

(Mostly Free) Legal Resources for Public Librarians



Community Legal
Information Center



Pamela Cartier,
Librarian & Coordinator



Sources of the Law

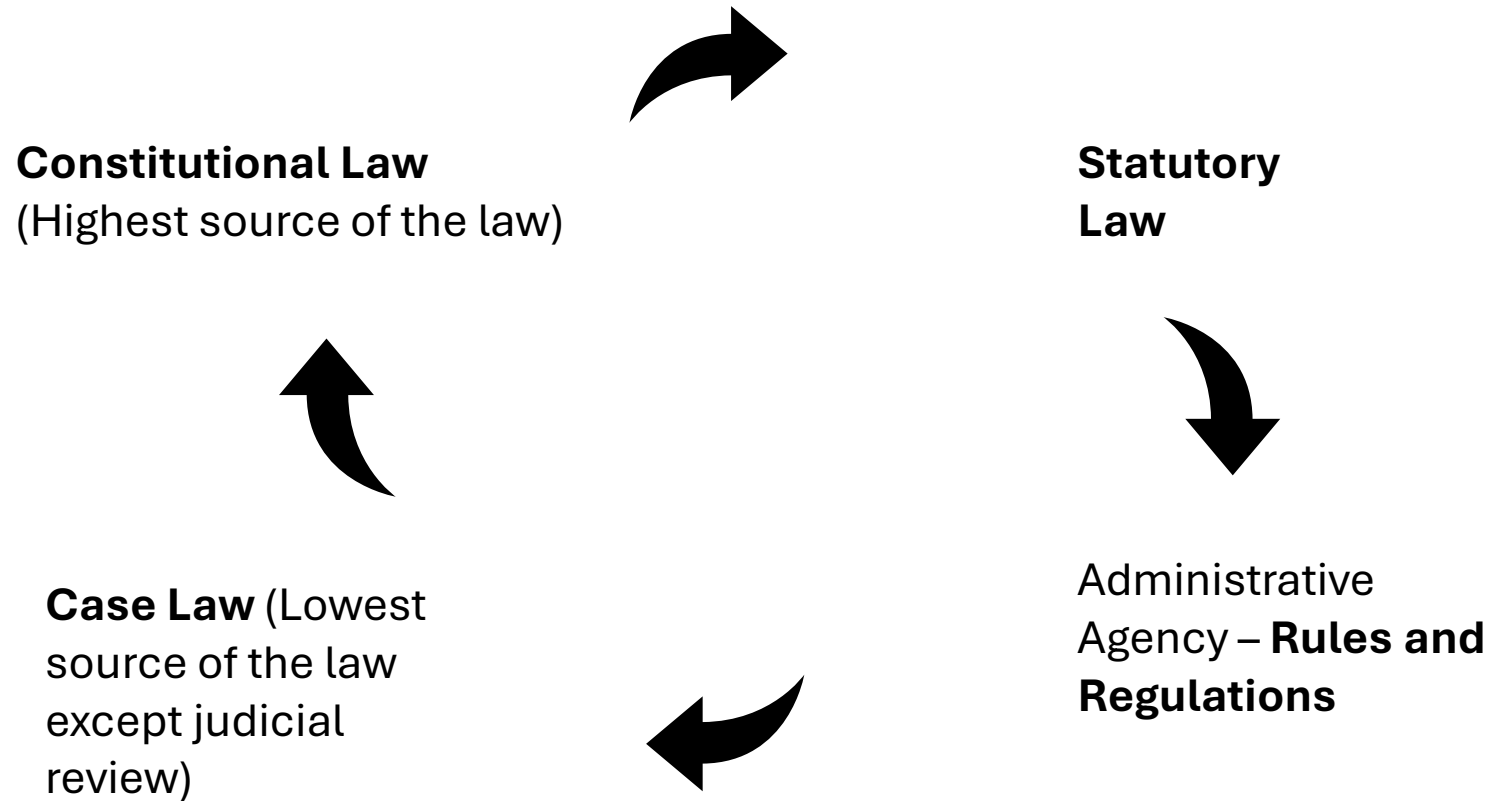
Constitutions (federal & state) – establish our fundamental rights in respect of government and the form of government. VT Const. chp. 1, art. 1.

Statutes - (federal and state) - laws enacted by Congress or the General Assembly – broadest rules to fit many situations. 15 VSA §1103 (relief from abuse)

Regulations/Rules - laws created by agencies (EPA, Dept of Taxes, Dept. of Families) - more specific or detailed rules to help you determine whether you fit within the rule of the statute. CVR 04-000-003 (safe at home address confidentiality).

Case law/common law – the decision of a court as it resolves a controversy between two people/entities (civil law) or a person and a governmental entity (criminal law). *Morton v. Young*, 2023 VT 29 (2023) defines stalking as a course of conduct.

Hierarchy of Laws



What are Vermont Laws and Where Can I Find Them?

<p>Vermont Constitution</p>	<p>Provides for your most basic rights and the form of Vermont's government. Broadest rules - Apply generally to all VT citizens.</p>	<p>chp. 1, art. 1: All persons are born equally free and independent, and they have certain natural rights such as enjoying life, liberty, acquiring property, and obtaining happiness, and safety.</p>	<p>https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/</p>
<p>General Assembly (Statutes)</p>	<p>Enacts/creates statutes. Examples-criminal law, landlord/tenant, wills, probate, guardianships, and divorce Broad rules to cover a range of situations.</p>	<p>15 VSA 1103 allows someone who had been physically or sexually abused, or stalked to seek a protective order against their abuser/stalker. What is stalking? 12 VSA 5131(6) - a course of conduct by a person who knows or should know that their conduct would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or cause them substantial distress.</p>	<p>https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/ While on this page in the left-hand column headed, "Statutes", you can select "Vermont Statutes at LexisNexis for easier searching.</p>
<p>Administrative Agency (Rules)</p>	<p>Create rules that flesh out statutes to explain more specifically how they are applied. (Dept. of Taxes, Agency of Human Services) Rules help to explain how or if a given situation fits within the requirements of the statute.</p>	<p>CVR (Code of Vermont Rules) 04-000-003 (Agency-Secretary of State) Safe at Home Address Confidentiality Program for victims of domestic abuse, violence, stalking etc. How to apply for confidentiality and requirements to qualify.</p>	<p>https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/ Similarly in lefthand column scroll down to "Rules" and select "state agency rules at Lexis" for easier searching.</p>
<p>Judiciary (Opinions/Orders)</p>	<p>Interprets statutes and rules and applies them to individual fact situations. Decisions can become new law. Most specific - applies to individual situations & facts.</p>	<p>Does a former best-friend (BF) of alleged victim (AV) engage in a course of conduct of stalking by posting a half-naked picture of AV on TikTok, and a video threatening to hurt her, followed by two more videos suggesting that BF still had the photo and might send it others? Held: A threat is an expression of intent to cause physical harm, and here there was only one such threat, which is not a course of conduct. Morton v. Young 2023 VT 29.</p>	<p>Google Scholar: https://scholar.goggle.com/ Court Listener: https://www.courtlistener.com/</p>

Free Federal (National) Legal Resources

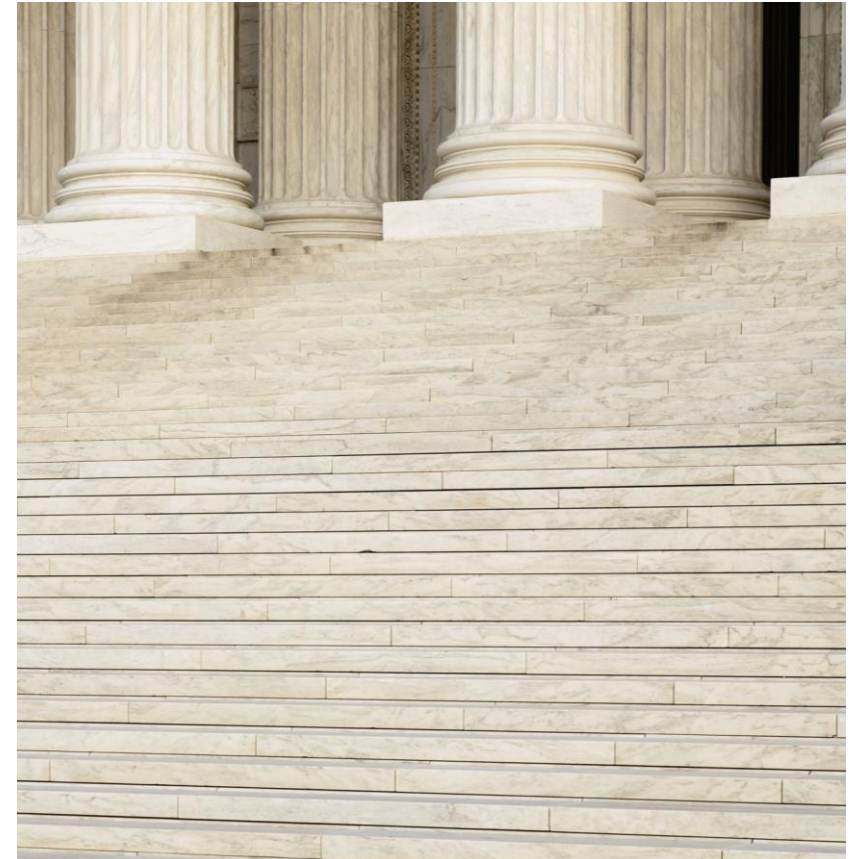
- All federal laws - [Govinfo.gov](https://www.govinfo.gov) (USC, Federal Register, Federal court cases).
 - <https://uscode.house.gov/browse.xhtml> (statutes)
 - <https://www.ecfr.gov/> (regulations)
 - 26 USC §61, 26 CFR §1.61-2
 - Case law searches
 - Google scholar - <https://scholar.google.com/> (cases & articles)
 - Courtlistener - <https://www.courtlistener.com/>
 - All purpose – Legal Information Institute at Cornell Law School - <https://www.law.cornell.edu/>
 - Findlaw - <https://www.findlaw.com/>

Vermont Free Legal Resources

- Vermont statutes & Agency rules - <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/>
- Vermont Court cases – Resources on previous page

Other general resources:

- Vermont Judiciary Self-help - <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/self-help>
- Vermont Law Help - <https://vtlawhelp.org/>
- Access & Resource Center - <https://www.vermontjudiciary.org/self-help/ARC>
- Gale Legal Forms Library - <https://subscriptions.uslegalforms.com/gale/catalog/category/view/id/26707/>



Lawyer referral resources

Low Income:

- **Legal Aid has five (5) locations throughout the state of Vermont. The Statewide Help Line is 1 (800) 889-2047.** Vermont Legal Aid currently represents clients in the following legal project areas: Poverty Law, Disability Law, Elder Law, Health Care Advocacy, Housing Discrimination, Long-term Care, and Mental Health.
- **Legal Services Vermont** - Legal Services Vermont provides free advice or consultation for qualified low-income Vermont residents. They can be reached by calling **1 (800) 889-2047** or by filling-out the [Legal Help Request Form](#).
- [ABA Free Legal Answers Vermont](#) - is a free service provided by the American Bar Association that allows qualified individuals to ask volunteer attorneys a specific civil legal question.

General Lawyer Referral - *Vermont Bar Association Lawyer Referral* - call **1 (800) 639-7036** or fill-out the [online request form](#).

- <https://libguides.vermontlaw.edu/civilmatters>

CLIC Specific Resources

- Legal Databases for onsite use – Lexis, Westlaw, Fastcase
 - Westlaw pilot – 8 public libraries
- Hard copies of Vermont Statutes, Cases, and Rules (regulations)
- Access to legal dictionaries, encyclopedia, treatises and law reviews
- HeinOnline - Large law review collection, all session laws and historic statutes prior to 1948
- Pacer – federal docket system – case filings
- Research guides
 - [Vermont Legal Resources for Civil Matters](#)
 - [Community Legal Information Center – Legal Self-help books \(CLOVER\)](#)



Service Hours & Contact Information

**Dedicated law librarian – Mon. through Friday –
10:30am to 4:00pm**

**Cornell library is open to the public from 8:30am
to 4pm – Monday through Friday.**

Email: clic@vermontlaw.edu

24-hour turnaround on weekdays.

Ask a Law Librarian: [802-831-1313](tel:802-831-1313)

24-48 hour turnaround on weekdays.



Questions