

## Legal Resources on the Internet

There are many places on the Internet where **free** legal information can be found. As with using any Internet resources, it is critical to know that the sites you visit are well-researched and adhere to high standards of quality. The sites included in this research guide are among the best. Additional Internet resources can be found in Widener Law School's other topical **research guides** available both in paper and online.

### MAJOR COMPREHENSIVE SITES

#### **FindLaw.com** - [www.findlaw.com](http://www.findlaw.com)

Owned by West, **Findlaw** is one of the most used free legal resources on the Internet. Its logical breakdown of information and resources makes it easy to navigate. Links point to resources in more than 30 practice areas plus case law, codes, legal associations, law reviews and much more.

#### **lexisONE** - [www.lexisone.com](http://www.lexisone.com)

From LexisNexis, this free online legal resource is aimed primarily at sole practitioners and smaller firms. It is loaded with free resources, including case law, forms, legal news and links to thousands of law-related web sites. Their "state resource center" is excellent. Just click on "Find State Resources Online" for an alphabetical list of states. There are some pay services, but these are clearly identified and a credit card may be used.

### LEGAL PORTALS AND INDEX PAGES

#### **Heiros Gamos** - [www.hg.org](http://www.hg.org)

Although it can be a bit overwhelming with its huge number of links, **Heiros Gamos** is considered to be the best when it comes to foreign and international resources. It also includes the full range of information about U.S. law.

#### **Legal Information Institute (LII)** - [www.law.cornell.edu](http://www.law.cornell.edu)

First known for its coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court, this site offers an extensive collection of both federal and state legal materials. **LII's** current awareness section has a sign-up for email notification of U.S. Supreme Court and/or New York Court of Appeals decisions.

#### **Washlaw WEB** - [www.washlaw.edu](http://www.washlaw.edu)

An easy-to-use index with entry links that start with the 11 Circuits and proceed alphabetically through a vast array of topics and geographical areas from "Alabama" to "Zip Codes." The entire site also is searchable by keyword.

#### **Big List of Legal Web Sites** -

[www.courts.state.ny.us/8jd/NYSSCLawLib/Biglist.htm](http://www.courts.state.ny.us/8jd/NYSSCLawLib/Biglist.htm)

Sponsored by the New York State Supreme Court Library at Buffalo, this easy to use list is amazingly comprehensive. In addition to New York State information, it has twenty-six topical sections with links to such resources as Canadian Legal Sites, Expert Witnesses, Federal and State Courts, Law Reviews and Journals, Legal Research Tutorials, and Legal Forms.

### LEGAL FORMS

Many legal portals and/or indexes provide links to free online forms. For example, **Findlaw** provides links to forms and **LexisONE** has forms, including those from Matthew Bender®. In addition, take a look at:

#### **Internet Legal Resources Guide** - [www.ilrg.com](http://www.ilrg.com)

Has a collection of links to legal forms available on the Internet. The links are separated into those that provide forms with or without a fee. A variety of sources are listed from law firms to business associations, plus ILRG's own archive of legal forms.

#### **Forms Room, 'Lectric Law Library** -

[www.lectlaw.com/form.html](http://www.lectlaw.com/form.html)

Some say this site has the largest collection of free forms on the Internet. Forms are divided into two broad categories: "**Business and General**" (e.g., contracts, employment, real estate, corporations, and trusts & wills) and "**Legal Practice**" (e.g., law practice management, litigation, and related matters).

### SEARCH ENGINES

#### **Google** - [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

**Google** is among the best general search engines. For an excellent description of others, see **The Virtual Chase "Search Engine Guide"** at [www.virtualchase.com/search\\_engines](http://www.virtualchase.com/search_engines).

#### **Google Unclesam** - [www.google.com/unclesam](http://www.google.com/unclesam)

Searches not only federal documents but also state and local ones.

### FEDERAL DOCUMENTS

#### **GPO Access** - [www.gpoaccess.gov](http://www.gpoaccess.gov)

Among other things this site provides access to the U.S. Code, the Federal Register, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the Congressional Record. You also will find links to federal resources available from each branch of the federal government.

**Thomas** - <http://thomas.loc.gov>

A service of the Library of Congress, *Thomas* provides access to the full text of Public Laws back to 1989. Under "Bill Summary and Status," access is available to bill summaries back to 1973.

**FirstGov - [www.firstgov.gov](http://www.firstgov.gov)**

Easy-to-search centralized place to find information from local, state and U.S. Government agency websites.

## FEDERAL COURTS

**Federal Judiciary Homepage - [www.uscourts.gov](http://www.uscourts.gov)**

As the official website for the Federal Judiciary, here you can find easy access to each of the federal courts. Also available at this site are court statistics, official forms, employment information and news releases.

**Federal Court Locator -**

**<http://vls.law.vill.edu/Locator/fedcourt.html>**

This site was built and is maintained by the Villanova Law School. It provides links to all available Federal courts including the Supreme Court, Courts of Appeals, and the District Courts. Each site varies as to the content available, but most include items such as opinions and court rules.

## STATE RESOURCES

**State and Local Government on the Net -**

**[www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm](http://www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm)**

Organized by state, this frequently-updated directory contains links to official state and local government web sites. It is a very good resource for locating courts, government officials, administrative agencies (including boards and commissions), and even libraries.

**Tip!** State information often can be located by simply using **[www.state.\\*\\*.us](http://www.state.**.us)** (insert the two letter postal abbreviation for the state in place of the two asterisks, i.e., [www.state.de.us](http://www.state.de.us)) or, in some instances, by searching **[www.nameofstate.gov](http://www.nameofstate.gov)**, e.g. **[www.delaware.gov](http://www.delaware.gov)**.

## DELAWARE AND/OR PENNSYLVANIA

From the Legal Information Center homepage, click on either "*Delaware Research*" or "*Pennsylvania Research*" under the "*RESEARCH*" heading to find an extensive list of links to free sites for all three branches of government, plus other agencies and organizations, local governments, newspapers, and more. Also, see the **research guides** (online or in print) specifically for Delaware, Pennsylvania and/or New Jersey.

**Tip!** Need to find legal information links for other states? Contact the Reference/State Documents Librarian in each library for assistance. In Delaware, contact Marcie Bierlein (302-477-2044) or [marcie.bierlein@law.widener.edu](mailto:marcie.bierlein@law.widener.edu) and in Harrisburg, call Julie Stuckey at (717-541-3984) or [jas0335@mail.widener.edu](mailto:jas0335@mail.widener.edu).

## LEGAL ASSOCIATIONS

Several sites already mentioned contain links to legal associations,

either at the national, state or local level. One major site is:

**American Bar Association - [www.abanet.org](http://www.abanet.org)**

This site is chock full of legal resources. Need to subscribe to a legal online discussion group? Find it here. Want tips on making your firm's website? They have them in their Legal Technology Resource Center. Want to find out what's new on the national legal front? Check out the "Latest in Law" Section. You also can find a CLE, subscribe to an ABA journal or find out what one of the ABA commissions is up to.

**Tip!** A good trick for finding a particular association is to try using the association's acronym as the domain name followed by .org (For example, the American Law Institute can be found at [www.ali.org](http://www.ali.org)). Of course, you always can use *Google*!

## RESEARCH GUIDES

The *Legal Information Center* has several research guides containing both print and electronic resources in a particular topical or practice area. These can be found in pdf on the LIC homepage (**[www.law.widener.edu/Law-Library](http://www.law.widener.edu/Law-Library)**) by clicking on "*Legal Research*" under "*RESEARCH*" and then on "*Research Guides*." Copies also may be found in various locations in the library. Ask at the Reference Desk if you are not able to locate what you need.

**Zimmerman's Research Guide - [www.llrx.com/guide](http://www.llrx.com/guide)**

A searchable, online encyclopedia for legal researchers.

**Law and Politics Internet Guide - [www.lpig.org](http://www.lpig.org)**

Find annotations to some of the best law and political resources on the Web. This is a great place to start for government and legal research.

## FIND LAWYERS

**Martindale-Hubbell - [www.martindale.com](http://www.martindale.com)**

Attorneys pay to be included, so tends to have the larger firms.

**Findlaw - [www.lawyers.findlaw.com](http://www.lawyers.findlaw.com)**

More likely to have smaller law firms and sole practitioners.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Nolo Law For All - [www.nolo.com](http://www.nolo.com)**

Comprehensive self-help site for non-lawyers.

**University Law Review Project - [www.lawreview.org](http://www.lawreview.org)**

Free, full-text search of law journals on the Internet.

**Newspaper Links -**

**[www.newspaperlinks.com/newspaperlist.cfm](http://www.newspaperlinks.com/newspaperlist.cfm)**

A gateway for local newspapers both U.S. and international.