

Federal Register, Code of Federal Regulations & Government Information

Library Research Guide

What are Federal Register & Code of Federal Regulations?

Administrative agency rules and regulations have the same legal effect as federal laws and are primary sources of law. Agencies receive their authority to issue rules and regulations from federal law and the Office of the President. Agencies can be called commissions, such as the Civil Rights Commission; departments, such as the Department of Labor; boards, such as the National Labor Relations Board; and offices such as the General Accounting Office.

Published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Federal Register (FR) is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents.

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. It is divided into 50 titles that represent broad areas subject to Federal regulation. Each volume of the CFR is updated once each calendar year and is issued on a quarterly basis.

Rules and regulations are first published in the *Federal Register* and are then codified in the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Because rules and regulations change frequently, it is crucial to update the *Code of Federal Regulations* by using the *Federal Register*. The daily *Federal Register* and the annually revised *Code of Federal Regulations* work together to provide an up-to-date version of any agency regulation.

The *Federal Register* is where proposed and final rules and regulations are initially published. It is a legal newspaper published every business day by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). It contains Federal agency regulations; proposed rules and notices; and Executive orders, proclamations and other Presidential documents. The Federal Register informs citizens of their rights and obligations and provides access to a wide range of Federal benefits and opportunities for funding. NARA's Office of the Federal Register prepares the Federal Register for publication in partnership with the Government Printing Office (GPO), which distributes it in paper, on microfiche and on the World Wide Web. The *Federal Register* has been published since 1936.

The daily Federal Register has a table of contents organized alphabetically by agency, which lists each document and span of pages. Two monthly publications provide information on documents that appeared in past issues of the Federal Register: the LSA (List of CFR Sections Affected) is a numerical listing that helps readers track changes to the CFR; and the Federal Register Index is a cumulative subject index of documents published in the Federal Register. The on-line edition has the same table of contents as the paper edition with hypertext links to take users directly to each document in the current issue. Tables of contents with these hypertext links provide easy access to Federal Register documents published since January 1, 1998. On-line users also can search by category, subject matter and date to retrieve documents in current or past issues from 1994 through the present day.

After rules and regulations are published in the *Federal Register*, they are codified in the *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)*. The *Code of Federal Regulations* is an annual codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

Published annually, the CFR is divided into 50 titles which represent broad areas subject to Federal regulation. Each Title is divided into chapters which are assigned to agencies issuing

regulations pertaining to that broad subject area. Each chapter is divided into parts and each part is then divided into sections -- the basic unit of the *CFR*. The *CFR* is keyed to and kept up-to-date by the daily Federal Register. These two publications must be used together to determine the latest version of any given rule. When a Federal agency publishes a regulation in the Federal Register, that regulation usually is an amendment to the existing *CFR* in the form of a change, an addition, or a removal. The approximately 200 *CFR* volumes are revised at least once a year on a quarterly basis as follows:

Titles 1 -- 16, as of January 1; Titles 17 -- 27, as of April 1;

Titles 28 -- 41, as of July 1; Titles 42 -- 50, as of October 1

The revision date of each volume is printed on the cover, and at the top of every even-numbered page. Each year's cover is a different color for quick reference.

How are they cited?

Regulations appearing in the *Federal Register (FR)* are cited by volume and page number.
Eg. 44 FR 56120 (Volume 44 /Federal Register/ Page 56120)

The Code of Federal Regulations (*CFR*) is cited by title and part numbers. On the cover of each volume of the *CFR* are the title number, the broad subject heading, and the revision date. In addition, if the title is contained in more than one volume, the cover will indicate the inclusive parts appearing in that particular volume.

Eg. 40 CFR 211 (Title 40/Code of Federal Regulations/Part 211)

How to access them?

Federal Register: Call Number: KF 70.A2, Location: 10th Floor

Code of Federal Regulation: Call Number: KF 70.A3, Location: 10th Floor

Search by using *Federal Register Index* (The entries are found primarily under the names of the issuing agencies along with broad subject headings)

Search by using citations.

Federal Register can be accessed at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/Index.html>

Code of Federal Regulations can be accessed at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/CFR/INDEX.HTML>

The Library's Campus Research (Westlaw) database provides access to the *Federal Register* & the *Code of Federal Regulations* (<http://www.jsu.edu/library/resources/>). You can search by Subject, Agency, Issue Date, Page Number (FR)/Part Number (CFR)

Search the Affected Sections by using *LSA (List of CFR Sections Affected)* (Call Number: REF KF70.A 34C6, Location: 10th Floor): Entries are by *CFR* title, chapter, part, and section, and indicate the nature of the change (i.e. additions or deletions). Proposed rules are listed at the end of appropriate titles except for title 41, in which proposed rules follow each chapter.

How to access government information online?

Government Web site has been offering rich and authority information about its administrations, law and regulations. The URL of the government information always has the extension ".gov". It is suggested by the librarians to search government information on the Web according to the following steps:

Step1. Identify which government agency deals with the type of information you need

Step2. Go to that agency's Web home page

Step3. Exam the links for the information you are looking for

You can check the following table to make sure you are looking for the right agency:

For information on	Check the following Agency & Web site
Agriculture & Farm; Food and Nutrition	Department of Agriculture (http://www.usda.gov/)
Air Travel/Flight; Aeronautics and Space Research; Astronomy	NASA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (http://www.nasa.gov/)
Arts	National Endowment for the Arts (http://arts.endow.gov/)
Broadcasting	Federal Communications Commission (http://www.fcc.gov/)
Business	Small Business Administration (http://www.sba.gov/)
Consumer	General Services Administration (http://gsaauctions.gov/gsauctions/gsauctions/); Consumer Product Safety Commission (http://www.cpsc.gov/); Department of Health and Human Services (http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/); Federal Trade Commission (http://www.ftc.gov/)
Crime	Department of Justices (http://www.usdoj.gov/)
Education	Department of Education (http://www.ed.gov/)
Energy	Department of Energy (http://www.energy.gov/)
Engineering	National Institute of Standards and Technology (http://www.nist.gov/)
Environment	Environmental Protection Agency (http://www.epa.gov/); Department of Commerce (http://www.commerce.gov/); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (http://www.noaa.gov/)
Foreign Affairs; International Affairs	Department of State(http://www.state.gov/); Department of Defense (http://www.defenselink.mil/)
Health and Medicine	Department of Health and Human Service (http://www.hhs.gov/)
Housing and Real Estate	Department of Housing and Urban Development (http://www.hud.gov/)
Humanities	National Endowment for the Humanities (http://www.neh.gov/)
Immigration	Immigration and Naturalization Service (http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis)
Labor and Employment	Department of Labor (http://www.dol.gov/)
Minority Concerns	Department of Commerce (http://www.commerce.gov/); Department of Education ((http://www.ed.gov/); Department of the Interior (http://www.doi.gov/); Department of Housing and Urban Development (http://www.hud.gov/)
Natural Disasters	Federal Emergency Management Agency (http://www.fema.gov/)
Social Security	Social Security Administration (http://www.ssa.gov/)
Natural Resources	Department of Interior (www.doi.gov)
Taxes	Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service (http://www.irs.gov/)
Transportation	Department of Transportation (http://www.dot.gov/)
Travel	Department of State (http://www.state.gov/)

Other useful websites are: <http://www.google.com/ig/usgov>, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>, <http://www.loc.gov/index.html>, <http://thomas.loc.gov/>, <http://www.usa.gov/>, <http://www.house.gov/>, <http://www.senate.gov/>, <http://www.fedstats.gov/>, <http://www.alabama.gov/portal/index.jsp>, <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/>, and etc.

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