FEDERAL BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Information on a bill or a resolution introduced by either the Senate or House of Representatives can be found in a number of places. Your search for bill or resolution information should begin on the Library of Congress’ Thomas website. Thomas provides numerous search options. The full text of legislation can be searched using the “Search Bill Text” feature located at http://thomas.loc.gov/home/c110query.html. You can search by words and phrases or bill number for legislation information from the 101st Congress (1989) to the present. Furthermore, you can select to search House or Senate legislation.

Another search option available on Thomas is to “Search Bill Summary and Status” located at http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/110search.html. This option searches everything but the actual text of the legislation. According to Thomas’ website, this option provides information for the 93rd Congress (1973) to the present on “sponsor(s); cosponsor(s); official, short and popular titles; floor/executive actions; detailed legislative history; Congressional Record page references; bill summary; committee information; amendment information; subjects (indexing terms assigned to each bill); a link to the full text versions of the bill; and if the bill has been enacted into law, a link to the full text of the law on the Government Printing Office Web site.” Thomas also offers the option of performing a full text search of legislation across multiple Congresses (101st to the present) located at http://thomas.loc.gov/home/multicongress/multicongress.html.

GPO Access located at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/bills/index.html also provides information on bills and resolutions. GPO Access includes information from the 103rd Congress (1993-94) to the present. You can search by bill or resolution number or by the bill’s subject matter.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Committee Hearing Transcripts

After a bill is introduced, it is sent to the respective House or Senate committee. The document produced from a committee hearing is a printed hearing transcript. Hearing transcripts can be found on GPO Access located at
In order to obtain the hearing transcript, you will need to know the House or Senate committee who was assigned the bill.

**Senate or House Reports**

After the bill is reported out of committee, a Senate or House report (abbreviated by S.Rept. or H.Rept.) is produced. Copies of these reports from the 104th to the present Congress can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/creports/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/creports/index.html). You can search by bill or report number and by subject. Copies can also be found on Thomas located at [http://thomas.loc.gov/cp110/cp110query.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/cp110/cp110query.html). Committee reports from the 104th to the present Congress can be searched using words and phrases, report or bill number.

Some recent committee and subcommittee hearing transcripts and reports can also be found on the Senate website located at [http://www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) and on the House website located at [http://www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). On both the House and Senate websites, there will be a link to committee websites.

**Congressional Record**

After a House or Senate report has been generated, the bill is debated on the floor of the House or Senate. The debate transcript is included in the Congressional Record along with a concise summary of the day’s Congressional activities called the Daily Digest. A copy of the Congressional Record can be obtained from Thomas located at [http://thomas.loc.gov/home/r110query.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/r110query.html) from the 101st Congress (1989) to the present. You can search by word or phrase and limit the results obtained by Congressional member, date, and a specific Congress. The Congressional Record can also be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html). GPO Access has copies of the Congressional Record from 1994 to the present. You can search by Congressional Record page number, section of the Record, subject, Congressional member, bill number, etc…
**Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents**

After a bill has been debated and passed by both the House and Senate, the President will either veto or approve the bill. Presidential veto and approval messages are included in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wcomp/index.html). GPO Access has this publication from 1993 to the present. It can be searched by page number, subject, and table of contents by issue date.

**FEDERAL STATUTES**

The first official publication of a statute is known as the slip law. Each law is published separately in an unbound pamphlet and is assigned either a public or private law number along with a statutes at large number.

**Statutes at Large**

At the end of each Congressional session, the slip laws are compiled and bound together in order of the date which they were enacted. These bound volumes are called the Statutes at Large and pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112 is considered the legal evidence of the law. Statutes at Large can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/statutes/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/statutes/index.html). Statute at Large information for the 108th Congress appears on GPO Access. You can search by the statute at large citation, public law citation, subject, United States code citation and bill number.

**Public Laws**

Copies of public laws can be found on Thomas located at [http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/d110/d110laws.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/bss/d110/d110laws.html) from the 93rd to current Congress. By selecting a particular Congress, you see the public laws passed. Copies of public and private laws can also be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html). GPO Access provides access to these laws from 104th Congress (1995-96) to the present. You can search by subject, public law number, statutes at large citation, United States Code citation and bill number.
**United States Code**


FindLaw also has a copy of the Code located at [http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/uscodes/](http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/uscodes/). You can search the Code by title and section, keyword, or browse it by title and popular name.

**UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION**

In order to obtain historical Constitutional documents, the Library of Congress, American Memory collection located at [http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html) has digitized, among others, documents related to the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention.

GPO Access has the Constitution of the United States, Analysis and Interpretation publication on its website located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/index.html). The publication provides annotations to the Constitution. You can browse the 2002 edition and its supplements. The 1992 edition and its supplements can be searched and browsed. GPO Access also has the following documents in PDF and text formats: U.S. Constitution with the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution as Amended,

**FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE CODES, RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**Code of Federal Regulations**

According to GPO Access, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. It is divided into 50 titles that represent broad areas subject to Federal regulation. Each title is divided into chapters, which usually bear the name of the issuing agency. Each chapter is further subdivided into parts that cover specific regulatory areas. Large parts may be subdivided into subparts. All parts are organized in sections, and most citations in the CFR are provided at the section level. A copy of the CFR can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html). 1996 to the most recent CFR and can be searched or browsed by subject or agency name. If you know the CFR citation, you can click on “Retrieve by CFR Citation” and enter the citation information.

The List of CFR Sections Affected (LSA) should also be consulted because it lists proposed, new, and amended Federal regulations that have been published in the Federal Register since the most recent revision date of a CFR title. A copy of the 1986 to most current LSA can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/lsa/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/lsa/index.html). The LSA can be searched by CFR citation and subject. It can also be browsed by month and year.

The Electronic Code of Federal Regulations or e-CFR located on GPO Access at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=%2Findex.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=%2Findex.tpl) is the most up to date version of the CFR. According to GPO Access, e-CFR consists of two linked databases: the "current Code" and "amendment files." The current Code database is updated according to the effective dates of amendments published in the Federal Register. As amendments become effective, the changes are integrated into the current Code database to display the full text of the currently updated CFR. For future-effective
amendments, hypertext links are inserted into the affected sections or parts of the current Code to take users to the pertinent amendment files. The e-CFR can be browsed by title.

**Federal Register**

The Federal Register is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. A copy of the Federal Register can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html). The “simple search” will allow you to select a particular volume and year of the Federal Register and search by subject, Federal Register citation or CFR citation. The “advanced search” will allow you to select a particular volume and year of the Federal Register, select a particular section of the Federal Register (proposed rules, presidential documents, etc…), specific date and search by subject, Federal Register citation or CFR citation. The table of contents, organized alphabetically by agency name, of the 1998 to current Federal Register can also be “browsed.”

**U.S. Government Manual**

If you are looking for comprehensive information on the agencies of the legislative, judicial and executive branches, the U.S. Government Manual should be consulted. A copy of the Manual can be found on GPO Access located at [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/index.html). The 1997-98 Manual to the present can be searched by subject, individual’s name or agency name or browsed. Although GPO Access has a copy of the 1995-96 Manual, it can only be searched not browsed.

**Agency Decisions, Opinions and Rulings**

In order to locate the text of administrative agency decisions, opinions and rulings, you can begin your search on LSU Libraries Federal Agency Directory website located at [http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html](http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/fedgov.html). The LSU website has a list of all federal agencies and links directly to the federal agency website where you can potentially find decisions, opinions and rulings. Two other websites also provide access to agency decisions, opinions and rulings, University of Virginia Library’s Administrative Decisions and Other Actions website located at
FEDERAL COURT OPINIONS, FORMS, RULES AND DOCKETS

Information on all federal courts (U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Courts of Appeals, U.S. District Courts and U.S. Bankruptcy Courts) can be found on the Federal Judiciary website located at http://www.uscourts.gov/. Each court will be discussed in more detail below.

U.S. Supreme Court: Rules and Dockets


U.S. Supreme Court: Opinions

The Supreme Court website also includes a link to their opinions located at http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/opinions.html. The Supreme Court opinions page has the Court’s latest slip opinions (2004-2007), in chamber opinions (2004-2007), opinions relating to orders, and the 2004-2006 opinions of the Court.

Supreme Court opinions can also be found on FindLaw located at http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html. FindLaw includes opinions since 1893 (US Reports volume 150-, 1893-). You can search for an opinion by citation (__US__), party name or full text search. Opinions can also be browsed by volume of the US Reports or year.

Fedworld located at http://supcourt.ntis.gov/ provides access to 7,407 opinions from volumes 300 through 422 of the US Reports (1937-1975). You can search by case name or perform a full text search.
GPO Access also has Supreme Court opinions from 1937-1975 located at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/supcrt/index.html. You can search by citation, case name or perform a full text search. GPO Access also has Supreme Court opinions and orders from 1992-1993 through the 1999-2000 session in WordPerfect 5.1, ASCII and PDF format located at http://fedbbs.access.gpo.gov/court01.htm.

Cornell’s Legal Information Institute located at http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html has archived opinions that can be found by legal topic (1990-present), authoring justice (1990-present) or party name (1990-present). It also provides access to 600 of the Supreme Court’s most important decisions. Those decisions can be found by legal topic, authoring justice, or party name.

**U.S. Supreme Court: Oral Argument Transcripts**

Transcripts of oral arguments before the Supreme Court can be found on the Supreme Court’s website located at http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts.html. The Supreme Court has transcripts from the October 2000 term to the present. Project Oyez located at http://www.oyez.org/ includes audio recordings of recent Supreme Court oral arguments.

**U.S. Supreme Court: Briefs**

FindLaw has Supreme Court briefs from the 1999 term to the present located at http://supreme.lp.findlaw.com/supreme_court/briefs/index.html. You can select a term to browse and the respective cases from that term will appear. The American Bar Association has some recent Supreme Court briefs available on its website located at http://www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/briefs/home.html.

**U.S. Courts of Appeals and District Courts**

Appeals and the District Courts can also be found on LLRX.com located at http://www.llrx.com/courtrules/.


**Courts of Appeals and District Courts: Opinions**

FindLaw archives summaries of opinions issued since September 2000 of the Courts of Appeals located at http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/casesummary/index.html. District Court opinions can be found on Justia located at http://cases.justia.com/federal/district-courts/. Justia has federal district court orders and opinions from 2004 to the present. You can search by District Court, party name, type of lawsuit or perform a full text search. Opinions can also be found on PreCYdent located at http://www.precydent.com and AltLaw located at http://www.altlaw.org.

The Public Access to Court Electronic Records website or PACER located at http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/ is an electronic public access service that allows users to obtain case and docket information from Federal Appellate, District and Bankruptcy courts. According to PACER, it offers electronic access to case dockets to retrieve information such as: a listing of all parties and participants including judges, attorneys, and trustees; a compilation of case related information such as cause of action, nature of suit, and dollar demand; a chronology of dates of case events entered in the case record; a claims registry; a listing of new cases each day; appellate court opinions; judgments or case status; types of documents filed for certain cases; and imaged copies of documents. In order to access the PACER database, you will need to register. Furthermore, PACER is not a free service; however, the cost is nominal.

**Federal Rules**

Copies of the Federal Rules of Appellate Procedure, Bankruptcy Procedure, Civil Procedure, Criminal Procedure and Evidence can be found on the Federal Judiciary

NEW YORK BILLS

Information on a bill introduced by the Senate or Assembly is relegated to two websites: the Assembly located at http://assembly.state.ny.us/ALIS/ and the public legislative website located at http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menugetf.cgi. The Assembly’s website can be searched by either bill number or keyword and only includes bill information (summary, text, sponsor memos, status, and floor votes) from the current legislature.

The public legislative website provides the same bill information as the Assembly. If you want to perform a keyword search, click on “NYS Legislative Bills.” This website provides bill information from the current and past year’s legislative session.

NEW YORK LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

After passage by both the Senate and Assembly but prior to the Governor’s approval, bill information (summary, text, sponsor memos, status, and floor votes) will be placed in a bill jacket. Memorandum from interested government agencies, bar associations and other organizations can be placed in the bill jacket for the Governor to read. Unfortunately, the bill jackets are not available for free on the Internet.

NEW YORK SESSION LAWS

Once a bill becomes a law, the new law is called a chapter law. At the end of each legislative session, the new chapter laws are arranged in order by number and printed in annual volumes called session laws. The chapter laws for the current and past year’s legislative session can be found on the public legislative website located at http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi. In order find the chapter law, click on “Locate by Document Number” and another screen will appear. On that screen, select “Chapter No.”, type in the chapter number and select the correct legislative session.
NEW YORK CONSOLIDATED AND UNCONSOLIDATED LAWS

New York’s consolidated laws are the session laws arranged and classified by subject while the unconsolidated laws are those that do not fit into the consolidation scheme. Both can be found on the public legislative website located at http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi under “Laws of New York.” You can also find the consolidated laws on FindLaw located at http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/ny/laws.html.

NEW YORK STATE CONSTITUTION


NEW YORK ADMINISTRATIVE CODES, RULES AND REGULATIONS

New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR)

Administrative agencies are typically responsible for promulgating New York’s codes, rules and regulations. Although individual agency websites will sometimes post their proposed rules, the publication that includes all proposed administrative rules is the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) located at http://government.westlaw.com/linkedslice/default.asp?SP=nycrr-1000. According to the Department of State’s website “This initial release of the online NYCRR does not yet include a table of contents. To find desired text, [] simply enter a search term or NYCRR citation. A table of contents will be available in the near future.”

New York State Register

Another important publication, the State Register, includes information on new court rules, executive orders of the Governor and text and summary of proposed regulations. A copy of the State Register is available on the Department of State’s

**Agency Decisions, Opinions and Rulings**

Locating the text of administrative agency decisions, opinions and rulings can be quite cumbersome; however, the following list of websites should provide some guidance. A comprehensive listing of state agencies can be located at http://www.nysegov.com/citguide.cfm?displaymode=normal&fontsize=100&contrast=low&superCat=102&cat=449&content=main. Since not all administrative agency websites provide access to their decisions, opinions and rulings, the New York State Library has compiled a comprehensive collection of agency publications located at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/ils/nyserver.html. Depending on the agency publication, the New York State Library has some of them in PDF format.

If you cannot find an agency publication using the aforementioned websites, the New York State Library publishes The Checklist of Official Publications of the State of New York located at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/edocs/education/chcktext.htm. The Checklist is a monthly compilation of New York State documents have been acquired by the New York State Library.

**NEW YORK STATE COURT OPINIONS, FORMS, RULES AND DOCKETS**

The New York State court system is complex and oftentimes difficult to navigate. Links to New York courts websites are located on the Unified Court System’s website at http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/.
**Court Opinions**

New York State court opinions can be found in a number of locations. The New York State Law Reporting Bureau’s website located at [http://www.courts.state.ny.us/reporter/Decisions.htm](http://www.courts.state.ny.us/reporter/Decisions.htm) provides access to decisions from 2003 to the present for the Court of Appeals, all Appellate Division Departments, Appellate Term First and Second Department motions and some other courts. The New York Slip Opinions can be searched by using the form located at [http://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/lawReporting/Search](http://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/lawReporting/Search).

Lastly, the New York Official Reports can be searched by word, citation, decision date, case name, judge and opinion type or docket number or counsel by clicking on the following link [http://government.westlaw.com/nyofficial/](http://government.westlaw.com/nyofficial/). Decisions can be retrieved from 1995 to the present.

If you cannot find the decision you are looking for using the aforementioned resources, the following websites might also be useful: the Unified Court System’s website located at [http://www.nycourts.gov/decisions/index.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/decisions/index.shtml) provides links to the decision section for the Court of Appeals, all Appellate Division Departments, and Court of Claims websites. Furthermore, this website provides access to Supreme Court Civil and Criminal Division decisions from 2001 to the present via a search form.

Cornell’s Legal Information Institute located at [http://www.law.cornell.edu/nyctap/](http://www.law.cornell.edu/nyctap/) has archived Court of Appeals decision from 1990 to the present. FindLaw located at [http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/ny/nyca.html](http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/ny/nyca.html) has Court of Appeals decisions from 1992 to the present. LexisONE located at [http://www.lexisone.com](http://www.lexisone.com) provides access to Court of Appeals and all Appellate Division Department decisions for the last five years. Although LexisONE is a free service, registration is required.

**Records and Briefs**

There are currently no free websites that provide access to briefs submitted to either the Court of Appeals or the 1st, 3rd, or 4th Appellate Division Departments. Copies
of briefs from the 2nd Department can be obtained from the Unified Court System’s e-Court’s website located at http://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/webcivil/ecourtsMain.

**Forms**

Sample forms and a schedule of filing fees can be located on the New York State Unified Court System website at http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/forms.shtml. Findlaw also has sample forms located at http://forms.lp.findlaw.com/states/ny.html. LLRX.com also includes information on where to sample forms located at http://www.llrx.com/courtrules/.

**Court Acts**

A copy of the various court acts (Court of Claims, Family Court, New York City Civil Court, New York City Civil Court, Surrogate’s Court Procedure, Uniform City Court, Uniform District Court and Uniform Justice Court can be located on the public legislative website at http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi under “Laws of New York.”

**Court Rules**

The Uniform Rules of Court can be found in title 22 of the NYCRR. A copy of the NYCRR can be found at http://government.westlaw.com/linkedslice/default.asp?SP=nycrr-1000/.

Uniform rules of the Chief Judge, Chief Administrative Judge, Trials Courts and Joint Appellate Rules Governing Attorneys are located at http://www.nycourts.gov/rules/index.shtml. Links to the court rules can also be found on LLRX.com located at http://www.llrx.com/courtrules/.

LOCAL CHARTERS, ORDINANCES AND CODES

There is a sparse amount of free information available on local charters, ordinances and codes. In order to determine if a municipality has a website, New York State has compiled this information located at http://www.nysegov.com/citguide.cfm?context=citguide&content=munibyalpha. The municipality listings are in alphabetical order. The New York State Library’s website on New York State local government located at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/ils/topics/local.htm includes information on New York counties, cities, towns and villages and other relevant reference resources.

Municipal codes can be found on General Code’s website located at http://www.generalcode.com/webcode2.html#newy.

New York City

Both the New York City Charter and New York City Administrative Code can be found on the public legislative website located at http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/menuf.cgi under “Laws of New York.” According to the New York City Charter, the City Council is vested with the legislative power of the city. To find information on proposed legislation introduced by the City Council, click on http://council.nyc.gov/html/home/home.shtml.