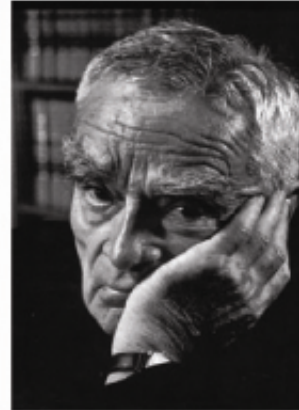


The Leo T. Kissam Memorial Library

LEARNED HANDY

When legal research gets you down,
Our handy guides are here to help.



Researching Uniform Laws

What are Uniform Laws?

A uniform law is an attempt to create a unified legal regime across the many jurisdictions inherent in federalism. When laws on the same subject are widely different in different jurisdictions, or are considered out-of-date, a new uniform law may be proposed.

Uniform laws, which cover a wide variety of subjects, are drafted and approved by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL) to promote uniformity among the states in all matters where it is desirable and practical. State legislatures are encouraged to adopt a proposed law in its entirety, but they often modify it to reflect local needs and existing laws. The best-known example is the Uniform Commercial Code, enacted at least in part in every state.

When complete uniformity is considered less pressing, NCCUSL drafts model acts, which this guide does not cover. The American Law Institute also drafts model acts.

Who Prepares Uniform Laws?

NCCUSL is a nonpartisan body composed of appointed representatives (all members of the Bar) from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Since its organization in 1892, the Conference has drafted over 250 uniform laws, many of which have been widely enacted. The Conference meets annually to consider proposed legislation, but all uniform laws undergo a minimum two-year drafting process, and many take much longer.

Where Can You Find Uniform Laws?

1. **NCCUSL Final Acts** (Official Site): Contains the text of all final acts and makes them available in various formats. Also included are the official comments which explain the purpose and intent of each section.

Online: http://www.law.upenn.edu/bll/archives/ulc/ulc_final.htm#final

2. **NCCUSL Approved Laws:** This site contains only approved laws currently recommended for enactment by the states. In addition to the full text and prior drafts (you are linked to the site above), you can see legislative information, including a list of states which have adopted the act.

Online: <http://www.nccusl.org/Update/>

3. **WESTLAW:** The [ULA](#) database includes a complete set of uniform laws as set forth in the *Uniform Laws Annotated*, with notes of decisions. Use the Table of Contents to find the law you need, or search the text.
4. **LEXIS:** Lexis includes many uniform laws, but has no database devoted to them. From the Research screen, select “by Source” then click on the “Find a Source” tab. Enter the name of the uniform law you need in the box.

Print

1. **Uniform Laws Annotated:** This multi-volume set contains the text of all uniform laws adopted by NCCUSL, with the official comments. Immediately before the text of a particular act is set out, there is a table of jurisdictions which have adopted it, giving the statutory citation and the effective date of adoption. Following the text of the act are references to court decisions from all adopting states (similar in format to annotations in *U.S.C.A.*) and to law review articles. A separate pamphlet published annually contains an alphabetical directory of uniform laws and where they may be found in the set. This is followed by a state by state listing of adopted acts.

Print: [Open Res. KF 165.A5 1968-](#)
[KF165.A5 1922](#) (1922-1967)

2. **Martindale-Hubbell, United States Law Digest, Part III:** The text of selected uniform laws, without annotations, may be found here. The laws included are those thought to be of greatest general usefulness to lawyers.

Print: [K526.5 .M3](#) (Index Area, Stack 3)

Note: A uniform law adopted by a particular state will be found in that state’s statutory code. For example, the Uniform Transfers to Minors Act, as enacted in New York, may be found in *N.Y. Est. Powers & Trusts Law* §§ 7-6.1 to .26. Use the Popular Name Table or the index, if available, or search the statutes database for the name of the law.

Where Can You Find Further Information?

General

1. **NCCUSL:** This site allows you to search by state for current legislative tracking information. The legislative It also provides useful links to sites maintained by some of the NCCUSL committees (e.g. the Uniform Trust Code Project).

Online: <http://www.nccusl.org/Update/>

Legislative History

1. **University of Pennsylvania Law School:** maintains the official web site for NCCUSL's drafts of uniform acts.

Online: <http://www.law.upenn.edu/bll/archives/ulc/>

2. **Proceedings of Uniform State Laws (Archive Publications):** An invaluable aid for doing "legislative history" of uniform laws, this microfiche set contains all available transcripts of the proceedings of each annual meeting, as well as transcripts of the discussions in the Committee of the Whole of each uniform law. Also included are the successive drafts of each uniform act. A hard copy index arranged by name of the acts is available.

Microfilm: Microforms Room, Cabinet 22 (Library has 1891-present)

Uniform Commercial Code

1. **The Karl Llewellyn Papers, Section F, Uniform State Laws 1990; The Karl Llewellyn Papers, Section J, Uniform Commercial Code 1987:** Professor Llewellyn was the Chief Reporter for the Uniform Commercial Code project.

Microfilm: [Microforms Room, Cabinet 27](#)

2. **Uniform Commercial Code: Drafts:** This twenty-three volume set reprints the non-confidential drafts of the Uniform Commercial Code through 1962.

Print: [KF 879.518.A15 1984](#)

3. **Uniform Commercial Code: Confidential Drafts:** Together with the set above, this multi-volume set represents the most complete collection of UCC drafts. It includes a looseleaf volume containing a drafting chronology and bibliographies.

Print: [KF 879.527 A15 1995](#)