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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 was written to provide researchers with a practical introduction to legal research, with a special focus on Pennsylvania. It is intended to be of use to students who are beginning their legal careers; to practitioners who may need a concise description of research tools they have not used extensively; and to attorneys from other jurisdictions who are experienced legal researchers, but who lack familiarity with basic Pennsylvania sources.

The series of which this volume is a part is designed to bridge the gap between general research texts, which often focus on federal materials, and state-specific resources which may be less comprehensive or more bibliographic.

Pennsylvania Legal Research begins with an overview of the legal research process, a discussion of the interrelationship between legal research and legal analysis, and guidance on planning and organizing research tasks. Although researchers who are new to a legal subject should begin with secondary source research, this text discusses primary resources first to emphasize their importance since finding mandatory, binding authority is frequently a researcher's goal. However, the chapters in the book may be used in any order and each chapter stands on its own.

Online research is a necessary component of thorough and efficient legal research. Accordingly, computer-assisted research is discussed in every chapter of *Pennsylvania Legal Research*, with particular attention paid to web-based legal research services and the major commercial providers of online legal research, LexisNexis and Westlaw. However, each chapter begins with a discussion of print resources because understanding the fundamentals of print research is

critical to successful research in computerized formats. Where online or print sources have a clear advantage, we have tried to indicate as much. Professors who defer certain aspects of online instruction until a second semester can still use the text easily, however, because the emphasis in all chapters is on the process of researching rather than on specific tools.

In writing this book we drew, of course, on our teaching and practice experience. We also used that experience to divide the primary drafting responsibility for certain chapters. Professor Tavares drafted Chapter 1, The Research Process and Legal Analysis; Chapter 3, Judicial Opinions and Reporters; Chapter 4, Finding and Updating Case Law; Chapter 8, Rules of Court and Ethics; and portions of Chapter 9, Secondary Sources. The remaining chapters were drafted by Professor Busharis. The final result, however, is a collaborative work.

We also benefitted from the efforts of those who have preceded us in the state-specific legal research series. The second edition of *Oregon Legal Research* was particularly helpful in drafting several chapters, especially the introductory chapter and the chapters on case law research. In addition, Appendix A, Updating a Case with the Print Version of *Shepard's Citations*, and Appendix B, Legal Citation, were largely drawn from *Oregon Legal Research*. Because one of the authors was simultaneously revising the third edition of *Florida Legal Research*, chapters on statutes, administrative law, rules of court and ethics, and secondary sources were, in part, inspired by their Florida counterparts.

We have also, indirectly, benefitted from the feedback provided by users of earlier versions of those textbooks. This book, like other current books in the series, tries to strike a balance between including sample pages and other graphics and keeping the overall size of the book manageable. We recognize that other texts include more images and sample pages; however, we hope this book provides helpful illustrations while remaining small enough to easily be carried.

We gratefully acknowledge the invaluable assistance of the librarians at Temple University's Beasley School of Law Library. A special thank you to Head Librarian John Necci, and to Law Librarians Poliana Irizarry, Steve Pavlo, and Noa Kaumeheiwa. Many thanks to our

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Barbara J. Busharis
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