

Federal Legal Publications – What are they?



Our Congressmen and Senators write bills and pass them to the President, hoping they'll be signed into law. For those that are, regulations are necessary to create the structure of the law and how it will be enforced. The government also notifies the public of proposed or finalized rules and revisions made to current law with a period for public comment. All of this information is published for the public's access and reference when needed.

The government produces these publications to let us know about the laws of our country.

Congressional Record: We don't carry in print. Find online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/crecord/index.html>

- Official record of proceedings/debates of US Congress. Essentially, a transcription of what happens in Congress (everything that is said and done)
- Published daily when Congress is in session
- GPO Access contains volumes from 140 (1994)-present. At back of each daily issue, "Daily Digest" summarizes day's floor/committee activities.
- Current year's Congressional Record database usually updated daily by 11 a.m., except when late adjournment delays production of the issue.



Federal Register: Also online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>

- Official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents
- Published by Office of Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- Updated daily by 6 a.m., published Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays



Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): Also online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/about.html>

- Codification of general /permanent rules published in Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government
- Divided into 50 titles representing broad areas subject to Federal regulation
- Each volume updated once each calendar year and issued on a quarterly basis



United States Code (and US Code Annotated): Also online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/index.html>

- Codification by subject matter of the general/permanent laws of the United States based on what's printed in the Statutes at Large
- Divided by broad subjects into 50 titles



- Published by Office of Law Revision Counsel of US House of Representatives
- Since 1926, the US Code has been published every six years
- Between editions, annual cumulative supplements are published to present most current information.
- USCA (US Code Annotated) is produced by private publisher; notes are provided to help summarize and point to relevant court decision and articles

Slip Laws, Public Laws, Private Laws: Public and Private Laws online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plaws/index.html>



- **Slip law:** An official publication of the law, a "competent evidence" that is admissible in all state/Federal courts and tribunals of the United States (1 U.S.C. 113)
- **Public Law:** Most laws passed by Congress are public laws. Public laws affect society as a whole. Public laws citations include the abbreviation, Pub.L., the Congress number (e.g. 107), and the number of the law. For example: Pub.L. 107-006.
- **Private law:** Affects an individual, family, or small group. Private laws are enacted to assist citizens that have been injured by government programs or who are appealing an executive agency ruling such as deportation. Private laws citations include the abbreviation, Pvt.L., the Congress number (e.g. 107), and the number of the law. For example: Pvt.L. 107-006.
- Public/private laws are prepared/published by Office of Federal Register (OFR), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).
- GPO Access contains the text of public and private laws enacted from the 104th Congress to the present. The database for the current session of Congress is updated when the publication of a slip law is authorized by OFR.
- After the President signs a bill into law, it's delivered to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), assigned a law number, legal statutory citation (public laws only), and prepared for publication as a slip law. Private laws receive their legal statutory citations when they are published in the United States Statutes at Large.

United States Statutes at Large: Also online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/statutes/index.html>



- Typically referred to as the Statutes at Large
- Permanent collection of all laws/resolutions enacted during each session of Congress
- Every public and private law passed by Congress is published in Statutes at Large in order of date it was enacted into law
- Laws arranged by Public Law number and cited by volume and page number
- Also included are concurrent resolutions, proclamations by the President, proposed and ratified amendments to the Constitution, and reorganization plans
- Until 1948, treaties and international agreements approved by Senate were also published here
- Prepared/published by Office of Federal Register (OFR), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
- GPO Access contains statutes enacted in 108th Congress, Volumes 117-118 and 109th Congress, Volume 119-120. Future volumes will be added as they become available.

United States Code Congressional and Administrative

News: Not freely available online.



- **West Group publication** collecting selected Congressional/administrative materials for publication in single resource
- First published 1941 with 1st Session of the 77th Congress; published with every session of Congress since
- Published in monthly pamphlets that contain cumulative subject index and cumulative Table of Laws Enacted in addition to the selected documents. Pamphlets then reissued in bound volumes after each session of Congress concludes.
- Among other documents, U.S.C.C.A.N. publishes full text of new federal laws, selected committee reports from the House and Senate, signing statements, presidential proclamations, executive orders, reorganization plans, President's messages, Federal Regulations, proposed constitutional amendments, Federal court rules, and sentencing guidelines all arranged in chronological order.

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