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RHODE ISLAND

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[State Constitution](#)

[State Supreme and Superior Ct. Decisions](#)

[State Code](#)

[State Digest](#)

[State Session Laws](#)

[State Court Rules](#)

[State Bills](#)

[Bill Tracking](#)

[State Jury Instructions](#)

[State Legislative Journals](#)

[State Forms](#)

[State Administrative Code](#)

[State Treatises, CLE's and Practice Guides](#)

[State Government Website](#)

[City and Town Ordinances](#)

[Law Libraries in Rhode Island](#)

RHODE ISLAND CONSTITUTION

RI Const. art. x, sec. x

PRINT

Volume 1 of the *Rhode Island General Laws* and *West's General Laws Annotated* contain the annotated version of the Constitution with historical references, amendments and synopsis and citations to case law.

ELECTRONIC

RI General Assembly Website - Free access, but does not contain annotations. <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/RiConstitution/> The General Assembly website contains a disclaimer that the material is "supplied for informational purposes only."

STATE CODE

R.I. Gen. Laws (LexisNexis)
RI Gen. Laws Ann. (West)

PRINT

The *General Laws of Rhode Island* are a statutory code that contain all the laws of a general and permanent nature and are arranged by subject. Both the Lexis and West versions are annotated with historical references and a variety of editorial enhancements. The *Rhode Island General Laws* are arranged by title, topic and section, in that order. Each title covers an area of law, such as education, taxation or motor vehicles.

The *Rhode Island General Laws* published by Lexis-Nexis are considered the official code of Rhode Island, as the Law Revision Office of the General Assembly has a cooperative agreement with the publisher.

The Rhode Island State Law Library has historic versions of the General Laws, including the various re-enactments of volumes and pocket supplements for each year after 1970.

ELECTRONIC

The General Laws are available electronically through the General Assembly website. Access is free, however the laws are not annotated nor do they contain historical references. The General Laws can be searched by word or by drilling down through the various titles. They are updated after each session. <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/> The General Assembly website contains a disclaimer that the material is "supplied for informational purposes only."

STATE SESSION LAWS

(Year) R.I. Pub. Laws (page no.)

(Year) R.I. Acts & Resolves (page no.)

PRINT

The Rhode Island Session Laws are laws passed at each session of the General Assembly. They can be of a private or public nature, permanent or temporary. At the end of each session, the laws are published by LexisNexis and arranged chronologically by Chapter Number as passed. They are divided into the *Rhode Island Public Laws* and the *Rhode Island Acts and Resolves*. There is an index as well as a table's volume. The Rhode Island State Law Library Collection as well as the Rhode Island State Library maintains a collection of Rhode Island state session laws from Colonial times to the present.

ELECTRONIC

The Rhode Island General Assembly offers a digital version of the RI Public Laws and the RI Acts and Resolves from 1998 to the present. <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/pages/legislation.aspx>. They can be accessed by bill number, chapter number and by subject. The General Assembly website contains a disclaimer that the material is "supplied for informational purposes only."

STATE BILLS AND JOURNALS

PRINT

HOUSE AND SENATE BILLS --- Bills are introduced throughout the legislative session. They are assigned a consecutive number and are often amended or changed as they move through the legislative process. These changes are designated as a aa (amended) or Sub A (substitute A) et seq. following the assigned number. A historical collection of introduced legislation is available at the State Library and RI State Law Library. Current legislation is available at the State Library.

HOUSE AND SENATE JOURNALS -- The constitution requires that the House and Senate "keep a journal of its proceedings." These journals contain the roll call, the notice of bill introduction, committee assignments, records of voting and transmittal to the governor. The Journals do not contain a copy of the legislation as introduced nor do they attempt to preserve verbatim testimony in the House or Senate.

ELECTRONIC

HOUSE AND SENATE BILLS – Various embodiments of the bills of an annual session are found at the General Assembly website <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/pages/legislation.aspx>. They are accessible by key word and by bill number

BILL TRACKING -- Tracking of legislation from the 2003 legislative session to the current is available at the General Assembly Website. <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/pages/legislation.aspx> View online bill summary, amendments, history and full text details, committee assignment, and most recent action.

HOUSE AND SENATE JOURNALS -- Journals of the House and Senate are available electronically through the RI General Assembly website. <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/pages/legislation.aspx>. They are available full text and can be searched by word or by date.

STATE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE (Agency number) (Sub-agency number) CRIR
(chapter number)

PRINT

The 20 volume, loose-leaf *Code of Rhode Island Rules* is published by LexisNexis. It contains the rules and regulations promulgated by state agencies and commissions as delegated by the General Assembly. It is updated monthly and accessible by agency. There is an index by subject and also by the section of the General Laws to which the regulation applies. Individual rules and regulations are filed with the Secretary of State Archives Division and copies of current and historical regulations can be obtained there.

ELECTRONIC

Both commercial publishers, Westlaw and LexisNexis offer digital versions of the Rhode Island Administrative Code.

The Secretary of State <https://rules.sos.ri.gov/organizations> maintains an electronic version of the rules and regulations filed by state agencies, boards and commissions. This can also be an excellent resource for superseded, expired and repealed rules and regulations. The *Final Rules and Regulations* database contain all regulations filed since January 2002. Regulations that are currently proposed by state agencies, boards and commissions can be found in the *Proposed Rules and Regulations* database.

The Administrative Database contains a disclaimer policy that informs users that State of Rhode Island makes no claims, guarantees or promises about the accuracy, currency, or completeness of the information provided.

Many of the agencies also publish their own rules and regulations on their respective websites. <http://www.ri.gov/guide/>

STATE SUPREME COURT OPINIONS AND SUPERIOR COURT DECISIONS

PRINT

R.I., A., A.2d, A.3d
R.I. Superior

The Rhode Island Supreme Court Opinions are available in slip form at the Law Library and in the Rhode Island and Atlantic Reporters. The Atlantic Reporter has been the official reporter since 1981 (v. 122) at which time the R.I. Reports ceased publication. The Rhode Island Reporter (West) is an offshoot of the Atlantic Reporter and contains only Rhode Island cases previously published in the Atlantic Reporter. These opinions contain precedent setting case law for Rhode Island.

The Superior Court in Rhode Island is a trial level court; their decisions do not have precedential value; however, due to the fact that RI does not have an intermediate level appellate court, the written decisions of the Superior Court are often cited, have persuasive value and are available on Westlaw and Lexis.

ELECTRONIC

Westlaw and Lexis offer databases of RI Supreme and Superior Court Cases. The State Law Library has public access computers which provide access to these services. In addition,

Google Scholar provides access to R.I. Supreme Court Opinions from 1950 to the present. Google Scholar website.

The R.I. Supreme Court Opinions are uploaded on the court website from 2000 to the present. Also included are Supreme Court Orders, Executive Orders and Miscellaneous Orders. <http://www.courts.ri.gov/Courts/SupremeCourt/Pages/Opinions%20and%20Orders%20Issued%20in%20Supreme%20Court%20Cases.aspx>

The R.I. Superior Court website provides Superior Court written decisions from 2000- to the present. Also included are the administrative orders and miscellaneous orders. <http://www.courts.ri.gov/Courts/SuperiorCourt/Pages/Decisions%20and%20Orders.aspx>

The court website contains a disclaimer that the information provided on the Judiciary site is for informational purposes only.

STATE DIGEST

West's Rhode Island Digest and *West's Atlantic Digest* are subject indices to case law. They provide citation and brief summaries of the issues of a case. The Rhode Island Digest is a multi- volume compilation updated with pocket supplements and re-enacted volumes. Digest topics and key numbers can be searched electronically on Westlaw.

STATE COURT RULES

PRINT

LexisNexis publishes the *Rhode Island Court Rules Annotated* and West publishes *West's Annotated Court Rules: State and Federal*. They contain the Appellate Rules of the Supreme Court, the Civil and Criminal for the Supreme and Superior Court, the Rules of Domestic, Worker's Compensation and Traffic Tribunal Courts. They also contain the Rules of Evidence, the Rules of Practice, the Rules of Professional Conduct for Attorneys and the Sentencing Benchmarks and Bail Guidelines. The Federal Rules provide the rules of the First Circuit, the District Court Rules for the District of Rhode Island and the Bankruptcy Rules for the District of Rhode Island.

ELECTRONIC

The Court Rules are available on many of the primary law databases, including Westlaw and Lexis. Many of the individual courts, including the Supreme Court, the Worker's Compensation Court and the Traffic Tribunal have posted their rules on the court website. Consult the specific court on the judicial website at <http://www.courts.ri.gov>

RHODE ISLAND SUPREME COURT BRIEFS

PRINT

The Rhode Island State Law Library houses a print collection of briefs submitted to the Supreme Court dating back to 1901. Those submitted before 1946 are housed off-site and can be requested and viewed at the library.

ELECTRONIC

The Rhode Island Supreme Court Briefs are available electronically on Westlaw and LexisNexis dating back to 1990. These are accessible on the library's public access computers.

STATE JURY INSTRUCTIONS

The Rhode Island Bar Association has published two editions of the *Model Civil Jury Instructions*. There is a CD-ROM that accompanies the print edition, which is available at the RI State Law Library. To date, there are not criminal jury instructions specifically for Rhode Island.

STATE FORMS

PRINT

There is no official forms book for Rhode Island. Each court has appended to their Court Rules recommended forms that can be used for a variety of situations. Forms are also available in many of the CLE Materials as well as treatise materials available at the RI State Law Library.

ELECTRONIC

The forms approved by the court are available on the court website at <http://www.courts.ri.gov/publicresources/forms/default.aspx>

STATE TREATISES, CLE'S AND PRACTICE GUIDES

There is not a practice series or legal encyclopedia for Rhode Island. A number of authors have written practice guides on a variety of legal topics. The RI State Law Library collects the seminar materials from continuing legal education programs held by the RI Bar Association, the National Business Institute and other providers. Below is a sampling of the popular and often consulted offerings.

Print

Romanoff, Hon. Marvin H, Mark Sjoberg et al. Practical Guide to Probate in Rhode Island.

Hurst, Hon. Patricia A., Mark Morse et al. Practical Guide to Discovery and Depositions in Rhode Island.

Kent, Robert. Rhode Island Practice

Kent, Robert, David Wollin et al. Rhode Island Civil and Appellate Procedure.

Resmini, Ronald J. Rhode Island Tort Law and Personal Injury Practice.

Resmini, Ronald J. Rhode Island Civil Practice and Procedure.

Riedel, David. T. Wills, Trusts and Gifts

Smith, Sandra, Deborah Miller Tate et al. Practical Guide to Divorce in Rhode Island.

Electronic

Kent, Robert, David Wollin et al. Rhode Island Civil and Appellate Practice is available on the public access Westlaw computers available at the Rhode Island State Law Library.

The library also subscribes to the MCLE Online Library which affords access to all the MCLE products including the popular Practical Guide toseries that is specific to Rhode Island as well as those of neighboring New England states.

STATE GOVERNMENT WEBSITE

The official website for the state of Rhode Island is located at www.ri.gov

CITY AND TOWN ORDINANCES

PRINT

To comply with 45-6-7, all ordinances are required to be printed in the manner determined by each town or city council and distributed to the State Library and State Law Library. In recent years, electronic updates have largely superseded the print versions of the ordinances.

ELECTRONIC

Thirty-seven of Rhode Island's thirty-nine city and towns provide an electronic version of their ordinances. Use Municode at <https://library.municode.com/RI>. If the town you need is not included in Municode's collection, search Google for the city or town website. Each municipality posts its ordinances on its website.

LAW LIBRARIES

The Rhode Island State Law Library serves the bench, members of the bar, students and the general public. It is the only comprehensive public law library in the state, and as such, collects primary and secondary legal materials. The library also makes accessible a number of authoritative databases, including Westlaw and LexisNexis. The library is a federal depository

library as well as a member of the State Documents Clearinghouse. The library has four satellite libraries located in the courthouses throughout the state.

The Rhode Island State Library, under the authority of the Secretary of State, housed in the State House. It functions as a depository and a legislative library, has a strong Rhode Island collection and primarily serves the General Assembly and the public with legal and historical research and reference services.

The collections and services of the *Roger Williams University Law Library* are primarily designed to meet the specific needs of the faculty and students of the law school, but also serve the broader academic and legal community.

