

# FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY LAW LIBRARY

## BASIC LEGAL RESEARCH SERIES

### Sources for Finding Common Law

#### FEDERAL CASES

##### U.S. Supreme Court Opinions

- PRINT:** *U.S. Reports* (official reporter) KF101.U5  
*Supreme Court Reporter* (unofficial reporter) KF 101.S9  
*Supreme Court Reports, Lawyers' Edition* (unofficial reporter) KF101.U52  
*United States Law Week* KF 101.U53, current issues on Reserve
- INTERNET:** U.S. Supreme Court <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/opinions.html>
- Official site
  - Bound Volumes from 1991 to 2001 in PDF
  - Slip opinions since 2002 in PDF
- Findlaw <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html>
- 1893 to present, from volume 150 of *U.S. Reports*
  - in HTML format; page markers used
  - Hyperlinks added within cases, linking cases to previous decisions
  - Searchable by U.S. Report volume number, citation, title and full text.
- LexisOne [www.lexisone.com](http://www.lexisone.com)
- 1790 to present in HTML format
  - free registration is required
- SUBSCRIPTION:** Hein Online
- accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - U.S. Reports, 1754-2002 in PDF
  - U.S. Reports Preliminary Prints, 2002-2004 in PDF
  - U.S. Reports Slip Opinions, 2002 to date in PDF
- U.S. Law Week (BNA)
- accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - searchable by case name, date, and topic
  - 1997 to present in html
- LexisNexis Academic
- accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - decisions from January 1790 to present, searchable by majority opinion, minority opinion, concurring opinion, counsel, or headnotes
- LEXIS:** Lib GENFED; file USPLUS  
Lib GENFED; file USLED (U.S. Sup.Ct. Lawyers' Ed., from 1790)
- WESTLAW:** SCT database, 1945+; SCT-OLD database, 1790 - 1944

## U.S. Supreme Court Records and Briefs

- FICHE: *United States Supreme Court Records & Briefs* Microform, Mif 30
- Coverage includes 1832 - 1994
- INTERNET: Findlaw [http://supreme.lp.findlaw.com/supreme\\_court/briefs/](http://supreme.lp.findlaw.com/supreme_court/briefs/)
- 1999 to present in multiple formats
  - searchable by year, then by case name
- LEXIS: File name BRIEFS, Library CONLAW, GENFED
- WESTLAW: SCT-BRIEF database, 1990+ ; SCT-BRIEF-EXT, 1976-1990, selective coverage

## U.S. Supreme Court Oral Arguments

- INTERNET: Supreme Court [http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral\\_arguments/argument\\_transcripts.html](http://www.supremecourtus.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts.html)
- Transcript available 15 days after oral arguments.
  - Coverage begins with 2000
- Oyez Project (audio) <http://www.oyez.org/oyez/frontpage>
- Over 500 selected cases available
  - Cases sorted by subject
- LEXIS: File name USTRAN, Library GENFED
- Transcript available 15 days after oral arguments.
  - Coverage begins with October term, 1979.
- WESTLAW: SCT-ORALARG database
- Transcript available 15 days after oral arguments.
  - Coverage begins in 1990.

## Circuit Courts of Appeal and District Courts

- PRINT: *Federal Reporters*, KF105.F42  
*Federal Supplement*, KF105.F43
- INTERNET: Findlaw <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/>
- Scroll down to "Case Law"
  - Coverage begins with 1996
  - Provides list of individual District courts linking to online opinions
  - Searchable by Circuit and across all Circuits; searchable by party name, docket number and full-text search
- LexisOne <http://www.lexisone.com>
- Coverage includes last five years
  - Searchable across federal cases and by individual courts
  - U.S. District courts not covered
  - free registration is required
- National Law Journal <http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/utility/courttopinions.jsp>
- Comprehensive directory of individual courts linking to online opinions
- Cornell Legal Institute <http://www.law.cornell.edu/federal/opinions.html>
- Searchable by Circuit and across all Circuits; searchable by keyword
  - List of individual District and Bankruptcy courts browsable by circuit and by state.
- U.S. Courts <http://www.uscourts.gov>
- Provides links to individual federal courts on the Web
  - Provides a link to PACER, electronic access to federal court records

- SUBSCRIPTION: LexisNexis Academic
- Accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - Decisions from all federal courts, including District Court decisions from 1789 to present
  - Must search different court levels separately
  - Available in HTML format; no PDF formats.
- Florida Law Weekly, Federal*
- Accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - *FLW, Federal* reports decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. District and Bankruptcy Courts in Florida, and the U.S. Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit from 2001 to present
  - Keyword searching, subject index available
- PACER Public Access to Court Electronic Records [www.pacer.psc.uscourts.gov](http://www.pacer.psc.uscourts.gov)
- See reference librarian for access
  - Service provides access to opinions, docket information, and filed documents in District, Bankruptcy, and Appellate cases
- LEXIS: Lib GENFED, File COURTS (federal courts combined)  
 Lib GENFED, File OLDER (federal courts combined from 1792-1945)  
 Lib GENFED, File DIST (District courts from 1789)  
 Lib GENFED, File USAPP (Circuit Courts of Appeal from 1789)
- WESTLAW: CTA database (Circuit Courts of Appeal from 1945); CTA-OLD (1891-1944)  
 DCT (District courts from 1945); DCT-OLD (1789-1944)

## Florida Cases

### Florida Supreme Court

- INTERNET: Florida Supreme Court <http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/>
- Official site; cases from 1999
  - Opinions are released by the Clerk's Office each Thursday at 11 a.m. They are posted on the website after release. The opinions are made available in Acrobat (PDF) format and for download in ZIP and Self Extracting (EXE) formats.
  - Listed in reverse chronological order by year
- Findlaw's Opinions from the Supreme Court of Florida  
<http://www.findlaw.com/11stategov/fl/flca.html>
- Available from different sources; links provided
  - 1995+
- Lexisone [www.lexisone.com](http://www.lexisone.com)
- free registration is required
  - last five years of state appellate cases only
- SUBSCRIPTION: LexisNexis Academic
- accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - only Florida Supreme and appellate decisions
  - in HTML format
  - free registration required
- Florida Law Weekly (FLW)
- Accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - FLW reports District and Supreme Court opinions from 1995 to present
  - Keyword searching, subject index available
- LEXIS: Lib FLA, file FLA (opinions from 1846)
- WESTLAW: FL-CS database (Supreme Court and DCA's, from 1957)

## Florida Supreme Court – Records and Briefs

- FICHE: Records and briefs of the Florida Supreme Court, Mif32
- Coverage includes 1967-1998
- INTERNET: Florida Supreme Court Records and Briefs  
[http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub\\_info/summaries/archives.shtml](http://www.floridasupremecourt.org/pub_info/summaries/archives.shtml)
- available from 1998
  - browsable by date and case name
- Florida Supreme Court Briefs and Opinions (from FSU Law Library) <http://www.law.fsu.edu/library/flsupct/index.html>
- Unofficial site; cases and briefs from 1989 and some earlier years
  - Listed by docket number and searchable by keywords
- LEXIS: Lib FLA, file FLBRFS, 2004 to date
- WESTLAW: FL-SCT-BRIEF database, from 1991

## Florida Supreme Court – Oral Arguments

- INTERNET: Gavel to Gavel <http://wfsu.org/gavel2gavel/>
- Available from 1997
  - Audio files and transcripts browsable by date and by case name
- VIDEO: *Oral arguments before the Florida Supreme Court*
- Coverage begins with January 1985.
  - Ask librarian for assistance.

## Florida District and Circuit Courts

- PRINT: *Southern Reporter*, KFF45.F56  
*Florida Law Weekly*, KFF60.F56  
*Florida Law Weekly, Supplement*, KFF60.F561
- INTERNET: Florida State Courts <http://www.flcourts.org/#>
- links to individual District and Circuit Court sites
  - can search all Districts by docket number
- Florida Law Online <http://www.floridalawonline.net/>
- Search capabilities vary
- LexisOne [www.lexisone.com](http://www.lexisone.com)
- Free registration is required
  - Last five years of state appellate cases available
- SUBSCRIPTION: Florida Law Weekly (FLW) and FLW, Supplement
- Accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library) (Go to Research Links, Florida, then select FLW)
  - FLW reports District and Supreme Court opinions from 1995 to present
  - FLW Supplement reports Florida Circuit and County Court decisions since October 1992
  - Keyword searching, subject index available
- LexisNexis Academic – State Case Law – Florida
- accessible from Law Library web site [www.law.fsu.edu/library](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library)
  - only Florida Supreme and appellate decisions
- LEXIS: Lib FLA, file FLCTS (Florida Supreme Court, 1846+ and DCA's 1957+ combined)  
Lib FLA, file APP (Florida Appellate courts, 1957+)
- WESTLAW: FL-CS database (Florida Supreme Court, 1846+ and DCA's 1957 combined)