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United States Government Documents & Publications

A guide to locating U.S. government documents at the NYU School of Law Library and on the internet.

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Starting your Research: Structure of the U.S. Federal Government

The United States Government Manual provides the following organizational chart of U.S. Government. It's a good starting point for where you can start your research: Legislative, Executive, or the Judicial Branch.

 Another good place to start your research may be the website of the specific department or agency in which you are interested. The A - Z index of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies is a directory of U.S. federal government agencies, departments, corporations, instrumentalities, and government-sponsored enterprises. This index provides websites, email, phone numbers, addresses, and much more.

Most government websites are structured similarly and will feature the following sections:

- **About Us**: A government website's "About Us" section will include information on the agency's mission statement, organizational structure, statutory authority, annual reports, and sometimes information on their budget.

- **Statutes and Regulations**: A typical government website structure often includes a dedicated section for accessing "statutes" (laws passed by Congress) and "regulations" (detailed rules implemented by that specific agency or department based on those statutes),

- **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)**: This section will describe how to submit a

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, the agency's FOIA process, contact information for the agency's FOIA officer, and a link to the agency's FOIA reading room where proactively released documents can be found.

Online collections, search tools & archives

Electronic products are rapidly becoming a favored format for government publications. GovInfo and the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP), both Web-based services, make a number of government publications available via computer.

- DiscoverGov

  DiscoverGov provides simple, one-stop searching across multiple U.S. Federal Government databases including GPO's Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) and GovInfo. It will retrieve reports, articles, and citations while providing direct links to selected resources and publications available online.

- GovInfo

  Provides free public access to official publications from all three branches of the Federal Government. The A to Z page provides a list of all available documents. Although it is not exhaustive, it provides a view of the scope of publications available. The list also includes outside links to GPO partner resources.

- Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP)

- Congress.gov

  The official source of U.S. federal legislative information.

- USA.gov

  The interagency portal to U.S. Government information and services for citizens, businesses and non-profits, government employees, and visitors to the U.S. Administered by the Federal Citizen Information Center of the General Services Administration.

- MetaLib

  A federated search engine that searches multiple U.S. Federal government databases, retrieving reports, articles, and citations while providing direct links to selected resources available online.

- Science.gov, from the interagency Science.gov Alliance

  Gateway to U.S. Government science information, citations, data, publications, etc.

- Government Information United States Federal Collection, Stanford Libraries

  Collection of born-digital documents from U.S. Federal executive agencies and Congressional Committees.

- HathiTrust U.S. Federal Government Documents Program

  NOTE: Materials in HathiTrust are available only to subscribers.

- CyberCemetery

  An archive of government websites that have ceased operation; maintained by the University of North Texas.

- Internet Archive Wayback Machine

- End of Term Web Archive: U.S. Federal Web Domain at Presidential Transitions

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JULIUS NYU Law Library catalog

Government documents which are integrated into the Library's collections, are organized by Library of Congress classification number. Use the online catalog, **JULIUS,** to locate these items.

JULIUS lists all types of federal depository materials (reports, books, codes, etc.) in all formats (paper, microform, internet). Microformat publications are primarily organized using the Superintendent of Documents classification system.

Keyword ⌄		Go

With the drop down above, search by title, author, call number, keyword, or ISBN/ISSN number. The Advanced Keyword search in JULIUS has more search options.

To search by author, it may help to put "United States" before the name of the government body, e.g., United States Tax Court. For a list of government agency, office, program and publication acronyms, see GovSpeak: A Guide to U.S. Government Acronyms & Abbreviations, by Kelly Smith, UC San Diego Libraries, and A-Z Index of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies, USA.gov.

To locate print material in the Law Library, note the call number and location in the Julius record. Click on the location for a map, or ask for directions at the Reference Desk or the Circulation Desk. The Derenberg Room of the Law Library is the location for a few of the major law-related government documents, e.g., the *United States Code*.

Worldcat and the Catalog of Government Publications (CGP) can be searched to identify other U.S. government publications that the Law Library might not have.

Catalog of Government Publications (CGP)

Use the Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP) to identify publications from the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the U.S. government. If you find a title of interest, click on the *Locate in a Library* link near the bottom of the record to identify a library that might have the publication in its U.S. depository collection. Make a note of the SuDoc number and Item number of the material. Check Julius for the Law Library call number and location, or ask for assistance at the Reference Desk.

The CGP is not comprehensive for pre-1976 government publications. These can be identified by using Worldcat and the earlier years of the CGP and related catalogs shelved in the Documents Assistant's office.

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