

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGAL MATERIALS AND WEB SITES



FEDERAL CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

1. Constitution of the United States – R342.73/U58 – see also related books about court decisions and constitutional amendments in the same section. The Constitution can also be found online at various websites including the Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School at www.law.cornell.edu.

2. U.S.Code – The general and permanent laws of the United States can be found online at the U.S. House of Representatives’ website <http://uscode.house.gov/lawrevisioncounsel.shtml>. The code is organized by subject into 50 “titles” and numerous “chapters” under each title. Numerous other websites including www.law.cornell.edu and www.findlaw.com/# also provide access to the U.S. Code.

3. U.S. Code Congressional and Administrative News 1967-present – R348.7323/U58c – The laws of the United States exactly as passed by specific congresses arranged by public law number. This set also includes such useful supplementary material as the legislative history of the laws, executive orders and proclamations, and a popular names index. It is published frequently during a legislative session with bound annual volumes.

4. Current bills being considered by Congress can be found on the Thomas: Legislative Information on the Internet website at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. This website is maintained by the Library of Congress.

UNITED STATES COURTS AND CASES

The United States’ court system is divided into three levels – district, circuit (appeals), and the Supreme Court. There are also specialized courts such as bankruptcy, tax, claims, and others. Decisions of the various courts are published in court reporters. Some court decisions are available online.

1. United States Supreme Court – The official website of the Supreme Court is at www.supremecourtus.gov. Decisions of the Supreme Court from 1893-present can be found at www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html. Important Supreme Court decisions arranged by topic can be found at www.law.cornell.edu. Compilations of important Supreme Court decisions can be found in the reference collection in the R342.73 and R349.73 sections.

2. Geographically the United States is divided into regions each represented by a specific circuit court. Illinois is in the 7th. Circuit. The official website of the court is at www.ca7.uscourts.gov. Court opinions of the circuit and specialized courts can be found at the Cornell Law School website www.law.cornell.edu.

3. The individual circuits are divided into district courts. The District Court of Northern Illinois’ official website is at www.ilnd.uscourts.gov.

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGAL MATERIALS AND WEB SITES

FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

1. The Code of Federal Regulations contains the rules and regulations of the various departments of the federal government. These regulations are formulated and administered by the various departments and are the means by which the laws are put into effect. The Code is divided into 50 “titles” with numerous “chapters” under each title. It can be found on the Government Printing Office website at www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html. One title of the Code is the Internal Revenue Code (Title 26). The Internal Revenue Code can also be found in a one volume print edition in the reference collection (R343.7304/C737). The Federal Register updates the entire code. It is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, notices of federal agencies, and executive orders. It also can be found on the GPO website at www.gpo.access.gov/cfr/index.html.

ILLINOIS CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

1. Constitution of the State of Illinois – R342.773/C758 – This edition also includes the federal constitution. An annotated edition of the Illinois constitution can be found at the end of the Smith Hurd Illinois Compiled Statutes – R348.773/I29c. An online version can be found at the Illinois legislative website at www.ilga.gov/.

2. West’s Smith Hurd Illinois Compiled Statutes – R348.773/I29c – This set contains the laws of the State of Illinois with relevant court decisions interpreting such laws. Individual volumes are published irregularly and updated with pocket parts. The set is arranged by chapter number and then section numbers under each chapter. The whole set is updated during a current legislative session by the Illinois Session Laws. For the status of current bills consult the legislative website at www.ilga.gov/.

3. West’s Illinois Family Law and Court Rules – R347.773/W538; West’s Illinois Criminal Law and Procedure – R345.773/W538; and West’s Illinois Vehicle Code – R343.7730944/I29ve. These three handy one volume books are compilations of Illinois laws on particular legal subjects.

4. Illinois Employment Laws – R344.77301/I29 – Published by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, this volume explains Illinois employment laws for the layman. A similar book, Essential Guide to Federal Employment Laws – R344.7301/G932es – explains federal law in this area.

5. Guidebook to Illinois Taxes – R343.773052/G946 – This handy one volume compilation is a digest of Illinois tax laws.

6. Illinois Condominium Law – R346.7730433/I29 – This book is a comprehensive one volume analysis of condominium ownership with explanation of the laws in this area.

7. Landlord’s Rights and Duties in Illinois – R346.7730434/S9551a – Written for the layman this book explains tenant law for both landlords and renters. Also have Renter’s Rights – R346.730434/P853re.

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGAL MATERIALS AND WEB SITES

ILLINOIS COURTS AND CASES

The Illinois court system is divided into three levels – circuit, appellate, and the Illinois Supreme Court. Decisions of the various courts are published in court reporters. Some decisions are available online.

1. Illinois Supreme Court – The official website for the Supreme Court is at www.state.il.us/court/. Biographies of the justices, court decisions beginning in 1996, court rules, and other information can be found there.

2. Illinois Appellate Courts – Illinois is divided into five appellate court districts with Cook County being in the first district. Information about districts, judges, and decisions back to 1996 can be found on the Illinois judicial website at www.state.il.us/court/.

3. Illinois Circuit Courts – These are the courts of original jurisdiction where cases begin. Illinois is divided into 22 circuits, three of which are single county circuits (Cook, DuPage, and Will). Information about the circuit courts in Illinois can be found on the judicial website at www.state.il.us/court/. The Circuit Court of Cook County’s website at www.cookcountycourt.org has information about the court’s organization, operation, judges, courthouses, traffic court, jury information, court rules, and more.

STATE ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

1. The Illinois Administrative Code is the Illinois version of the Code of Federal Regulations. It contains the rules and regulations of the various agencies of state government. Many individual agencies have placed their particular rules on their agency website. A good place to begin is at the State of Illinois website at www.illinois.gov/government/. Click on “state agencies” to go to individual agency websites. Much of the Code is also available from the Illinois legislative website at www.ilga.gov.

LEGAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS, DICTIONARIES, AND FORMS

1. West’s Encyclopedia of American Law – R348.7303/W438 – This comprehensive legal encyclopedia is a useful source for information on legal concepts, practices, important court cases, and individual laws. The last volume is a helpful index.

2. Black’s Law Dictionary – R340.03/B627b1 – A comprehensive dictionary of legal terms and concepts.

3. Books containing legal forms can be found in the R347.73055 section.

FEDERAL AND STATE LEGAL MATERIALS AND WEB SITES

DIRECTORIES OF LAWYERS AND COURTS

1. Martindale/Hubbell Law Directory – R340.025/M384 – This multivolume international directory of lawyers and law firms also includes very useful digests of state laws from all 50 states and uniform acts such as the Uniform Commercial Code. Also available online at www.martindale.com.

2. Sullivan's Law Directory – R340.025/S952 – This directory of Illinois lawyers in two volumes is arranged first by county. The rules of practice of the federal, state, circuit, and specialized courts are included in volume 2.

3. The Northwest Suburban Bar Association website at www.nwsba.org and the Illinois State Bar Association website at www.illinoislawyerfinder.com provide a find an attorney service.

4. The Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Illinois Supreme Court maintains a website at www.iardc.org/lawyersearch.asp for individuals looking up the background of a particular lawyer.

5. CQ Federal – State Court Directory – R347.731/F293 – This one volume directory of federal and state courts includes all 50 states and territories and Canada plus useful information on legal websites, bar association addresses, and an organizational chart of each state's court system.

6. West's Illinois Court Rules and Procedures – Federal, State, and Circuit – R347.773/I29co This three volume set gives all the rules of the various courts at the federal, state, and local level.

USEFUL LEGAL WEBSITES

1. Findlaw – Internet Legal Resources – www.findlaw.com.

2. Free Lexis – www.lexisone.com.

3. Legal Information Institute, Cornell University – www.law.cornell.edu.

4. Legal forms – www.findforms.com.

5. Gale Virtual Reference Library – Available at the Niles library website, www.nileslibrary.org – includes the American Law Yearbook Series, the National Survey of State Laws, and other online legal reference books.

6. LexisNexis – Available at the Niles library website, a comprehensive database of legal and business information.

Maintaining a comprehensive collection of legal materials is beyond the scope of the Niles Public Library. Referral to other public and law libraries is sometimes necessary. The Cook County Law Library, Skokie Branch, 5600 Old Orchard Road, Skokie, Ill., Tel. # 847/470-7298, is an important local resource for local, state, and national materials. The Arlington Heights Public Library, 500 N. Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Ill., Tel.# 847/392-0100, also maintains an extensive collection of legal materials.