

§ 10.5**State Statutes***Citing Chapters and Sections Instead of Volumes and Pages*

Although there are differences among states, many aspects of statute citation form are universally applicable from one state to the next.

What does the § symbol mean?

§ means “section.” If there are two of the symbols together, §§, it means “sections” (plural). Note that there is always a space after the § symbol.

How are statutes arranged?

Statutes are arranged by topic. For instance, typically, all the statutes that deal with traffic laws are collected in the same chapter or title.

How are statutes cited?

Statutes are cited by either *title and section number* or *chapter and section number*, or *title, chapter and section number*. (Depending on the state.)

Note about Bluebook Statutory Abbreviations

While the majority of jurisdictions use the *Bluebook Uniform System of Citation* for citing cases, statutory citations in many jurisdictions do not conform to the *Bluebook* standards. So be flexible and go with the citation style your attorney prefers.

Example

Following are examples of citations for a Colorado state statute. As with most states, attorneys in Colorado tend to use the standard citation form. However, you will never be criticized if you use *Bluebook* form. At the end of the day, your attorney will decide which style of citation to use.

Standard citation: C.R.S. § 13-22-221(1)(a) (1999)

Bluebook citation: Colo. Rev. Stat. § 13-22-221(1)(a) (1999)

This citation refers to Title 13, Chapter 22, Section 221, Subsection 1a of the Colorado Revised Statutes. (Note that the section symbol appears prior to the title, chapter, and section numbers.) Various states arrange the citation so that the chapter, title, and section number are not immediately evident. For instance, in N.R.S. § 200.110, the cite refers to the Nevada Revised Statutes, Chapter 200, Section 110. If you are unsure about how a statute is cited by the jurisdiction where the matter is being heard, check with your attorney, another paralegal, or even court opinions in your state.