

Washington County (Oregon) Law Library

LEGAL RESEARCH GUIDE

DISCLAIMER: *It is against state law for library staff members to engage in any conduct that might constitute the unauthorized practice of law (ORS 9.160, 9.166, and 9.21). They may not interpret statutes, cases, or regulations, perform legal research, recommend or assist in the preparation of forms, or advise patrons regarding their legal rights. They may, however, assist patrons in locating materials or links that would aid in individual research.*

TOPIC: FORMS (includes information about where and how to find legal forms)

**** Legal forms are everywhere; the right legal form is much harder to find.
You may even have to draft it yourself. ****

1) BOOKS/PAMPHLETS/BROCHURES (TIP: Remember, not everything is online!)

- Ask at your county courthouse or law library to find out if they have forms packets.
- Many legal research resources are not online. For instance, Oregon legal practice manuals specific to particular areas of law contain sample forms, but not fill-in-the-blank forms. Check at your [county](#) or [state](#) law library for practice books with forms.
- Ask your public library and local bookstores if they have legal self-help books.
- **NOTE:** Legal self-help publishers offer generic legal forms that may or may not be valid or useful in Oregon or to your situation. **Always check with the court or an Oregon attorney before filing the form or relying on it in a legal transaction.**
- Oregon public library links [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

2) ONLINE INFORMATION

- [Oregon Revised Statutes \(ORS\)](#): search for key words under your specific area of law. For example, if you are looking for small claims forms look under "small claims."
- [Oregon Judicial Department \(OJD\)](#) has court forms for some matters and FAQs about other resources. Some forms are accepted only at the option of a particular county; others are provided for by the county's [Supplementary Local Rules](#). Check [County Circuit Courts](#) for information and forms available at your county courts.
- Search for forms under the state agency that has oversight of your legal issue, e.g.: [Oregon Secretary of State Corporation Division](#) for business forms; [Oregon Department of Justice \(DOJ\)](#) for garnishment and other forms.
- OJD's [Self-Help Resources](#) provides links to forms and helpful information for specific areas of law.
- Some forms approved for use in Oregon courts are in the [OJD Uniform Trial Court Rules](#); OJD also has sample appellate forms.
- [Oregon Division of Child Support Enforcement \(DCS\)](#) has Oregon Child Support program forms.
- For name changes, ask for forms at your county's Circuit Court. For other vital records, check first with your county government. Also look for forms and information at the [Department of Human Services Center for Health Statistics](#).
- [Oregon State Bar \(OSB\) Public Info](#): 503-684-3763
- At the [Oregon Legal Research blog](#), search the keyword "form" and particularly the [July 3, 2008, Forms Pyramid post](#) on how to evaluate legal forms and their sources.

3) OTHER RESOURCES

- [Legal Aid Services of Oregon](#) and [Oregon Law Help](#)
- [Oregon Law Center](#) (503-640-4115) – Hillsboro Regional Office
- Locate your local county law library: [Oregon Council of County Law Libraries directory \(OCCLL\)](#)
- A directory of [Portland Metro Area Legal Services](#)
- [How to Find a Lawyer in Oregon](#)
- Ask an Oregon law librarian a question via email: [Oregon State Library/L-net](#)
- [Oregon Legal Research website](#)
- Other [Washington County Law Library legal research guides](#)

Keywords: form, legal form, UTCR, uniform trial court rules, SLR, supplementary local rules, small claims, name changes, civil, criminal, power of attorney, answer, motion, business forms