



University of Connecticut School of Law Library



HOW TO LOCATE A STATUTE

Finding Laws

To locate statutes on a particular topic, start with the index to the annotated code for your jurisdiction. An annotated code is one that includes, in addition to the full text of the statutes, brief summaries of cases interpreting a statutory provision and citations to other research material such as law review articles, legal encyclopedias, and administrative regulations. All states and the federal government have at least one annotated code. The index will direct you to the section or sections within the code where statutory provisions on your topic are located.

Code Citations

A citation to a code section acts like an address. In the United States, most jurisdictions organize their current laws of general application into “codes” arranged by subject. Each subject grouping is given a name, for instance, “Corporations,” and a number, for example, “Title 10.” The main difference between a code cite and a case cite is that you will be referred to a “title” or “chapter” of the code and a “section” within the title or chapter instead of a volume and page number of a case reporter.

Citations vary depending on the format the jurisdiction uses. Here are some examples:

- 1) Title/Name of Code/§ within Title/Date
42 U.S.C. § 1983 (1976)
- 2) Name of Code/Title/Chapter/Section/Date
T.C.A. 44-28-100 (1985)
- 3) Name of Code/Title/Section within Title/Date
Okla. Stat. tit. 10, § 1102.1 (1980-81)
- 4) Name of Code/Chapter/Section within Chapter/Date
Mass. Gen. L. Ch. 59, § 5 (1978).

State Codes

Connecticut has the General Statutes of Connecticut and the Connecticut General Statutes Annotated. The annotated code includes the text of the statutes and annotations to cases, law review articles, and other materials that are applicable to each section. It is updated annually with pocket parts (pamphlets slipped into the rear of each bound volume). The law library has three copies: one on reserve (behind the circulation desk), one on the third floor in the Reference Collection, one on the first floor with the other state material.

The law library has an annotated code from each of the fifty states. They are shelved on the first and second floors in alphabetical order, beginning with Alabama and ending with Wyoming.

Federal Codes

There are three different versions of current United States federal laws:

- U.S.C.** **United States Code.** This is the official version published by the U.S. government. It contains the text of the statutes, but it is not supplemented in a timely fashion and does not contain references to cases and other materials that pertain to the statutes.
- U.S.C.A.** **United States Code Annotated.** Contains the same text of the statutes as the U.S.C. but includes annotations to cases, law review articles, and so on. It is published by West Publishing Co., and the annotations are comprehensive. The index is quite thorough.
- U.S.C.S.** **United States Code Service.** Contains the same text of the statutes as the U.S.C. but includes annotations to cases, law review articles, and so on. It is published by LexisNexis Publishing, and the annotations are selective.

All three versions of the federal code are shelved on the third floor. Duplicate copies of the United States Code and the United States Code Annotated can be found on the first floor.

Updating Statutes

All annotated codes are kept current with annual pocket parts or paperback supplements. Between the issuance of pocket parts, advance legislative service pamphlets, which include the latest legislative and judicial actions, are published for many, but not all, states. Ask a reference librarian if you need help in updating a statute.