

Finding Legislation on Your Topic

FCC Gladhill Learning Commons
2nd Floor of Linganore Hall
301-846-2444

Do Background Research First!

- ▶ It's difficult to find laws or cases without one of more of these details:
 - ▶ A citation (e.g. 545 U.S. 1)
 - ▶ Party names (e.g. Gonzales v. Raich), or
 - ▶ The name of a law (e.g. Controlled Substances Act)
 - ▶ State and year in which law was passed
- ▶ Background research can help identify some of these details

Resources for Background Research

Recommended FCC Library & Internet Sources for Background Research:

- ▶ [CQ Researcher](#) - Contains overviews of current controversies in public policy
 - ▶ See: Class activity
- ▶ [Issues & Controversies](#) - Reports, background information, articles, and more all related to current controversial issues
 - ▶ See: class activity
- ▶ [Gale Virtual Reference Library](#) - Scholarly subject encyclopedias in science, social science, literature, humanities, and biography.
- ▶ [FindLaw](#) - Learn about the law - Features informational articles about a wide variety of legal topics

How to Access the Research Databases

- ▶ From campus:

- ▶ Go to www.frederick.edu/library, then click on Research Databases
- ▶ Click on the database by name in the alphabetical list

- ▶ From home:

- ▶ Go to www.frederick.edu/library, then click on Research Databases
- ▶ Click on the database by name in the alphabetical list
- ▶ Login with your student ID number

Searching the Internet for Legislation

- ▶ Looking for legislation is a messy process; don't be intimidated!
- ▶ Once you have identified case or law details from your background research, try these Google searches!
 - ▶ Google domain search: Site:.gov = This will only search government websites (e.g. "controlled substance act site:.gov")
 - ▶ Name of Act; laws are sometimes referred to as Acts (e.g. "Controlled Substances Act")
 - ▶ State name + "marijuana case law" + site:.gov (e.g. "Colorado marijuana case law site:.gov")
 - ▶ State name + "marijuana laws" + site:.gov; (e.g. "Colorado marijuana laws site:.gov")
 - ▶ Include the year of a case in your search to narrow down results (e.g. "controlled substance act 1970")
 - ▶ Try different combinations of these suggestions!

Searching the Internet for Legislation (Cont'd)

Here are some good websites for finding the text of cases or laws:

- ▶ Oyez - Supreme Court Cases
 - ▶ Database on major constitutional cases heard by the United States Supreme Court
 - ▶ <https://www.oyez.org/>

- ▶ United States Code - Federal Laws
 - ▶ <http://uscode.house.gov/>

- ▶ Law, Legal, and Government Resources (Federal or State)
 - ▶ <http://guides.frederick.edu/legal>
 - ▶ Pay special attention to the “Find Statutory & Case Law” tab
 - ▶ Favors federal and MD law; we’re happy to help you locate similar sources for other states

- ▶ Walk-in consultations at the Learning Commons (librarians and learning assistants)

Get Research Help!

[Submit a request](#) for virtual research help and a librarian will get back to you ASAP.