I might look?
2. I've received a notice of an easement across my property, but I'm not sure what that is. Can you help me find a definition of easement?
3. I received a letter from my daughter's school which cites to Minnesota Statute 121A.62. Do you know if I can retrieve that online?
4. I just bought a car and I think I got duped. It's a lemon. Do you know where I could find information about Minnesota car laws? Is there a pamphlet or something I could look at?
5. I need a power of attorney form and health care directive. Are they available online?
6. My husband just died and I need to get his Social Security benefits transferred to my name? Do you know where I could go to find out what to do?

Locating Legal Information on the Web

Forms and Print Materials

Forms

Court forms and Legal forms. Court forms relate to procedures when parties take matters before the court. Legal forms relate to matters that don't come before the court but which have full legal effect between the parties involved.

Court transactions require parties to act/not act—failure to comply can result in contempt. Non-court transactions can be between individuals, individuals and businesses—by agreement, legal effect is imposed upon the parties; failure to comply may result in a cause of action or lawsuit.

What they call themselves: Court forms (motion, affidavit, petition, summons, complaint, judgment, decree) “Out of court” forms (will, codicil, power of attorney, lease, purchase agreement)

Minnesota Court Forms available from the state court website (www.courts.state.mn.us); many district courts also have websites

Free Comprehensive Forms Sites (www.lectlaw.com)

Commercial vendors such as Miller Davis (www.millerdavis.com) or Kemske/Oswald—1-800782-3532)

Commercial document vendors—We the People document service

Strategy—Patrons must decide upon the form they need and select accordingly. The librarian cannot give advice regarding the proper form a patron should choose. Forms relate to procedures determined by the court as well as statutory authority. A good example of form derivation from the statutes is the statutory short form power of attorney text at Minn. Stat. 523.23.

Print Materials

See MALL's “Legal Resources for Public Libraries” which lists core print resources for public library collections.