

GUIDE SERIES 4 - SELECTED RESEARCH TOPICS



Guide #4E – FINDING GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Many publications from government agencies are distributed freely to designated Federal Depository Libraries. GGU Law Library is a selective depository, and we collect approximately 10% of the government documents available. Most new government documents are available only on web sites. Finding them can be challenging.

FINDING FEDERAL DOCUMENTS

The traditional tool for finding federal documents is the *Monthly Catalog* [paper, 1948-Jan 1993, Lower Level B-2; fiche, Feb. 1993-Jul. 1995, Lower Level B-2] which identifies most U.S. Government publications, especially older documents. The catalog is arranged by agency and contains entries for each publication with information similar to that found in a card catalog. There is an index at the end of each monthly issue, as well as annual and cumulative indexes. Through the indexes you can search by author, title, subject, key word, and several other access points. The *Monthly Catalog* is also available on Westlaw (database GPO-CTLG). The current *Catalog* is available from the GPO only on the Internet at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/>. Ask a Reference Librarian for assistance.

To find a document at Golden Gate University Law Library use the author, title, or Government Documents# from the *Monthly Catalog* entry, and look in the online catalog to determine if this library has the publication and where it is located. Documents with a call number are found in the stacks. Documents without a call number are shelved by the Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) number; these documents are on the Lower Level in Room B-2. Microfiche and CD-ROMs are also in LLB2.

Certain types of government publications are copied or reprinted by private publishers, and are not part of the depository system. For example, many legislative committee reports are available here on microfiche through the CIS service. A separate CIS index located in LLB2 must be consulted to use these materials.

Another useful tool is *The Guide to U.S. Government Publications* published by Gale Group (call# Z1223 .Z7 A575 in Reference). This is useful for ascertaining if an agency publishes a particular item.

Our Government Documents web page at www.ggu.edu/lawlibrary/specialcollections/govdocs provides links to many government websites as well as shortcuts to searches in our OPAC for documents on particular topics.

CALIFORNIA STATE DOCUMENTS

California State Publications (on the Plaza level) is a monthly list of state documents received by the Government Publications Section of the California State Library. Each issue has an index and there is a cumulative index on microfiche in the same room. The index will give you the California State Library call number which is not the same as the call

number we use at the Law Library. Use the state call number to find the complete entry for the document and note the author or agency, and title. This index is no longer available in print, but is online at www.lib.state.ca.us/Web2/tramp2.exe/log_in?guest&SETTING_KEY=English&screen=csp_index.html .

California documents that are in the Law Library can be found using our online catalog. Look up the title or author to determine if we have the document. Most California documents are shelved by call number.

OTHER STATES DOCUMENTS

To identify documents from other states, try searching on the Internet. Links to state government homepages can be found at: www.statelocalgov.net/index.cfm. Also, searching on google.com for "state documents" will provide many state-specific hits.

Always ask a Reference Librarian for assistance if you need help in finding government documents.

OTHER LOCAL LIBRARIES

FEDERAL & STATE DEPOSITORIES

- San Francisco Public Library 557-4500
- San Francisco State University 338-1557
- U.C. Hastings College of the Law 565-4750
- University of San Francisco Gleeson Library 422-2233

FEDERAL DEPOSITORY ONLY

- U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit 556-9590

STATE DEPOSITORY ONLY

- University of San Francisco Law Library 422-6773

For Further Information Consult a Librarian

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