

Legislation Finding Aid

This guide provides step-by-step instructions for finding legislation using LexisNexis and other online resources. If you have any questions or would like further assistance call or email:

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Legislation Types	Sources
Federal Court Cases	LexisNexis Academic Universe This database provides access to full-text news, business, and legal publications.
Federal Laws	http://thomas.loc.gov This Library of Congress Website provides free access to U.S. Federal Legislative Information.
Pennsylvania State Laws	www.gpoaccess.gov This Website provides free electronic access to information produced by the Federal Government.
Federal Bills and Legislation	www.census.gov This Website provides National, State and local Statistical information based upon the decennial census and other surveys.
Executive Orders	
Statistics	

Federal Court Cases - LexisNexis Academic Universe

With Party Names:

- From the Library's Homepage, select Find Articles and then Databases Listed by Title.
- Select L and then **LexisNexis Academic Universe**.
- In the center column enter the party names, **Brown vs. Board of Education**, in the boxes provided and select Go.
- From the list on the left side, under Sources by Category and Cases, choose U.S. Supreme Court Cases, Lawyer's Edition.

- **Choose #8- Brown v. Board of Educ.**, No. 1, SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, 349 U.S. 294; 75 S. Ct. 753; 99 L. Ed. 1083; 1955 U.S. LEXIS 734; 71 Ohio L. Abs. 584; 57 Ohio Op. 253, May 31, 1955, Opinion and judgments announced , May 31, 1955 , Reargued on the question of relief April 11-14, 1955.

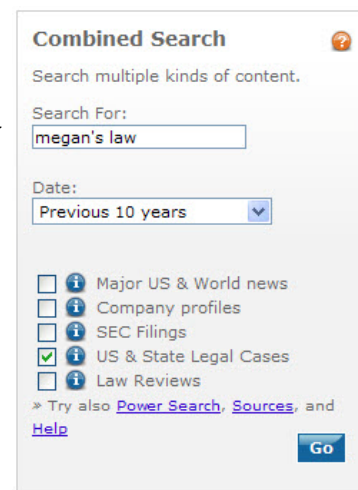
With Keywords:

- From the Library's Homepage, select Find Articles and then Databases Listed by Title.
- Select **L** and then **LexisNexis Academic Universe**.
- In the center column, in by Topic box, enter the term **Detainees**.
- From the list on the left side, under Sources by Category and Cases, choose U.S. Supreme Court Cases, Lawyer's Edition.
- You will obtain 33 cases that the U.S. Supreme Court heard about detainees. They are sorted Newest to Oldest so that the most recent cases appear first.

State Court Cases – LexisNexis Academic Universe

- From the Library's Homepage, select Find Articles and then Databases Listed by Title.
- Select **L** and then **LexisNexis Academic Universe**.
- Choose the Combined Search box on the lower right corner. Search for **Megan's Law**, select the Date: Previous 10 years and choose US & State Legal Cases and click on Go.
- From the list on the left side, under Sources by Category and Cases, choose any State Listing, ex: **PA County Decisions from 1918**, and you will obtain all the cases that mentioned Megan's Law.

1. **Note:** To find exactly where the case mentions Megan's Law, follow the steps below:
2. Choose #9 - Commonwealth v. Gonzalez
3. Select KWIC (Key Word In Context) from the drop down menu at the top the page.



4. Results: **OPINION** ... [*5] [**486] assault, indecent exposure, corruption of minors and criminal attempt to commit sexual assault in docket 1226-01. On October 1, 2002, this Court held a **Megan's Law** hearing and found the defendant to be a sexually violent predator pursuant to [42 Pa.C.S.A. § 9791 et seq.](#) and ordered the defendant to ...

Federal Laws – <http://thomas.loc.gov>

With Public Law Number:

- Click on Public Laws from the THOMAS homepage.
- Select the Congress and Law number that you want.
- Scroll down and choose the range in which your law fits and select View. Then select the specific law.
- Click on the PDF link and Continue to GPO site and you will obtain the full text of this law, as well as well as the legislation and reports that contributed to this law from GOP Access.
 - Ex: Pub. L. 107-110 - "**No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.**"
Pub. L. = Public Law, when a bill becomes a law it is designated as a Public Law.
107 (2001- 2002) = The Congress that passed the Law.
110 = The Law number in that Congress.

With Keywords:


"The United States Code...is a consolidation and codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States."

- Click on U.S. Code from the Thomas Homepage.
- Select Search the U.S. Code.
 - Ex: Enter the term "**USA Patriot Act**" and select search.
 - Click on TABLE OF POPULAR NAMES -- USA Patriot Act.
 - Here you obtain the original Public Law number: Pub. L. 107-56.
- Click on the home link and then the THOMAS link to return to the Thomas Homepage.
- Click on Public Laws.
- Select the Congress and Law number that you want.
- Scroll down and choose the range in which your law fits and select View.
- Then select the specific law.
- Click on the PDF link and Continue to GPO site and you will obtain the full text of this law, as well as well as the legislation and reports that contributed to this law from GOP Access.

Pennsylvania State Laws – LexisNexis Academic Universe


- From the Library's Homepage, select Find Articles and then Databases Listed by Title.
- Select **L** and then **LexisNexis Academic Universe**.
- Ex: Pennsylvania State Laws
- On the LexisNexis Homepage, select Sources and the Browse Sources on the left side of the page.



- In the Filter by Country section, on the top of the page, choose United States and then in the Regions box, choose Pennsylvania.
- Then click on the Legislation, Statutes & Codes Folder.
- Then click on the Statutes (Statutory Codes) Folder.
("The Pennsylvania Statutes include all laws of a general and permanent nature, as enacted by the Pennsylvania Legislature.")
- Select PA - Pennsylvania Statutes, Annotated by LexisNexis and click 

Search Box

KEYWORD


Search Terms: 

Specify Date:

Add Index Terms: [Company](#) [Industry](#) [Subject](#) [Geography](#) [People](#)

Select Source: Clear Sources

Selected:

-  PA - Pennsylvania Statutes, Annotated by LexisNexis [\(remove\)](#)

- Click Search to see how Pennsylvania defines this crime.
- Choose #3 - **18 Pa.C.S. § 2502**, PENNSYLVANIA CONSOLIDATED STATUTES , PART II. DEFINITION OF SPECIFIC OFFENSES, ARTICLE B. OFFENSES INVOLVING DANGER TO THE PERSON, CHAPTER 25. CRIMINAL HOMICIDE, § 2502. Murder, PENNSYLVANIA STATUTES
 - When you click on this link you obtain the following definitions:

§ 2502. Murder

(a) MURDER OF THE FIRST DEGREE.-- A criminal homicide constitutes murder of the first degree when it is committed by an intentional killing.

(b) MURDER OF THE SECOND DEGREE.-- A criminal homicide constitutes murder of the second degree when it is committed while defendant was engaged as a principal or an accomplice in the perpetration of a felony.

(c) MURDER OF THE THIRD DEGREE.-- All other kinds of murder shall be murder of the third degree. Murder of the third degree is a felony of the first degree.

Federal Bills, Legislation – <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Key: H.R. 1997 = House Bill & Bill Number; S.686 = Senate Bill & Bill Number

“The extensions following the bill number represent different versions of the bill and correspond to different stages in the legislative process. They are listed in alphabetical order, rather than chronological order, but their meaning is largely explained in the preceding parentheses. A particularly important extension to note is .enr, which indicates an “enrolled” bill. An enrolled bill is one that has been passed by both chambers of Congress and sent to the president for signature. It represents the final version of the bill.”

- Use the search option on the Thomas homepage to find bills in the current congress only.
 - Ex: In the Search Bill Text Box enter “Iraq Study Group” and obtain all the Senate and House versions of the bill: “Iraq Study Group Recommendations Implementation Act of 2007.”
 - For older legislation, click on the Bills, Resolutions link on the left side navigation and then select the Search Bill Text link. You can search legislation from 1990 to the present.
 - Ex: Pick 108 Congress and enter the keywords “Laci and Conner.” – You will obtain several versions of “Laci and Conner's Law” or the “Unborn Victims of Violence Act of 2004.”
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Executive Orders - www.gpoaccess.gov

“Published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), 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.”

- From the GPO Access Homepage under Executive Resources, select Federal Register then click on Advanced Search.
 - On this page check Presidential Documents and choose the desired year.
 - Ex: 2005 FR, Vol. 70; Presidential Documents.
 - Enter the keyword “Hurricane.”
 - Here you obtain the Executive Orders passed in response to the damage caused by the 2005 Hurricanes in the Gulf Region.
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Statistics - www.census.gov

- census.gov is the best source for accurate statistical information.
- Most tables are based on 2000 Census Data with some information from the 2010 Census.

The site also provides: Economic Information from 2007; American Community Survey data from 2004 and 5 Year Estimates from 2005-2009; Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States and other statistical information.