



RESOURCES FOR LEGAL RESEARCH FOR NON-GMU PATRONS

LAYOUT OF THE LAW LIBRARY

I - First Floor

- A – Circulation Desk (Where you go for basic information and to sign in)
- B – Reference Materials – Legal Dictionaries, *West's Encyclopedia of American Law*, Directories
- C – Reference Office (Room 141) – Reference Librarian, Subject & Title Location Guide, Maps
- D – Microform Room (Room 136) – Microforms, Printers, Copiers
- F – Federal Materials
 - 1 – US Code, USCA, USCS, U.S. Statutes at Large
 - 2 – Code of Federal Regulations, Federal Register
 - 2 – US Reports
 - 3 – Fed Reporter, Fed Supplement
 - 4 – Federal Digests
- G - Legal Encyclopedias (AmJur 2d, CJS, ALR)
- H – Form Books – West, AmJur
- I – Government Documents
- J – Current Periodicals (Unbound)
- K – Administrative Decisions

II – Second Floor

- A – Decennial Digests
- B - Regional Reporters
- C – State Materials
 - 1 – Codes
 - 2 - Reporters
 - 3 – Encyclopedia (For some states)
 - 4 - Digests
 - 5 - Practice materials (Very extensive for Virginia; more limited for other states)

III – Third Floor

- A – Bound Journals in Compact Shelving
- B – Treatises, monographs, etc. (arranged according to the Library of Congress classification system)
- C – Subject collections – e.g. Labor, Patent, Tax

STARTING YOUR RESEARCH

Abbreviations - What Am I Supposed to Find?

Many times, legal materials will cite to publications using abbreviations with which you are unfamiliar. *Bieber's Dictionary of Legal Abbreviations* is an excellent tool for answering abbreviation questions. A copy is available at both the Circulation Desk and the Reference Desk; the call number is KF 246 B46 2001.

Now That I Know What I Want - Does the Library Have It?

To find out if the library owns the material you need, check the online catalog. You can access the catalog here on one of the nine computers at the Law Library or at home through the University Library's homepage, <http://library.gmu.edu> or the Law Library's web page <http://www.law.gmu.edu/libtech/catalog.php>. You can search for items several ways, including by title, author or guided keyword (especially good if you're not quite sure of the exact title). If the library owns what you are seeking, the catalog will tell you its location, call number and circulation status (if it's checked out or not). If the location says LL that means the item is here in the law library. If the location says GM, the book is elsewhere in the George Mason Library System - in Fenwick or Johnson Center (Fairfax campus), Prince William or Arlington campus library. The catalog searches the entire holdings of the George Mason University. So, if the law library does not own the item, another GMU library may have it. If you need any assistance in using the catalog, please ask at the Reference Desk.

The Law Library Doesn't Own What I Need - Now What?

Although our collection totals almost 500,000 volumes, no library can own everything. Sometimes, you will need materials that are not available here. You have several options for obtaining the materials.

1. If the item is available at another one of the George Mason University libraries, you can always go to that library. You may also wish to look at the online catalogs of nearby public libraries such as Fairfax County and Arlington County.
2. If the material is a legal publication, you may wish to check the catalogs of other local law libraries. As with the George Mason Law Library, you will not be able to check out books from these libraries, but if you only need to make a photocopy, you could probably go to the appropriate library and use the materials there. Be sure to call the library first to determine their policies in regard to use of the library by visitors.
3. If the item is a recent government publication, or a publication of a public-interest group or other association, it may be available on the World Wide Web. Frequently, documents are available only on the Web.

The Law Library reference staff is here to provide assistance throughout the year.

In general, our hours are:

Monday - Thursday 9am - 9pm

Friday 9am - 5pm

Sunday 2pm - 9pm

ELECTRONIC DATABASES YOU CAN ACCESS AT THE LAW LIBRARY

Located on computers at the carousel in front of the Circulation Desk, at computers by reference area, and computers on second and third floors near stairs.

Index to Legal Periodicals – Provides access to more than 1250 legal journals through two databases: **Legal Periodicals Retro** contains indexing of more than 850 legal journals from 1918-1981. **Legal Periodicals Full-Text** contains indexing of nearly 750 legal journals from 1981 up to the present with full-text of over 200 select periodicals as far back as 1994.

BNA ALL databases cover a wide range of legal subjects, including: business law, criminal law, environmental law, labor law, intellectual property, professional ethics, and the U.S. Supreme Court.

CCH Business and Finance Library and Health and Human Resources Library Contains the current, full-text of a number of CCH services.

Congressional Lexis-Nexis (CIS and beginnings of Serial Set) - Contains Congressional publications, bills, hearings, testimony, legislative research information, and much more.

KeyCite and Shepard's – We have two dedicated terminals, one each on the first and second floors. The one on the first floor is located at the carousel in front of Circulation Desk, and the second floor terminal is directly over the Copy Center near the stairwell.

HeinOnline You can also link directly to full-text articles in many legal journals on HeinOnline through the GMU library catalog.

GPO documents – You can link directly to many GPO documents from the GMU catalog.

LLMC Online access to the full text of the Law Library Microform Consortium collection of legal and government documents material. Collection includes historical U.S. primary documents from the executive, judicial and legislative branches. In addition there are selected Canadian legal materials. The historical collection is constantly growing.

Making of Modern Law Provides digital images on every page of 22,000 legal treatises on US and British law published from 1800 through 1926. Full-text searching on more than 10 million pages provides researchers access to legal history.

RIA Checkpoint Contains a substantial collection of primary tax materials, including tax legislation and IRS materials. In addition, RIA Checkpoint provides full-text access to several journals from WG&L and RIA, as well as current news about tax legislation and caselaw.

U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs 1832-1978. Document types include Appellant's Brief, Appellee's Brief, Oral Transcript, Petition, Petition for Rehearing, Petition for Writ of Certiorari, among other sources.