



Research Guide to Maryland Law

This guide provides users with information on selected resources on Maryland legal research available at the Judge Kathryn J. DuFour Law Library or publicly accessible through the Internet. The Library's online Catalog, [Columbo](#), provides information on the availability of these and other Maryland resources. For more information on performing research in this jurisdiction please consult *Legal Research in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia*, 2d ed. (Reference and Reserve KFD1275 C47 2000). Please note that *LexisNexis*[®] and *Westlaw*[®] provide full-text coverage of many of the resources listed below. **L** and **W** indicate availability on these databases respectively.

1. Maryland Case Law

The Maryland judicial system is comprised of the Court of Appeals, the Court of Special Appeals, circuit courts in eight judicial circuits, twelve district courts in twenty-four counties, and an Orphan's court in twenty-two counties. Reported decisions of Maryland courts are collected in the following publications:

- *Maryland Reports* (KFM1245 A2) 1658-present: The official publication for decisions of the Maryland Court of Appeals. **L W**
- *Maryland Appellate Reports* (KFM1249 S64) 1967-present: The official reporter for published decisions of the Maryland Court of Special Appeals. **L W**
- *Atlantic Reporter* (4th floor) 1885-present: An unofficial reporter for Maryland Court of Appeals cases (also included are cases from the state courts of Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont). **L W**

Recent (1995-) decisions from Maryland's appellate courts (published opinions only) are available on the Internet at <http://www.courts.state.md.us/opinions.html>.

2. Case Indexes and Digests:

The following publications can be used to locate Maryland case law:

- *West's Maryland Digest 2d* (KFM1257 W4): This West Key Number product provides indexing to cases interpreting Maryland law. **W**
- *Shepard's Maryland Citations* (KFM1259 S5): This can be used to check Maryland case history and treatment. **L**
- *West's Maryland Law Encyclopedia* (KFM1265 W4) and *The Annotated Code of Maryland* (Reference/4th floor stacks at KFM1230 1974 .A4) also provide references to cases interpreting or discussing Maryland law. See below for more information on both of these sets. **W**

3. Court Rules, Forms, Jury Instructions:

- Court rules for Maryland are located in two rules volumes located toward the end of the *Annotated Code of Maryland* (Reference/Reserve/4th floor stacks at KFM1230 1974 .A4). **L W**
- *Criminal Practice and Procedure in the District Court of Maryland* (KFM1775 C74 2000). A one-volume practice manual containing various forms.
- *Maryland Practice Forms* (KFM1268M34 2003). A one-volume set published by MICPEL.
- *Maryland Civil Pattern Jury Instructions* (Reserve KFM1742.6 M37 2002). A one volume loose-leaf set updated regularly. **W**
- *Maryland Criminal Pattern Jury Instructions* (Reserve KFM1783 A65). A one volume loose-leaf set updated annually. **W**
- *Maryland's Judicial System* available at <http://www.courts.state.md.us/>. This site contains links to publications, forms, and a variety of resources related to the Maryland court system.

4. The Constitution and Statutory Law of Maryland

The Maryland constitution, first adopted in 1776, was most recently revised in 1867. The current version can be found in the *Constitutions* volume of the *Annotated Code of Maryland* (KFM1230 1974 .A4), and online at <http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/msa/mdmanual/43const/html/const.html>. **L W**

There are two sets containing the Code for the state of Maryland. Both are titled *Michie's Annotated Code of Maryland* (Reference and 4th floor KFM1230 1957/1974 .A2), however the smaller, black set (1957) is slowly being replaced by the larger maroon set (1974 -). Both sets are indexed by the same two-volume subject index. These sets include all laws passed by the General Assembly that are currently in effect. Also included are annotations of cases, brief explanations of the legislative history of the original statute and its amendments, and references to relevant law review articles. A version of the current code is freely available on the Internet at <http://government.westlaw.com/mdcode/>. **L W**

The microfiche collection, *Laws of the State of Maryland* (3rd Floor Media Center), contains the official language of all Maryland session laws. The acts are assigned consecutive chapter numbers based on their chronological order of passage.

5. Legislative History

The Maryland State Law Library's guide, *Ghost Hunting: Searching for Maryland Legislative History* (1989, revised 2004), is available at <http://www.lawlib.state.md.us/Legislativehistory.html>. This is perhaps the best starting point for researchers wishing to compile a legislative history on Maryland legislation.

Additional sources of information include the historical note at the end of code sections in the *Annotated Code of Maryland* (Reference/4th floor stacks at KFM1230 1974 .A4). Please note that this may often refer to superseded volumes of the 1957 *Code* or previous editions of the *Code*. Superseded volumes are available on the 4th floor and on microfiche (3rd Floor Media Center). The *Laws of the State of Maryland* (3rd Floor Media Center) collects all enactments of the Maryland legislature. This can be used to find the original legislation, as well as to track subsequent changes in the statute. The *General Assembly website* at <http://mlis.state.md.us/> provides users with access to a wealth of legislative information including bill tracking. **L W** The retrospective information on this site goes back to 1996. Information about the legislative process and research services can be obtained from the Maryland Department of Legislative Services website at <http://dls.state.md.us/index.html>.

6. Administrative Law of Maryland

The Code of Maryland Regulations (KFM1235 1977 .A22), also referred to as COMAR, is the official compilation of rules and regulations currently in effect. It is organized into 24 volumes covering 26 titles and is updated twice a year. **L W** *The Maryland Register* (KFM1235 .A2), published biweekly since 1974, includes proposed and final state rules and regulations. **L** *The Code of Maryland Regulations* and issues of the *Register* are available on the Internet at <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/>. Opinions of the Attorney General may be found in *The Annual Report and Official Opinions of the Attorney General of Maryland* (3rd floor Media Center). Recent opinions (since 1993) are available on the Internet at <http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opinions/index.htm>. **L W**

7. Secondary Sources of Maryland Law

West's Maryland Law Encyclopedia (KFM1265 W4) is the legal encyclopedia covering the law of Maryland. This publication provides references to cases, statutes and administrative law, and should be considered a valuable tool for gathering resources on a particular topic. **W** The Library also collects a number of *MICPEL* (Maryland Institute for Continuing Professional Education of Lawyers) publications including the *Practice Manual for the Maryland Lawyer* (Reserve KFM1268 P73 1993). *MICPEL* publications cover a wide range of legal topics that can be found throughout the Library; however an author search on [Columbo](#) for *MICPEL* will provide location information for all of them.

The Library's periodical collection includes a large number of Maryland publications such as *Journal of Health Care Law and Policy* (K15 A81), *Maryland Journal of International Law and Trade* (K9 N869), *The Maryland Bar Journal* (3rd floor Media Center), *The University of Baltimore Law Review* (K24 B35), *The New Daily Record* (Casual Reading, retained 2 months) and many other academic and professional publications. Access to articles within periodicals can be achieved using [Legaltrac](#)[®] or [Index to Legal Periodicals](#)[®] (both are available on our [home page](#)). Many journals are also available through **L** and **W**.