



Cornell University Law Library

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW: RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

This guide offers sources for free and low-cost legal research. As well, additional sources are provided to help one learn about public interest law, the types of career opportunities available in the public interest sector, and options for networking.

FEDERAL

United States Code from the Office of the Law Revision Counsel

<http://uscode.house.gov/>

Online source for the U.S. Code from the entity that prepares it.

Thomas

<http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Provides federal legislative materials, including bills, committee reports, and the Congressional Record. Use it to update code sections obtained from the Office of the Law Revision Counsel.

U.S. Supreme Court

<http://supremecourtus.gov/>

Provides opinions from the 1991 Term to current. Also provides oral argument transcripts from the 2000 Term forward, plus court rules, argument calendar, and docket information.

U.S. Courts

<http://www.uscourts.gov/>

Links to the district and bankruptcy courts, and the courts of appeals, plus other court information. Courts provide opinions on their web sites, but keep in mind that coverage is variable.

PACER—Public Access to Court Electronic Records

<http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/>

Low-cost access to records from the U.S. District, Bankruptcy, and Appellate courts.

Code of Federal Regulations

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

Provides pdf copies from 1996 to current.

Federal Register

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>

Provides pdf copies from 1994 to current.

Library of Congress, Executive Branch Web Sites

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/fedgov.html>

Directory to federal agency web sites. Many agencies post primary material to their sites.

UVA Administrative Decisions page

http://www.lib.virginia.edu/govdocs/fed_decisions_agency.html

Organized by agency, provides links to agency decisions and actions on the web.

STATE

Cornell LII

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/states/index.html>

Access to primary materials from the 50 states, plus Uniform laws.

Washlaw Web

<http://www.washlaw.edu/>

Detailed jump page to state law and information.

PORTALS

Cornell LII

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/>

Gateway to federal and state materials, plus some secondary material.

USA.gov

<http://www.usa.gov/>

Gateway to U.S. government information.

COMMERCIAL RESOURCES

LexisOne

<http://www.lexisone.com/>

Designed with the solo/small firm practitioner in mind, LexisOne actually offers some primary sources for free—typically material that is otherwise publicly available. The benefit of LexisOne is the ability to access extensive legal materials on a pay-as-you-go basis. LexisOne provides various “research value packages” that are priced by the day, week, or month.

LoisLaw

<http://www.loislaw.com/>

Low cost access to federal and state cases, statutes, regulations, and court rules, plus treatises and forms. Flat rate pricing with subscription periods ranging from one day to one year.

VersusLaw

<http://www.versuslaw.com/>

Quite basic, but very affordable monthly pricing plans. Standard plan does not include citation searching.

LOCAL LAW**MuniCode**

<http://www.municode.com/>

Free access to selected codes of local ordinances.

AmLegal

<http://www.amlegal.com/>

Free access to selected codes of local ordinances. New York not included.

FOREIGN AND INTERNATIONAL**Cornell Foreign and International Selected Resources**

<http://library2.lawschool.cornell.edu/ForeignLawGuide/default.aspx>

Directory to extensive set of foreign and international law on the web, including the United Nations and regional organizations.

World Legal Information Institute

<http://www.worldlii.org/>

Access to primary and secondary materials from numerous countries.

Globalex

<http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/>

Extensive set of guides to international, foreign, and comparative legal research.

SECONDARY SOURCES**Washlaw Web – Law Journals online**

<http://www.washlaw.edu/lawjournal/>

Extensive listing of legal periodicals.

Justia Blawg Search

<http://blawgsearch.justia.com/>

A search engine and directory of legal blogs.

Cornell Law Library—Legal Research Engine

<http://library.lawschool.cornell.edu/WhatWeDo/ResearchGuides/CLL-Legal-Research-Engine.cfm>

Customized searching of blawgs, the legal Internet, and research guides.

Duke Law Faculty Scholarship Repository

<http://eprints.law.duke.edu/>

Full-text archive of scholarship.

ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, INSTITUTES, ETC.

Public Interest Law Initiative

<http://www.pili-law.org/>

PILI creates opportunities for law students and lawyers to perform pro bono and public interest work.

Public Justice

<http://www.tlpj.org/default.htm>

Billed as “America’s public interest law firm,” Public Justice consists of a national network of more than 3500 lawyers and other professionals.

USC School of Law Public Interest Links

<http://law.usc.edu/career/students/pubint.cfm>

Extensive directory of public interest organizations, resources, and opportunities organized topically.

National Association of Law Placement

<http://www.nalp.org/>

The site has a section devoted to public service initiatives.

The Institute of Public Law at the University of New Mexico

<http://ipl.unm.edu/>

IPL “engages in research, analysis, teaching, training, writing, and publishing to support . . . informed public policy.”

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Morrison, Alan B. and Diane T. Chin. New York, NY: Aspen Publishers, 2007.
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The Great Firm Escape: Harvard Law School's Guide to Breaking Out of Private Practice and Into Public Service

DeBroff, Stacy M., et al. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law School, 2000.

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Serving the Public: A Job Search Guide: Harvard Law School's Handbook & Directory for Law Students and Lawyers Seeking Public Service Work

Cambridge, MA: Harvard Law School, 2006.

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Something to Believe In: Politics, Professionalism, and Cause Lawyering

Scheingold, Stuart A. and Austin Sarat. Stanford, CA: Stanford Law and Politics, 2004.

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