

Finding Chinese Law

According to Reynolds and Flores, *Foreign Law Guide*:

“The volume of legislation and regulation coming from the People's Republic of China is overwhelming and efforts to control and classify this mass is disheartening. There are now more than 400 actual “laws” and another 800 “regulations” and beyond this are hundreds of pieces of subsidiary legislation and the important regulations made by local authorities (excluding the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. This would not include laws or versions that have been specifically replaced or abrogated, nor would it include legislation that has noticeably expired. All of this is quite beyond the control of printed sources as there is no way to keep up with the volume and would also preclude the production of consolidated versions in print in Chinese or in English (the non-Chinese language of choice).

The researcher understandably turns to online sources with a degree of hope. We have found that most of the online databases of Chinese law that your editors have approached (this excludes databases entirely in Chinese) frequently promise more than they can deliver or have delivered, as many of the laws they contain are expired, although they still maintain a misleading presence on the web.

There is no “free lunch” for Chinese law on the Internet....

There are useful sites whose main attraction is that they are available without charge. Our real concern is that the texts are no longer assuredly current.

There is no dearth of web sites offering, or purporting to offer, full English texts of Chinese laws. Unfortunately there are often drawbacks. First, caution must be exercised since many of the laws and regulations displayed in provisional format may date back a decade and may have been overtaken by later revisions or versions. Second, many seemingly attractive sites turn out to be merely vehicles for advertisements, offers of legal services or anything but displays of promised texts and perhaps, filing and unreliable summary. Third, organization can be deceptive; the database may be arranged by title, alphabetically, but Chinese legislation often has confusing and extended titles that depend upon the whim of the translator...

The best online Chinese sources for translation of legislation are only available with a fee.”

This guide attempts to provide information about the electronic sources of information that are available at the moment. Because of the great volatility of the providers of information related to Chinese law (whether located within or outside of China), you may find that some of the websites that were working on February 26, 2006, may no longer be working when you try to reach them.

Finding Documents

Governmental Websites — China

[The Central People's Government of The People's Republic of China](#). This site has a link from the front page to: [Information Centre](#), [Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council PRC](#), [China Legislative Information Network System](#):

[CCH, China Law Reference Service Online](#). Free trial subscription, which allows access to titles, in English, of laws and regulations, but does not allow access to the full text of the documents.

[People's Daily Online List of Governmental Agencies of the PRC](#).

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC](#).

[ChinaCourt](#). This website is sponsored by the [Supreme People's Court of the PRC](#) (whose website is in Chinese).

Governmental Websites — United States

[Congressional - Executive Commission on China](#): (The CECC was created by Congress in October 2000 with the legislative mandate to monitor human rights and the development of the rule of law in China, and to submit an annual report to the President and the Congress. It consists of nine Senators, nine members of the House of Representatives, and five senior Administration officials appointed by the President).

Other Sources of Legislation and Regulations

PRC [Constitution](#) and [Legislation and Regulations](#), from the People's Daily Online.

[International Labour Organization. Natlex – China](#): (Laws relating to labor, social security, and related human rights)

Catholic University of Leuven, Faculty of Law, [Documentation Centre for Chinese Law](#).

Baker & McKenzie, [China: Electronic Legislation and Regulations](#).

Databases

China LawInfo. Bilingual database of Chinese statutes, regulations, cases, government policies, legal news, treatises, and law review articles. Subscription required.. Also available through our academic subscription to LexisNexis: Legal > Legal (excluding U.S.) > China & Hong Kong > Case Law (latest legislation is from 2005; latest cases are from 2002).

IsinoLaw. Legal information of the People's Republic of China in both English and Chinese: laws, regulations, measures, rules, draft laws, local legislations, judicial interpretations. Subscription-based. Free searching by guests, but access to documents is available only to subscribers.

Research Websites

Internet Chinese Legal Research Center – Mainland China: Includes legal, government information, and news resources on the Internet with annotations and links. Also includes the useful: Wei Luo, A Strategy to Start Searching or Update the Laws of the People's Republic of China.

University of Pittsburgh School of Law, Jurist Legal News and Research – China: (Includes links to live Chinese News and Public Affairs, newspapers, latest official news and statements, among others)

Foreign Law Guide. Each country is organized by subject, with references to laws, regulations, websites, and print materials.

Law Library of Congress – China and **Library of Congress, Portals to the World – China**.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. Statistical information. Laws and regulations relating to statistical matters.

Yale's China Law Center: (“The China Law Center was established at Yale Law School in 1999. It has two important missions: first, to assist the legal reform process within China; and, second, to increase understanding of China's legal system outside of China.”)

China Law Digest. The China Law Digest is published by the Constitutional Democracy Forum and edited each month by Xiaoping Chen and translated by a group of research assistants at the Harvard Law School. The website contains legal news, legislative developments, important cases, regional developments, law stories (true stories illustrative of legal and judicial issues in China), op-eds on the law, information on the development and reform of the legal profession, information on Chinese legal studies abroad, news on prominent figures in the Chinese legal community, and periodic publication of information reflective of particularly important Chinese legal problems. The website emphasizes social justice and the protection of disadvantaged minority groups; constitutional reform and the advancement of the rule of law; legal and social development; and Sino-foreign exchanges on judicial and legal reform.

Research Guides

Lyonette Louis-Jacques, Lorna Y. Tang, and Bill Alspaugh, [*Chinese and Asian Law Resources: People's Republic of China*](#) (February 2005). The authors of this excellent starting point are International Law Librarians at the University of Chicago's D'Angelo Law Library.

[Washlaw's Legal Research on the Web, People's Republic of China.](#)

University of Pennsylvania Library, China Business – [Research Guide #30.](#)

New York University School of Law, Hauser Global Law School Program, [GlobaLex](#), Joan Liu, *Finding Chinese Law on the Internet* (February 2005); and New York University School of Law Library, [Guide to Foreign and International Legal Databases.](#)

[List of Research Guides to Chinese Law](#) (as of July 14, 2005)

The World Wide Web Virtual Library, [Internet Guide for Chinese Studies – Law.](#)

News

[EINNEWS.com](#). Access to breaking news (general, business and economy, government and politics, industry, and miscellaneous). Subscription required, but a free trial is available.

[People's Daily Online – English.](#)

[BBC](#). Also available through:

Lexis: Summary of World Broadcasts and Monitoring Reports. News & Business > Country & Region (excluding U.S.) > Asia Pacific > News > Individual Publications > BBC Worldwide Monitoring: International Reports - Asian Pacific Stories. Coverage: 1 January 1979-present.

Westlaw: [BBCNEWSFILE](#). Coverage 1 January 2000-present.

World News Connection (Westlaw: WNC). Translated and English-language news and information, compiled from thousands of non-U.S. newspaper articles, conference proceedings, television and radio broadcasts, periodicals, and non-classified technical reports. The information in WNC covers significant socioeconomic, political, scientific, technical, and environmental issues and events. The material in WNC is provided to the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), a U.S. government agency. Updated each U.S. government work day. Coverage:1995-present.

Listservs

CHINALAW, an electronic discussion group on the modern law of the People's Republic of China (PRC), other Chinese jurisdictions (Hong Kong, Taiwan), and Chinese legal history. Subscribe or join the CHINALAW list [here](#). This list was formerly the [Chinese Law Net](#), [archived](#) on listproc@u.washington.edu.

Blogs

[China Law Blog – China Law for Business](#): (The Wall Street Journal has used information on this blog as a basis for stories about China)

[China Economic Review Editor's Blog](#).

[China Confidential](#): (interesting economic information).

[China Challenges](#): (“The mission of this weblog is to explore the various political, economic and social implications of the rise of the Peoples Republic of China in the 21st Century).

[Walter Hutchens' Blog](#): (interesting economic information).