
§ 1.6

Locating a Statute with a Citation

The Address of the Statute

A statute, which is a law created by the legislature, acts as a general rule for society. Unlike case law, statutes do not reflect specific factual situations.

There are federal statutes and state statutes. The researcher may locate statutes in a couple of different ways, depending on the information provided.

IF THE PARALEGAL IS PROVIDED WITH A CITATION

As mentioned previously, almost any legal writing may be cited, including statutes. The following is a typical federal statutory citation:

42 U.S.C. § 1204 (2006)

Title or Chapter

42 stands for *Title 42*. In many state statutes, the 42 might stand for Chapter. In either case, the researcher is led to this number first.

Publication

U.S.C. stands for the *United States Code*.

Section Symbol

§ stands for "Section." **§§** stands for "Sections." For example: 42 U.S.C. § 1204, or 42 U.S.C. §§ 1204 to 1207. It would also be appropriate to write 42 U.S.C. Sec. 1204.

Year

1984 is the year the statute was enacted.

To find the statute, one needs the publication, title (or chapter) and section. Locate the publication (*United States Code*), the title (*42*), then the section number (*1204*).

IF THE PARALEGAL ONLY HAS A LEGAL ISSUE

There are many publications that help the researcher locate statutes, cases, and other forms of authority.

Examples include legal encyclopedias, digests, annotations, and form books. But if the researcher is specifically looking for statutory authority, start in the index to the statutes being researched.

ASSIGNMENT § 1.6 | USE THESE CITATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS

- 42 U.S.C. § 1204
- Iowa Code Annotated § 85.27
- Nev. Rev. Stat. § 37.010

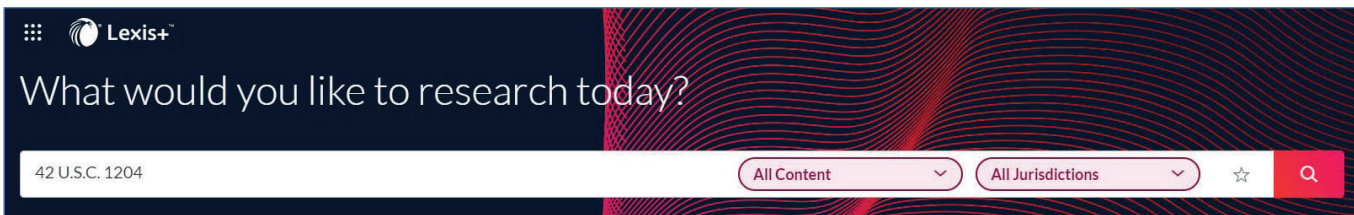
ASSIGNMENT § 1.6(A) | ONLINE STATUTORY RESEARCH USING WESTLAW

1. Login to *Westlaw* at *westlaw.com*
2. In the *Search Query Text Box*, type the volume, Title (or Chapter) and section number from the above citations, such as: 42 U.S.C. 1204 (no section symbol is required)
3. Click *Search*.



ASSIGNMENT § 1.6(B) | ONLINE STATUTORY RESEARCH USING LEXIS

1. Login to *Lexis* at *lexis.com*
2. Type the citations provided above one at a time.
3. Click *Search*.

**ASSIGNMENT § 1.6(C) | STATUTORY RESEARCH USING THE LAW LIBRARY (OPTIONAL)**

NOTE: All law library assignments are optional unless required by your instructor. However, when and if you are able to gain access to a law library it is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that you use these assignments and exercises to become familiar with the books. It will make you a much better overall researcher, including online research.

Locate the following statutes in the law library. You do not have to copy the statute. Instead, write down the first sentence of each statute.

1. *Locate the publication (such as the Iowa Code Annotated)*
2. *Locate the Title or Chapter number from the citation*
3. *Open the volume containing that Title or Chapter and turn to the page where the Section can be found.*

