

# **Florida Legal Research**

Third Edition

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LEGAL RESEARCH SERIES

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**Barbara J. Busharis**

**Suzanne E. Rowe**

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## Series Note

The Legal Research Series published by Carolina Academic Press includes an increasing number of titles from states around the country. The goal of each book is to provide law students, practitioners, paralegals, college students, and laypeople with the essential elements of legal research in each state. Unlike more bibliographic texts, the Legal Research Series books seek to explain concisely both the sources of state law research and the process for conducting legal research effectively.



## Preface and Acknowledgments

This book grew out of an effort to supplement traditional research texts with materials specific to Florida when the authors were both teaching at the Florida State University College of Law. Over time we realized what we really wanted and needed was a stand-alone research text—a book that would fill a previously unfilled niche between general legal research textbooks and bibliographies specific to Florida.

Although a primary audience of this book is law students, we have learned that many novice researchers, including non-lawyers, find it helpful. It has also proven helpful to practitioners who need a concise summary of basic Florida sources because their practice has been outside of Florida or has concentrated on certain areas of law.

In the third edition, we addressed a number of comments from a variety of users of the first two editions. One visual change readers may notice is the use of sample pages and screen shots. While we have intentionally kept the number of sample pages smaller than some other research texts, we realize that many readers like to see a source after reading about it. We have tried as much as possible to limit the increase in total pages, however, because we want this to be a book that researchers can easily carry and use.

The text of the third edition also fully integrates online with paper sources. Given the increasing availability of Internet research tools, as well as more flexible pricing options that have brought LexisNexis and Westlaw within reach of even small firms and government offices, we decided there was no longer a strong benefit to separating the discussion of researching online from researching in books. Writing and research programs that delay instruction in using Westlaw

and LexisNexis should still find the text helpful, however, because the overall emphasis of the text is on the research process rather than on specific sources.

Consistent with the integration of paper and online sources, the chapter that was titled “Shepard’s Citators” in the first and second editions is now a broader chapter on “Updating.”

We gratefully acknowledge three reference librarians at Florida State University College of Law who have continued to answer questions large and small with patience and good humor: Mary McCormick, J.D., M.L.I.S.; Patricia Simonds, M.L.S.; and Margaret Clark, M.L.S. Electronic Services Librarian Jon Lutz helped us with digital images. In Oregon, we are fortunate to have had the research, editorial, and administrative assistance of Angus Nesbit (J.D., M.L.S.), Harvey Rogers, Kelly Fahl, Jeff Hinman, and Donna Williamson. We also thank our colleague and collaborator on the first edition of this book, Lisa Kuhlman. We are deeply appreciative of the feedback we continue to receive from colleagues at Florida State University and other Florida law schools; we will not list them for fear of omissions, but we are grateful for the time they have taken to share their ideas with us.

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