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Lucky 13: Research Resources for Georgia and the Other States

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Lucky 13:

RESEARCH RESOURCES FOR GEORGIA AND OTHER STATES

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► There is an online research guide that supplements this paper with additional information and resources: libguides.law.uga.edu/cle2017

Lucky 13:
Research Resources for Georgia and Other States

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The title refers to the fact that Georgia was one of the original thirteen colonies and that Georgia researchers are lucky to have access to a good number of free, online legal resources.

COMPREHENSIVE SITES - GEORGIA

1. Georgia Portal – georgia.gov

Links to sites for state agencies, counties, and local governments. Under Popular Topics find information on tasks like “Applying for a Business License” and “Changing Your Name.”

2. Open Georgia – www.open.ga.gov

Access to information and documents about how the state spends tax dollars and other revenues. The information comes from various state agencies and is updated annually. You can find:

- Salaries and travel reimbursements paid to state employees
- Payments, obligations, and professional services expenditures made by state organizations
- Key reports related to the state’s budget and finances
- Performance review of state entities
- SPLOST reports

COMPREHENSIVE SITES – OTHER STATES

1. GovEngine.com - www.govengine.com

EXECUTIVE - GEORGIA

1. Current Regulations - rules.sos.state.ga.us/home.aspx

Browse the rules by title or search by citation or keyword. See the fee schedule for scanning and certifying copies as well as hourly research (payable in advance).

- Corporations Division – sos.ga.gov (Corporations link at top of page)

Provides online registration and filing, forms, and filing fees. Use the Business Search database, ecorp.sos.ga.gov/BusinessSearch, to find a Georgia entity’s information of record.

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2. Proposed Regulations

A printed *Georgia Register* was eliminated in 2006 with the understanding the Georgia Technology Authority was to develop an electronic version. See O.C.G.A. § 50-25-6. As of January 6, 2017 there is no online product. The *Monthly Bulletin*, which is a compilation of all rules filed and all rules effective in a particular month, is for sale from the Secretary of State, <http://gasos.casemakerlibra.com/home/index.aspx>

Currently the best way to identify proposed regulations is to check the relevant agency sites.

- List of state agencies with links to websites: georgia.gov/agency-list

Not all agencies post information about proposed rules and regulations. Take a look at the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. It's a good example of a responsive state agency that informs the state's citizens by providing the text of proposed rules along with dates for hearings and board actions, public comments deadlines, responses to comments, and final board action.

3. Attorney General Opinions – law.ga.gov/opinions/official

Provides official and unofficial opinions beginning with 1993. Arranged in reverse chronological order. Search by opinion number or keyword of the full text.

4. Government Publications/Digital Library of Georgia - www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=ggpd

Includes some older AG opinions. Use the Advanced Search function, entering "Georgia. Office of the Attorney General" in the author field. Select Annual Reports from the faceted results as the Annual Reports included opinions issued during that year.

EXECUTIVE – OTHER STATES

1. Administrative Codes and Registers – www.administrativerules.org/administrative-rules

Web portal to state rules and regulations from the National Association of Secretaries of State

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2. All Things Political State Administrative Codes - www.allthingspolitical.org/state_government/state_admin_codes.htm

Bare bones and unattractive but easy, straight forward and quick.

JUDICIAL - GEORGIA

1. Georgia Supreme Court – www.gasupreme.us

The Court provides access to its opinions from the current and prior year only. View oral arguments for the most current term only: www.gasupreme.us/court-information/oral-arguments

2. Georgia Court of Appeals – www.gaappeals.us

Opinions are available in the Docket/Case Inquiry System: www.gaappeals.us/docket, but you need docket/case number, the trial court case number, or a word from the style of the case, no general keyword searching.

3. Court Rules – www.gasupreme.us/rules

4. Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority – www.gscca.org/search

A well-organized and useful site providing access to UCC, real estate, and lien filings from all counties. An account is required. Free limited use as well as monthly and one-time use fees.

JUDICIAL – OTHER STATES

1. Google Scholar - scholar.google.com

Find published opinions of:

- state appellate and supreme court cases since 1950
- US federal district, appellate, tax, and bankruptcy courts since 1923
- US Supreme court cases since 1791

Includes citations for cases cited by indexed opinions or journal articles which allows you to find influential cases (usually older or international) which are not yet online or publicly available.

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Google Scholar's case law database also provides a *Shepard's*® like function by providing links to all cases citing the subject case.

2. Public Library of Law - www.plol.org

Opinions of the U.S. Supreme Court and Courts of Appeals, cases from state courts from 1997.

3. National Center for State Courts, State Court Web Sites - www.ncsc.org/Information-and-Resources/Browse-by-State/State-Court-Websites.aspx

Provides judicial branch links for each state, focusing on the administrative office of the courts, the court of last resort, any intermediate appellate courts, and each trial court level.

LEGISLATIVE - GEORGIA

1. Current Code - www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/gacode

Arranged by title. Expand individual titles to browse or select specific titles to search. Please note that the search box is set to "Table of Contents (TOC) only" and "Terms and Connectors". Use "Advanced" for more options and precise searching.

You may have to enable cookies, Java script, and/or pop-ups depending on your browser.

2. Historic Digests and Codes

- **archive.org/details/ugalaw**
- **digitalcommons.law.uga.edu/ga_code**

The Alexander Campbell King Law Library had these historic materials digitized and made available on the Internet Archive and Digital Commons, our digital repository. The collection begins with the 1799 digest through the Code of 1933 which remained in effect until 1981.

3. Legislation - www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/Search.aspx

Actually provided by the Georgia General Assembly, rather than a commercial service. Includes legislation, enacted or not, from the 1995-1996 to the current session.

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4. Historic Legislative Documents

Provided by the Digital Library of Georgia

- **Georgia Legislative Documents** -- www.galileo.usg.edu/express?link=zlg1
Includes a nearly comprehensive collection of digitized Acts and Resolutions from 1799-1999. Searchable by keyword, publication date, and type of act or resolution. Citations from session laws in Georgia Laws can be retrieved by session year and page number.
- **Georgia Government Publications** -- dlg.galileo.usg.edu/ggp/?Welcome
PDF versions of Acts and Resolutions beginning from 2000. There is also a digital repository of publications released by state agencies.

5. Bill Tracking

- **Georgia General Assembly** – www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/default.aspx
Explains the legislative process which can be useful in deciding which documents to seek.
- **Georgia Legislative Navigator** – legislativenavigator.myajc.com
The staff of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* highlight legislation that is likely to have significant impact on the public. The Members section shows bill sponsorship, recent votes, committee assignments, and top campaign donors. The navigator is updated daily during the legislative session. Look for the Predict-a-bill tool.

6. Legislative History

- **Georgia General Assembly** - www.legis.ga.gov/Legislation/en-US/default.aspx
View amendments to a bill as it moves through the legislative process. Be sure to review the session laws, the bill's preamble may include a statement of purpose. Comparing versions of the statute if it has been amended may be useful.

The Georgia General Assembly does not publish transcripts of its floor debates or committee reports. The Georgia Archives, www.georgiaarchives.org, includes some committee reports.

Go to Research > Research Help > Legislative Intent.

- **Georgia House and Senate Journals** – dlg.galileo.usg.edu/ggp
Find links to the journals in the lower right column. The journals do not include transcripts or the text of bills, but they do provide the text of amendments to bills.

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Additionally the journals provide votes, committee actions, amendments, and sponsors.

- **Georgia State University Law Review's Peach Sheet** - readingroom.law.gsu.edu

The law review covers selected Georgia legislation in peach-colored pages in each fall issue. The "Peach Sheets" include analysis of the bills, relevant floor debate, personal interviews, and newspaper articles. Search by bill number, "HB 154" or a phrase, "peach sheet"

- **Lawmakers** – www.gpb.org/lawmakers

Georgia Public Broadcasting's GPTV provides detailed analysis of each day's legislative sessions on the program "Lawmakers." Archived versions of the show are available from 2009.

LEGISLATIVE – OTHER STATES

1. Open States – openstates.org

Researchers can follow bills, track lawmakers, and stay up to date on legislative activity in all 50 states. Free but requires registration.

2. LLSDC's Legislative Source Book - <http://www.llsdc.org/sourcebook>

Maintained by the Law Librarians' Society of Washington, D.C. with research guides and resource lists for state legislatures, laws, and regulations.