

AALL LISP Public Library Toolkit

Massachusetts

1. State Constitution

Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In Print: In the *General Laws of Massachusetts*

Available online at: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/Constitution>

Original document held by Massachusetts Archives at Columbia Point:

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arccol/colidx.htm>

“The 1780 Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, authored by John Adams is the oldest written constitution still functioning as a structural foundation of government in the world,” on view at <http://www.commonwealthmuseum.org/> .

2. State Statutes

General Laws of Massachusetts

Official Edition: Prepared under the Direction of the General Court, published every other year with annual supplements and monthly updates by the General Court and Thomson Reuters

Unofficially available online at: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/Search>

Links to various ways to search the Mass. General Laws available from the

Mass. Trial Court Law Libraries: <https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-general-laws-session-laws-bills>

Annotated Statutes

Annotated Laws of Massachusetts, Lexis Nexis. “black books”

Massachusetts General Laws Annotated, Thomson West. “green books”

Historical Codifications (1836-1932)

Listed and linked at: <http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/2452/124177>

3. State Bills

Session Laws: *Acts and Resolves*

Official Editions: published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth

Acts from 1997 on available online at: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Search>

Acts and Resolves, 1692-2009, available online from the State Library of Massachusetts

at: <http://archives.lib.state.ma.us/handle/123456789/2> , searchable by year and chapter number

Bills: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills>

4. State Administrative Law

Code of Massachusetts Regulations in print available at the Mass. Trial Court Law Libraries

Official Edition: published in print by the Secretary of the Commonwealth

New regulations are published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth bi-weekly in the

Massachusetts Register to be filed in the *Code*

The Secretary of the Commonwealth sells individual titles and access electronically to the entire

Code through the State Bookstore: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/spr/spridx.htm>

Current regulations (updated bi-weekly) available from the Mass. Trial Court Law Libraries:

<https://www.mass.gov/code-of-massachusetts-regulations-cmr>

The Regulations Manual, 2016, published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth,

Available at: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/spr/sprpdf/manual.pdf>

Index, compiled by the Mass. Trial Court Law Libraries:

<https://www.mass.gov/law-library/code-of-massachusetts-regulations-cmr-by-subject>

Guide to the Code of Massachusetts Regulations

Collection of six indexes to the Mass. regulations formerly called *Weil's Guide*, now published (in print) by LexisNexis
Earlier Editions of the Code: 1976, 1978 and 1987

5. Municipal (City and Town) Codes

Copies of Municipal codes are available from the City or Town Clerks – M.G.L. c. 40A § 5, “A true copy of the zoning ordinance or by-law with any amendments thereto shall be kept on file available for inspection in the office of the clerk of such city or town.” A Directory with contact information for the Clerks is available at:

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleclk/clkidx.htm>

City and Town Bylaws or Ordinances available online indexed by municipality:

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-city-and-town-ordinances-and-bylaws>

6. State Jury Instructions

District Court Criminal Model Jury Instructions available online at:

<http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/trial-court/dc/dc-crim-model-jury-inst-gen.html>

Supreme Judicial Court Model Jury Instructions on Homicide available online at:

<http://www.mass.gov/courts/court-info/sjc/attorneys-bar-applicants/model-jury-inst-homicide-gen.html>

Criminal Model Jury Instructions for Use in the District Courts, 3rd ed., M.C.L.E., 7th supp. 2019.

Massachusetts Superior Court Civil Practice Jury Instructions, 2nd ed. M.C.L.E., 2nd supp. 2018.

Massachusetts Superior Court Criminal Practice Jury Instructions, 3rd ed., M.C.L.E. 2018.

7. State Forms

Forms available from Massachusetts Courts: <https://www.mass.gov/topics/court-forms>

Other Massachusetts Legal Forms available for free on the internet, compiled and indexed by the Massachusetts Trial Court Law Libraries: <https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-legal-forms>

Other forms are available in a variety of treatises including West's *Massachusetts*

Practice series and Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education (M.C.L.E.) manuals.

8. State Legal Encyclopedia

There is no current legal encyclopedia for Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Jurisprudence, a 22 volume encyclopedia was published between 1992 and 1996 by Lawyers Cooperative Publishing. Publication ceased with a 1998 supplement published by West Group.

Massachusetts Practice series. St. Paul, MN: Thomson West. 1967-date. 83 vols. Includes 44 components dealing with separate practice areas including *Summary of Basic Law*, 4th, v. 14-14D, which covers topics from agency to workers' compensation, A-W.

9. State Case Law and Administrative Reporters

Massachusetts Court Cases at: <https://www.mass.gov/topics/massachusetts-court-cases>

Massachusetts Agency and Commission Opinions and Bulletins available at:

<https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-agency-and-commission-decisions-and-opinions>

Landlaw Legal Publishers publishes seven administrative and case-law reporters from

Massachusetts trial courts and state agencies: <http://www.landlaw.com/>

Social Law Library Administrative Databases (covering state agency decisions) are available for remote access by subscription: <http://sociallaw.com/article.htm?t=inlibonly>.

10. State Digest

West's Massachusetts Digest 2d, West Publishing Co., 1986- .

Massachusetts Digest Annotated: covering cases from state and federal courts, West

Publishing Co., [1947-1984]. Includes references to cases “from 1761 to date[1947].”

11. Records and Briefs :

Archived by Social Law Library: www.sociallaw.com

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Records and Briefs. Boston: Social Law Library.

Microforms, 1918-present . Social Law Library has S.J.C. Briefs going back to 1840.

Massachusetts Appeals Court Records and Briefs. Boston: Social Law Library, microforms.

Vol. 1-, 1972-present.

Supreme Judicial Court Briefs for recent cases available online through

<http://www.ma-appellatecourts.org/search.php>

Select briefs available through Lexis and Westlaw.

12. State Court Websites

Massachusetts Courts: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-court-system>

Links to Supreme Judicial Court, Appeals Court, and the Trial Court Departments:

Boston Municipal Court, District Court, Housing Court, Juvenile Court, Land Court, Probate and Family Court and Superior Court.

13. Regional Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)

/Instructions on How to Subscribe to Listserv/Become a Member:

Law Librarians of New England – llne.org

LLNE List: <http://llne.org/llne-list/> “Subscribers are limited to LLNE members.”

Join LLNE: <http://llne.org/join-llne/>

14. Referral Policies of Local Law Libraries / MassLegalHelp

Massachusetts Legal Referral: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/finding-a-lawyer#lawyer-referral-services->

MassLegalHelp, Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corp.’s website for Massachusetts’ residents looking for civil legal services: <http://www.masslegalhelp.org/>

15. Federal Depository Libraries in Massachusetts – 28 Selective Depository Libraries

http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/FDLPdir.jsp?flag=searchp&st_12=MA

16. Bar Associations

Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA) : <http://www.massbar.org/>

Affiliated Bar Services (links to local, county and specialty bar associations in Massachusetts):

<http://www.massbar.org/for-attorneys/affiliated-bar-services>

17. Massachusetts Research Guides – a representative selection

Annotated Laws of Massachusetts Research Guide, LexisNexis.

**Handbook of Legal Research in Massachusetts*, 3rd ed., edited by Mary Ann Neary,

M.C.L.E., with 1st supp. 2012.*

West’s Massachusetts Law Finder: Your Coordinated Research Guide to Massachusetts,

Federal and General West Publications, Thompson Reuters.

“Massachusetts Law About..., Over 150 Topics A-Z”:

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/massachusetts-law-about>

”Massachusetts Legal Research,” Boston College Law Library Legal Research Guide:

https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/schools/law_sites/library/pdf/researchguides/MA.pdf

“Massachusetts Legal Research,” Harvard Law School Library Research Guide:

<http://guides.library.harvard.edu/massachusetts>

“Massachusetts Legal Research,” Suffolk University Law School:

<https://www.suffolk.edu/law/faculty-research/research#>

“Massachusetts Resources,” New England Law/Boston:
<http://lawguides.bc.edu/massachusetts>

18. Four Recommended Massachusetts Titles for Answering Legal Reference

Family Law, including all issues to divorce, adoption, name change, and paternity

Family Law Advocacy for Low and Moderate Income Litigants,

Jacquelynne J. Bowman, editor, Boston, MA : M.C.L.E., c2018.

Available online at:

<http://www.masslegalservices.org/FamilyLawAdvocacyForLowAndModerateIncomeLitigants>

Available from www.mcle.org for \$45.00.

Labor and Employment Law

Labor and Employment Law in Massachusetts, 2nd ed by Jeffrey Hirsch. Available from LexisNexis for \$414.00/year.

Landlord Tenant Law

Legal Tactics, 8th ed.,

Annette R. Duke, editor, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, 2017.

Available online at: <http://www.masslegalhelp.org/housing/legal-tactics1>

Available from www.mcle.org for \$65.00.

Small Claims

Pursuing a Case in Small Claims Court,

Sean P. Coleman, Boston, MA : Massachusetts Continuing Legal Education, c2010.

Available from www.mcle.org for \$45.00.

19. Ask a Law Librarian

Need help finding or using Massachusetts legal information? Ask a Trial Court Law Librarian at <https://www.mass.gov/ask-a-law-librarian>

Compiled by Barbara Schneider with help from Meg Hayden and Michelle Pearse, and updated by Suzanne Hoey, for the Law Librarians of New England (LLNE)