

Oregon Legal Research

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Oregon Legal Research

Fourth Edition,
Revised Printing

Suzanne E. Rowe

Megan Austin

Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, Series Editor
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Series Note

The Legal Research Series published by Carolina Academic Press includes titles from many 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 legal research and the process for conducting legal research effectively.

Preface and Acknowledgments

The primary audience for this fourth edition of *Oregon Legal Research* continues to be the law student, paralegal, or layperson who is learning the sources and processes for conducting research in Oregon law. Experienced researchers and librarians may find this book a helpful reference to Oregon legal resources and current research techniques.

The fourth edition welcomes Megan Austin as a co-author. Her vast experience teaching legal research and her deep knowledge of research techniques are visible throughout the book. Three changes will be evident to those who have used prior editions. First, the chapters have been organized to align with the steps of the fundamental research process. This means secondary sources appear earlier in the book, just as they often do in the research process. Enacted law is presented next, followed by judicial opinions. One chapter now covers both an overview of judicial opinions and courts as well as case law research. Second, information about federal legal research has been compiled in a new appendix, rather than being introduced in each chapter. Third, the research process has been condensed from seven steps to six. The extra step of reading authorities, and particularly cases, was a remnant of print research, which required moving to a different set of books to read cases. We still stress the importance of reading legal authorities carefully.

As with prior editions, the premier online providers of legal research are still Lexis and Westlaw,¹ but high quality legal material is increasingly available for free. While books still have an important place in legal research, many traditional tools have been replaced by online counterparts.

1. For readability, throughout this text we use the shortened “Westlaw” for Thomson Reuters Westlaw Edge. We omit the registered trademark symbols for that term as well as for Lexis, Lexis Advance, and Shepard’s. We are grateful for the permission of these publishers to include small excerpts to illustrate their products to readers.

The fourth edition continues to use primarily Oregon citation form, as explained in the *Oregon Appellate Courts Style Manual*, because that is the form researchers are likely to encounter in Oregon legal documents and resources. There are subtle differences between the state's citation style and the national citation format of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* and the *ALWD Guide to Legal Citation*. Oregon style uses shorter abbreviations for state sources (e.g., abbreviating the state's statutory code as "ORS" rather than "Or. Rev. Stat.") and deletes periods in reporters (e.g., abbreviating *Oregon Reports* as "Or" not "Or.") and other abbreviations (e.g., "edition" is abbreviated "ed" without a period).

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