

Public Libraries Toolkit New Hampshire

By Mary S. Searles, Law Librarian
The John W. King New Hampshire Law Library

This is a list of New Hampshire state legal titles and other resources. Print resources are linked to library catalogs to show researchers which libraries in New Hampshire carry the titles. Online versions are included if they are available for free.

New Hampshire Constitution

Abbreviated as:

N.H. CONST.

The annotated¹ version of the New Hampshire Constitution of 1784 is published in print in the Constitutions volume of the *New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated* (see below under State code). An online version without annotations or other research aids is on the [official state website](#).

Legislative Branch

Bills

Abbreviated as:

HB
SB

Bills may go through many changes as they move through the legislative process. The "bill as introduced" is the first version of a bill. The "bill as amended" contains changes to the original bill. The final version of the bill is the version that became law.

Bills are collected in print by the [New Hampshire State Library](#), the [New Hampshire Law Library](#) and the [State Archives](#). Coverage varies so contact the institutions for more information.

Bills are online at the [General Court's website](#).

Session Laws

Abbreviated as:

N.H. Laws
Laws

¹ Annotations are references to cases that have interpreted sections of the Constitution. They provide brief summaries of the issues involved in the cases.

Statutes are laws passed by the legislature. There are public, private, permanent, and temporary statutes. Public (or general) statutes apply to the state as a whole. A private statute applies to an individual, a family, a small group, or a specific entity.

Session laws are all the laws, public and private, permanent and temporary, passed by the New Hampshire General Court in a particular legislative session. At the end of each legislative session, all the legislation and resolutions passed during the session are published annually in print under the title *Laws of the State of New Hampshire*. The spine title is *N.H. Laws* and that title is often used instead of the complete title. Many print volumes of the session laws have been digitized by the University of New Hampshire and are available for free [online](#) at the Internet Archive.

Individual enacted laws from 1989 to the present are online at the New Hampshire General Court's [website](#). They are called the "final version" or the "chaptered final version" or "chaptered law."

Statutory Code

Abbreviated as:

R.S.A.

N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann.

New Hampshire's statutory code is called the Revised Statutes Annotated² (R.S.A.). The Revised Statutes Annotated contains only the public and permanent laws of New Hampshire arranged more or less by topic.

New Hampshire has two print versions of the Revised Statutes Annotated. The official³ version is published by Thomson Reuters and is titled *New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, 1955*. The unofficial version is published by LexisNexis and is titled *Lexis New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, 1955*.

The *Revised Statutes Online* is the online version of New Hampshire's statutory code. The *Revised Statutes Online* has the same text as the print versions but does not have case annotations or other legal research aids.

The [New Hampshire Law Library](#) keeps current and retrospective versions of both print versions of the R.S.A.s.

Selected laws on particular topics are also published separately in softbound publications. These versions can be an economical way for public libraries to provide print access to some of the RSAs. Titles include:

² Annotations are references to cases that have interpreted sections of the statutes. They provide brief summaries of the issues involved in the cases.

³ "Official" in this case means that Thomson Reuters contracts with the State and works in cooperation with the [Office of Legislative Services](#) to publish the statutory code.

New Hampshire Juvenile Laws (LexisNexis)
New Hampshire Landlord & Tenant Law Annotated (LexisNexis)
New Hampshire Selected Motor Vehicle, Boating and Related Laws Annotated
(Blue360 Media)
New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulation (LexisNexis)
New Hampshire Statutes Pertaining to Health and Human Services (LexisNexis)
New Hampshire Banks and Banking Laws Annotated (Thomson Reuters)

Legislative Calendars and Journals

Legislative calendars list all the business that has been scheduled in the legislature. They include hearing notices, committee reports and bill amendments. The [House](#) and the [Senate](#) have separate calendars. During the legislative session, the calendars may be published several times a week.

Legislative journals are the records of what occurred on the floor of the Senate and House of Representatives. There are two versions of journals: the daily, or working, journals which are published within a few days of each completed floor session, and the permanent journals which are bound and edited versions of the daily journals. The daily journals for the [House](#) and [Senate](#) are online and are collected in print by the [New Hampshire Law Library](#) and the [New Hampshire State Library](#).

The permanent Senate Journal includes a transcription of Senate floor debate but the permanent House Journal includes floor debate only if requested by a Representative. The permanent journals, titled [Journal of the Senate of New Hampshire](#) and [Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of New Hampshire](#), are distributed in print to libraries, agencies, and offices throughout the state. Many volumes of the permanent [House](#) and [Senate](#) journals have been digitized and are available for free online.

House and Senate Rules

The proceedings of the House and Senate are guided by Rules which are approved by the individual chambers. The Rules are published in print by the House Clerk's Office in the [Manual of the New Hampshire General Court](#) (a.k.a. the Black Book). In addition to the Rules, the Black Book contains complete listings of House and Senate members with their address, phone numbers, county, and district. It also contains lists of all standing and statutory committees, the Ethics Guidelines and the N.H. Constitution.

House and Senate Rules are online at the General Court's [website](#). Follow the links to the House and Senate webpages.

House and Senate Streaming Media

Current and archived audio and video of Senate and House floor sessions is available from the General Court's [website](#).

Executive Branch

Administrative Code

Abbreviated as:

N.H. Code Admin. R. Ann.

N.H. Admin. Rules

The General Court delegates lawmaking power by granting rulemaking authority to [state agencies](#). Administrative rules have the force and effect of law. An administrative code contains the rules adopted by agencies.

New Hampshire has two commercial print versions of its administrative code: a 15-volume, loose-leaf publication titled [Code of New Hampshire Rules](#) and a smaller, 5-volume version titled the [New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules Annotated](#) containing rules from selected agencies. Both are published by LexisNexis.

Online versions of administrative rules are on the Office of Legislative Services, Administrative Rules [website](#) or on individual agency [websites](#). If the name of the agency is unknown, use the [Agency Rule and Rulemaking search](#) provided by the Office of Legislative Services.

The [New Hampshire Law Library](#) and the [New Hampshire State Library](#) collect and preserve the print versions of rules.

Administrative Register

The New Hampshire Rulemaking Register is published online. A complete description of what the register contains is [here](#), and current and archived Registers back to 1998 are [here](#).

Administrative Agency Decisions

The best way to find administrative agency decisions is to check the individual agency website. A list of state government agencies is online at [NH.gov](#). Not all agencies have their decisions online but there should be agency contact information and/or information about how to obtain copies of decisions.

Governor and Council

Governor

The Governor's website is [here](#). Executive orders going back to 1991 are [here](#).

Executive Council

The official website of the State of New Hampshire's Executive Council is [here](#). Council agendas, audio of meetings, meeting minutes, and audio recordings of public hearings are hosted on the Secretary of State's website [here](#).

Attorney General Opinions

Non-confidential Attorney General opinions are published on the Attorney General's [website](#) and in the [New Hampshire Rulemaking Register](#). Older opinions are available from the [New Hampshire Law Library](#).

Other administrative sources

An online list of most state agencies and boards is [here](#). The *Manual for the General Court* (a.k.a. the "Redbook") has information about, and brief descriptions of, most agencies and boards. Print versions of the Redbook have been digitized and are online [here](#). A "working" version of the Redbook is online [here](#).

[New Hampshire State Agency Databases](#)

This is an annotated list of databases produced by New Hampshire State Agencies listed by database subject. Created by GODORT, the Government Documents Round Table of the American Association of Law Libraries.

Judicial Branch

State cases

Abbreviated as:

N.H.

A.

A.2d

A.3d

Opinions

The official version of New Hampshire's Supreme Court opinions is published in print by LexisNexis in the [New Hampshire Reports](#). The unofficial version is published by Thomson Reuters in the three series of the [Atlantic Reporter](#).

Individual opinions (a.k.a. "slip opinions") from 1995 to the present are online at the New Hampshire Judicial Branch [website](#). This version of NH Supreme Court opinions does not use the case abbreviations noted above. Searching must be done by docket number or party name.

[Google Scholar](#) has New Hampshire's supreme court opinions from 1950 to the present. Note that Google Scholar does not always have the *New Hampshire Reports* (N.H.) abbreviation and searchers may need to use party names, docket numbers, or the *Atlantic Reporter* cite to find their cases.

Orders

Orders of the Supreme Court are not published in print. Orders are made public online for informational purposes only and, unlike opinions, have no precedential value.

The Supreme Court sometimes hears cases by the three-judge panel appeal process known as 3JX. Final 3JX orders from 2004 to the present are [here](#).

The court also issues other, non-3JX final orders deciding the merits of a case. Orders from 2014 to the present are online [here](#).

Trial Court Decisions

Trial court⁴ decisions are not published in print and are rarely published online unless the case is of particular interest. Some are on the Superior Court [webpage](#) others are on the [Frequently Requested Cases](#) page. Business and Commercial Dispute Docket Orders are online [here](#). Otherwise, contact the trial court for a copy of a decision.

State digest

A digest is a subject index to case law with brief summaries of the issues of a case. New Hampshire Supreme Court opinions are indexed by *West's New Hampshire Digest* and by *West's Atlantic Digest*. Trial court decisions are not indexed by the digest.

State court rules

Current, online state court rules are on the New Hampshire Judicial Branch [website](#).

State court rules in print are found in *New Hampshire Court Rules Annotated* published by LexisNexis and *New Hampshire Rules of Court : State* and *Federal* published by Thomson Reuters. Current and retrospective print versions of state court rules in print are kept by the [New Hampshire Law Library](#).

State jury instructions

[New Hampshire Civil Jury Instructions](#) are published by LexisNexis.

Draft criminal jury instructions are available online at the [New Hampshire Bar Association](#). There is no "final" version of the criminal jury instructions.

State forms

There are no New Hampshire form books. To find forms, look in Continuing Legal Education (CLE) materials, the *New Hampshire Practice Series*, the *New Hampshire Practice and Procedure Handbook*, the state statutes, and the state court rules.

The Judicial Branch has created many online forms which are available on the [website](#). Follow the links for the individual courts to find their forms.

State legal encyclopedia

There is no state legal encyclopedia. Use New Hampshire legal treatises instead.

⁴ In New Hampshire, the trial courts are the Superior Courts and the Circuit Courts. The Circuit Courts are made up of 3 divisions: Family, Probate, and District.

State treatises, practice guides, Continuing Legal Education Materials

The [*New Hampshire Practice Series*](#) is a 17-volume set of books on New Hampshire law covering family law, civil and criminal procedure, wills, trusts and probate, real estate law, local government and municipal law, land use, planning and zoning, and personal injury.

Other treatises and practice guides include:

[*Labor and Employment in New Hampshire: a Guide to Employment Laws, Regulations, and Practices.*](#)

[*New Hampshire Evidence Manual.*](#)

[*New Hampshire Practice and Procedure Handbook*](#)

[*New Hampshire Workers' Compensation Manual.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Construction Law and Litigation in New Hampshire*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Discovery & Depositions in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Divorce in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Estate Planning in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Evidence in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Organizing a Business in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Probate in New Hampshire*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Residential Real Estate Transactions and Foreclosures in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Trying DWI Cases in New Hampshire.*](#)

[*A Practical Guide to Understanding RSA 358-A in New Hampshire*](#)

The New Hampshire Law Library collects many Continuing Legal Education (CLE) materials in print. Follow these links to find CLEs from the [New Hampshire Bar Association](#) (NHBA CLE), the [New Hampshire Association for Justice](#), [Lorman Education Services](#), and the [National Business Institute](#) (NBI CLE).

State directories

The [*Manual of the New Hampshire General Court*](#) (a.k.a. the "Black Book") contains complete listings of House and Senate members with their address, phone numbers, county, and district.

The [*Manual for the General Court*](#) (a.k.a. the "Red Book") lists the names of state officials and of members of many boards, commissions, and committees though there is little to no contact information. There is also an online version [here](#), and digitized versions of the print volumes are [here](#).

The [*New Hampshire Law Directory & Daybook*](#) (a.k.a. the "Green Book") contains a directory of lawyers who are members of the New Hampshire Bar as well as local, county, and state officials and staff.

The [Handbook of New Hampshire Elected Officials](#) contains biographical and contact information as well as photographs of local, county and state elected officials.

The [New Hampshire Register](#) is a directory of local, county, and state officials and offices, and other organizations.

The State Phone/Email directory is online [here](#). The House Roster is online [here](#) and the Senate Roster is online [here](#).

State legal periodicals

Current and archived versions of the *New Hampshire Bar News* and *New Hampshire Bar Journal* are online at the New Hampshire Bar Association's [website](#). The print versions are held by the New Hampshire Law Library.

[IDEA: the IP Law Review](#) and the [UNH Law Review](#) which are published by the [University of New Hampshire School of Law](#) are online.

State government website

The official website of the State of New Hampshire is located at www.nh.gov.

City and town ordinances

Very few New Hampshire ordinances are published by commercial publishers but most local government websites have links to their ordinances. Check with the [city or town clerk](#) for more information.

Law librarian associations

[Law Librarians of New England](#) (LLNE). LLNE was organized to promote the profession of law librarianship in the legal and library communities, and to provide members with opportunities for continuing education and networking.

Local law libraries

The [John W. King New Hampshire Law Library](#) (NHLL) is open to the public and collects state and federal primary and secondary sources and provides free online access to LexisNexis and Westlaw. NHLL also provides interlibrary loan and document delivery services. The [New Hampshire State Library](#) collects New Hampshire primary law and legislative and agency materials. Many public libraries throughout the state have law collections as well. The [University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law Library](#) is not open to the public.

Depository libraries

For a list, go to the [Federal Depository Library Directory](#)

Bar associations

As a unified bar, all attorneys licensed to practice in New Hampshire and New Hampshire judges must belong to the [New Hampshire Bar Association](#) and pay annual dues. County, local, and specialty bar associations are listed [here](#)

The [New Hampshire Association for Justice](#) is a statewide professional association of trial attorneys.

Pathfinders/research guides

[American Association of Law Libraries. Public Library Toolkit.](#)

The Public Library Toolkit is meant to help public librarians understand the process of legal research, effectively develop and use the information located within their libraries, and utilize information located outside their libraries with the end goal of helping their patrons locate the legal information they need. Materials include:

[Researching a Legal Problem](#)

[How to Find Legal Material if You Already Have a Citation](#)

[Making Sure You Have the Most Current Information](#)

[Public Library Collection Guidelines for a Legal Research Collection](#)

[Knowing When to Refer](#)

[State-Specific Public Library Toolkits](#) (scroll down the page to see the list)

Library of Congress: [Guide to Law Online – New Hampshire](#)

New Hampshire Law Library: [Compiling a New Hampshire Legislative History](#)

New Hampshire Law Library: [NH Law About ...](#)

UNH School of Law Library: [Research Guides](#)