

Florida Legal Research

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Florida Legal Research

Fifth Edition

Barbara J. Busharis
Anne E. Mullins
Suzanne E. Rowe

Tenielle Fordyce-Ruff, Series Editor
Suzanne E. Rowe, Series Editor Emerita



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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

This fifth edition of *Florida Legal Research* continues to fill a niche between general legal research textbooks and bibliographies specific to Florida. In this edition, we have reorganized, updated, and expanded the text. The reorganization will be most obvious in four ways: (1) The Introduction is much shorter, and the substance of the chapter now appears in Chapter 1, Getting Started. (2) We have reorganized the order of chapters to follow the research process; thus, secondary sources are now covered early in the book and primary sources follow. Within primary sources, we follow the traditional hierarchy of authority with constitutions and statutes coming before administrative law and then judicial decisions. (3) We attached the chapter on research aids to the chapter on secondary sources. (4) We moved federal materials from each chapter to a new Chapter 9, near the end of the book.

Our updating targeted Westlaw's move from WestlawNext to Westlaw Edge, as well as recent changes from Lexis Advance to Lexis +. Anticipating continued changes in interfaces for Westlaw and Lexis, we refer to each in the text as simply "Westlaw" or "Lexis."

Finally, the text includes additional material to help the novice researcher apply new skills in practice. As examples, the overview of developing a research plan in Chapter 1 has been expanded to explain how to receive a research project from a supervisor; Chapter 2, Executing and Organizing Research, has been enhanced with an overview of research methods and techniques; and Chapter 6, Researching Judicial Opinions, now includes additional explanation of trial and appellate procedure. The following chart aligns the chapters from the fourth edition with this fifth edition.

Fourth Edition	Fifth Edition
Introduction: The Research Process	Introduction and Chapter 1. Getting Started: An Overview of Research Essentials
1. Planning and Organizing Research	Chapter 2. Executing and Organizing Research
2. Judicial Decisions	Chapter 6. Researching Judicial Decisions
3. Statutes and Constitutions	Chapter 4. Researching Statutes and Constitutions
4. Administrative Law	Chapter 5. Researching Administrative Law
5. Updating	Chapter 7. Updating Sources with Citators
6. Secondary Sources	Chapter 3. Researching Secondary Sources
7. Research Aids	Chapter 3. Researching Secondary Sources
8. Rules of Court and Ethics	Chapter 8. Researching Rules of Court and Ethics
	Chapter 9. Researching Federal Law
9. Citation	Chapter 10. Understanding Legal Citation

As with prior editions, work on each chapter was collaborative, but we specifically recognize the contributions of our new co-author, Anne Mullins, in revising Chapter 1, expanding Chapter 2, updating Chapter 5, and creating Chapter 9 from material scattered throughout various chapters of the prior editions. We are grateful for the contributions of our former co-author Jennifer Lavia, particularly in chapters on administrative law, secondary sources, practice aids, and court rules. We also acknowledge that portions of this book have appeared in prior editions and in other books in the Legal Research Series (e.g., the discussion on citators mirrors the treatment of citators in *Oregon Legal Research*).

Each edition of this book has benefitted from the contributions of countless faculty colleagues, librarians at our respective law schools, research specialists, student research assistants, and support personnel. We are grateful for their

assistance. In particular we thank Lora Vineberg, research assistant at Stetson University College of Law.

Finally, each of us is blessed with a family that supports (or at least tolerates) our devotion to this book. We love each of them.

Barbara J. Busharis
Anne E. Mullins
Suzanne E. Rowe

