



FEDERAL STATUTES RESEARCH GUIDE

H. DOUGLAS BARCLAY LAW LIBRARY

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PURPOSE

This pathfinder directs law library users to materials for conducting Federal statutory research. This pathfinder will discuss the following sources, texts, finding aids and databases available at the H. Douglas Barclay Law Library. (See also the Law Library Pathfinder entitled "Federal Legislative History")

OUTLINE:

I. FEDERAL STATUTES

- A. Slip Laws
- B. Statutes
- C. Codes
- D. Updating the Law

FEDERAL STATUTES Floor 4

A law, also called a statute or an act, is identified by a public law number, such as P.L. 103-13. That law refers to the 13th law passed in the 103rd Congress. As soon as statutes or acts are enacted, they are published separately in pamphlet form as "slip laws."

A. Slip Laws

- First official publication issued by Government Printing Office.
- Printed in separately paginated pamphlets, with no internal indexing.
- Form of the printing is almost identical to that which appears in the bound volumes of *Statutes at Large*.

Slip laws provide the following information in the headings and margin notes of the text:

- Date act was approved.

- Number of the bill enacted into law.
- Short title or popular name of the law.
- Cross reference to the *United States Code* (USC).
- Cross reference to *U.S. Statutes at Large* in bound volumes.

Slip laws also include:

- A brief summary of the legislative history of each law after the text.
- Legislative history includes references to:
 - House and Senate Bill numbers.
 - House and Senate Reports.
 - Citations to Congressional debates in the *Congressional Record*.
 - Citation to *Weekly Compilation of Presidential documents*.

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper	irregular	Unclassified Floor 4 (arranged by Public Law number)
* Lexis	1988 – Present	Yes
* Westlaw	1989 – Present	Yes
Internet	1973 – present	<i>Thomas – Public Laws by Law Number</i> http://thomas.loc.gov/

*** Authorized Westlaw and Lexis users please see Reference Librarian or online vendor student reps for database identifier information.**

B. Statutes

Permanent bound collections of the slip laws (statutes) enacted during a legislative session can be located in two sources: *U.S. Statutes at Large* and *U.S. Code Congressional and Administrative News* (USCCAN).

U.S. Statutes At Large

- Official, permanent bound government publication.
 - Cited as “107 Stat. 2304”
- Volumes published in chronological order after each session of Congress, so amendments to the law appear in later volumes.
- Acts cited by Public Law Number and the volume and page in which they appear in the *Statutes at Large*.
- Each session’s compilation includes indexes by subject and popular names.
- Volume 33 and all volumes thereafter include in the margins:
 - bill numbers
 - Public Law numbers
 - effective dates

Sample Statutes at Large Citation

107 STAT. 2304	<p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC LAW 103-198—DEC. 17, 1993</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Law 103-198 103d Congress</p> <p style="text-align: center;">An Act</p> <p><u>Dec. 17, 1993</u> [H.R. 2840]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To amend title 17, United States Code, to establish copyright arbitration royalty panels to replace the Copyright Royalty Tribunal, and for other purposes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,</i></p> <p>Copyright Royalty Tribunal Reform Act of 1993 17 USC 101 note.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This Act may be cited as the “Copyright Royalty Tribunal Reform Act of 1993”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SEC. 2 COPYRIGHT ARBITRATION ROYALTY PANELS</p>

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper	1789 – present	Unclassified Floor 4

United States Code Congressional and Administrative News (USCCAN)

- Unofficial West Publication of federal statutes.
- Same text, but more current than the *Statutes at Large*.
- Provides bill numbers, dates of enactment, popular name of the act, if any.
- Individual texts of Executive Orders & Presidential Proclamations in document number order.
- Separate volumes for legislative histories contain:
 - Full-text of selected committee reports most closely related to the public law.
 - Tables listing congressional documents for all laws.
- Monthly cumulative subject index and annual subject index.
- Monthly supplements in separate softbound pamphlets.
- **Note:** Westlaw version of Legislative History material does not include pagination to specific USCCAN pages for citation purposes.

Sample USCCAN Citation

PUBLIC LAW 99-280 [S. 1282]; April 24, 1986

HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1986

*For Legislative History or Act see Report for P.L. 99-280
in Legislative History Section, post.*

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
United States of America in Congress assembled,*

Health Services
Amendments Act
of 1986

SECTION 1: SHORT TITLE REFERENCE TO ACT

(a) SHORT TITLE – This Act may be cited as the “Health Services Amendments Act of 1986”. 42 USC 201 note

(b) REFERENCE TO ACT – Whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or a repeal of a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of the Public Health Service Act. 42 USC 201 note

SEC. 2 MEDICALY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Section 330(b) {42 U.S.C. 254(b)} is amended –

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper	1952 – present	Unclassified Floor 4
* Westlaw	1948 – present	Yes

*** Authorized Westlaw and Lexis users please see Reference Librarian or online vendor student reps for database identifier information.**

C. Codes

Laws collected and organized by subject matter into fifty (50) titles. Chapters and Sections correspond to specific subjects under a title.

The *United States Code* (USC) is the official code. The *United States Code Annotated* (USCA) and the *United States Code Service* (USCS) are both unofficial, annotated codes.

For example, federal laws pertaining to prison escape will be classified under Title 18, Chapter 14, Section 623. Title 18 deals with Crimes and Criminal Procedure. Codes incorporate all amendments or revisions to reveal current status of the law on a given subject.

FORMAT	COVERAGE	LOCATION
Paper		various titles, see list below
* Westlaw	1990 – Current	Yes
* Lexis	Current year	Yes
Internet	current year	<i>United States Code – Cornell Site</i> http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/
	current year	<i>United States Code – House of Representatives Site</i> http://uscode.house.gov/usc.htm

*** Authorized Westlaw and Lexis users please see Reference Librarian or online vendor student reps for database identifier information.**

United States Code **Unclassified Floor 4**

- Official subject compilation of federal laws published by U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Includes all laws currently in force and effect.
- Whole set recompiled every six (6) years, using the same fifty (50) titles.
- Not as up-to-date as the unofficial versions, USCA & USCS (see below)

Indexing & Tables

- Multi-volume general index for subject research.
- Popular Name Table for citations to popular names of acts.
- Translation table for Public Law numbers and *Statutes at Large* citations to corresponding USC citations.

Updating

- *USC Annual Supplements* and replacement volumes.
 - Amendments to sections in USC under corresponding title, chapter and section numbers.
 - Additions to and changes in the General Index, Acts Cited By Popular Name, Tables, Executive Orders and Proclamations.

Sample USC Citation

Ch. 35

ESCAPE AND RESCUE

18 § 752

§ 752. Instigating or assisting escape

(a) Whoever rescues or attempts to rescue or instigates, aids or assists the escape or attempt to escape, of any person arrested upon a warrant or other process issued under any law of the United States, or committed to the custody of the Attorney General or to any institution or facility by his direction, shall, if the custody or confinement is by virtue of an arrest on a charge of felony, or conviction of any offense be fined not more than \$6,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both; or, if the custody or confinement is for extradition or by virtue of an arrest or charge of or for a misdemeanor, and prior to conviction, be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

United States Code Annotated (USCA) Unclassified Floor 4

- Unofficial compilation of Federal law. (West Publishing Co.).
- Same titles and text as the USC.
- Cross-referenced to related and qualifying laws.
- References to legislative history found in West's USCCAN.
- "Library References" section enhances statutory text with notes and references to:
 - West Digest Topic and Key Numbers.
 - Citations to *Corpus Juris Secundum* (CJS).
 - Federal regulations (CFR) pertaining to the topic.
 - Law review articles on point.
 - Other West publications.
 - Abstracts to Federal and State court decisions.
 - Historical notes about statutory derivation and amendments.

Indexing & Tables

- Annual multivolume general subject index at the end of the set.
- Table of Acts by Popular Name in last volume of subject index.
- Individual title indexes at the end of each title.
- Table of Statutes for citations to USC.

Updating

- Annual pocket parts inserted in the back of each volume.
- Bimonthly pamphlets of newest laws and amendments.
- Statutory Supplement pamphlets:
 - contain recent amendments to the code arranged in Public Law form
 - are dated and numbered
 - provide Executive Orders and Rules and Regulations

Sample USCA Citation

11 § 366

BANKRUPTCY Ch. 3

CROSS REFERENCES

Applicability of this section in Chapter 9 cases, see 11 USCA § 901.

LIBRARY REFERENCES

American Digest System

Protection of utility service in general, see Bankruptcy Key 2481. 2482

Encyclopedias

Protection of utility service in general, see C.J.S. Bankruptcy §§ 103, 104.

Forms

Adjustment of debts, family farmer, see West's Federal Forms § 979 et seq

Law Reviews

Practical prefiling considerations in chapter 11 cases. Philip J. Mendel, 2 Comm. Law Bul. 10 (July/Aug. 1987)

WESTLAW ELECTRONIC RESEARCH

Bankruptcy cases: 51K [add key number]

United States Code Service (USCS) Unclassified Floor 4

- Format, layout and indexing similar to USCA.
- Unofficial version of the federal code published by Lexis.
- Cross-references:
 - *American Jurisprudence 2d* (Am Jur 2d)
 - *American Law Reports* (ALR)
 - *Federal Procedure L Ed.*
 - Selective notes of case decisions
 - Notes of administrative decisions.

Indexing & Tables

- Indexes and Tables similar to USCA.

Updating

- *USCS Cumulative Later Case and Statutory Service*
 - Issued monthly
 - Contains latest statutory additions, amendments and repeals.

- Changes in administrative rules, Executive Orders, and other presidential documents.
- A list of Research Guide materials cited in the supplement.
- Table of Acts By Popular Names.
- Subject index with references to Code titles and sections.
- *Advance Pamphlets, USCS*
 - Updates USCS bound volumes and *Cumulative Later Case and Statutory Service*.
 - Issued monthly.
 - Cross-referenced to *Statutes At Large* pagination.
 - Cumulative index and tables to sections affected.
 - Legislative history references.
 - Includes Presidential Proclamations and orders, and selected administrative regulations.
 - Contains selected case annotations.

Sample USCS Citation

<p>18 USCS § 1697</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS</p> <p>Enforcement of private express statutes, 39 CFR Part 310. Suspension of private express statutes, 39 CFR Part 320.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CROSS REFERENCES</p> <p>General powers of Postal Service, 39 USCS § 401.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RESEARCH GUIDE</p> <p>Am Jur: 62 Am Jur 2d, Post Office §§ 88, 117.</p> <p>Annotations: Validity, construction, and application of 18 USCS § 1696, making it criminal offense to establish any private express for conveyance of letters or packets, 43 ALR Fed 664.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">INTERPRETIVE NOTES AND DECISIONS</p>	<p>Crimes</p>
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D. Updating the Law

Always check for the latest amendments to a law that have appeared since the bound volume was published. The law which you read in the bound Code volumes may have been amended, repealed or modified since it was published in the permanent set. Check the publication date of the hard copy volume to determine if your act needs updating. To

verify the validity of your research, consult the following sources or check pocket parts and supplements of unofficial codes.

- USCCAN (see above) **Unclassified Floor 4**
 - Laws arranged in chronological order as passed by Congress.
 - Monthly paper supplements include current laws.
 - Subject index and Tables list amended Code titles and sections.

- *Shepard's Acts and Cases by Popular Name* **Unclassified Floor 4**
 - Alphabetical listing of federal and states acts and selected cases.
 - Service provides: Public Law number; date of enactment; *Statutes at Large* citation; USC citation; and information about amendments to major acts.
 - Supplementation consists of bound supplements and paper advance sheets.