

Arkansas Legal Research

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SECOND EDITION

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Series Note

The Legal Research Series published by Carolina Academic Press includes titles from states around the country as well as a separate text on federal legal research. The goal of each book is to provide law students, practitioners, paralegals, college students, laypeople, and librarians with the essential elements of legal research in each jurisdiction. 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

Access to the law has never been easier. Ask a question, get an answer—okay, get hundreds or thousands of answers. How will you know which is the right answer? Does it represent the law in your own state? Does it represent federal law? Are there things governed solely by state law? Solely by federal law? Is it from an official or even trustworthy source? Does the quick answer give you everything you need to know? Does the quick answer help you find even more (or better) authority on the point of law you're researching? Access isn't everything.

Even as it has become easier for today's legal researchers to access sources of the law online, that abundance can be overwhelming, whether the researcher is a first-year law student or an attorney with several years' experience. Therefore, deciding how and where to start, refine, and filter results for any legal research project is more important than ever.

In preparing this second edition of *Arkansas Legal Research*, we discovered how quickly the tools of legal research are evolving. This edition has undergone significant updating to cover current sources of and methods for finding and evaluating Arkansas law. It is intended to be useful for legal researchers of various levels of experience and training, whether they use materials in print, online, or in combination.

The opening chapter walks users through the legal research process. The second chapter introduces readers to the eclectic mix of secondary materials that provide users with the concepts, vocabulary, and overview needed when researching unfamiliar areas of the law. Each of the remaining chapters focuses on particular sources of law, beginning with the ultimate source of state law, the Arkansas Constitution, and continuing through cases, statutes, legislation, administrative rules, and rules of court. This edition includes a new chapter on updating sources and using online citators, plus two new appendices. Appendix A briefly explains and illustrates citations to the most common sources of law, both in practitioner format (including those used in local practice) and academic format. Appendix B contains a wealth of references to current online and print resources of particular interest to Arkansas legal researchers.

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