

Washtenaw Community College

Finding Government Information on the Web

Since the majority of government publications do not follow the Copyright Laws, this is one area where you will find the same information in print and on the web. This is also an area where you do not have to evaluate the information you find; government information is part of the “good” web.

Where to begin to find information? There are **thousands** of government web sites on the web. Government information is sometimes referred to as part of the “invisible web.” The invisible web is considered to be the web sites that are not indexed by search engines. They are invisible to search engines not to everyone. The best way to find government information might be to search specific sites that index government web sites, although search engines are improving and indexed more government web sites and their publications. **Here are a few sites:**

Government InfoMine <http://infomine.ucr.edu/search/govpubsearch.phtml>

SearchGov.com <http://www.searchgov.com/>

Federal Web Locator <http://www.infoctr.edu/fwl/>

The Invisible Web <http://www.invisible-web.net/>

GovSpot – Federal, State, and Local Government Resources
<http://www.govspot.com>

GPO Access Finding Aids http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/tools.html

To find information on Michigan government information, you may want to search:

Michigan Legislature <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/>

Michigan State Government <http://www.michigan.gov>

Michigan Courts <http://courts.michigan.gov/>

Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)
<http://www.semco.org/>

Washtenaw County* <http://www.ewashtenaw.org/>

(*For other Michigan counties, find their web sites)

You can also search for government information by searching the specific U.S. department or agency. Here are a very few examples:

For Health Statistics try
National Health Center for Health Statistics <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

For All Statistics try
University of Michigan Document Center <http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html>

For Medical information try
Healthfinder <http://www.healthfinder.gov>

For information on businesses try
SBA: Small Business Administration <http://www.sba.gov>

For information on U.S. education try
U.S. Department of Education <http://www.ed.gov>

You can also search for government information by subject.

For example, to find legal information, try these sites:

Internet Legal Research Compass <http://vls.law.vill.edu/compass/>
Site is sponsored by Villanova University School of Law
This site provides links to federal and state cases, statutes, and court rules.

NCJRS National Criminal Justice Reference Center <http://www.ncjrs.org/>
Site is sponsored by Department of Justice
This site provides publications on criminal justice and law enforcement topics.

Thomas: Legislative Information on the Internet <http://thomas.loc.gov>
Site is sponsored by U.S. Congress
This site provides Bill text, Public Laws, Congressional Record, Committee information and much more.

FedLaw <http://www.thecre.com/fedlaw/default.htm>
Site is sponsored by General Services Administration
This site provides links for federal legal research, such as U.S. Code, Federal Courts, GAO Decisions, and Legislation.

For company information try these sites:

Department of Commerce <http://www.doc.gov>
Site sponsored by Department of Commerce
This site provides information on business, commerce, as well as statistics and weather information.

Department of Labor <http://www.dol.gov>
Site sponsored by Department of Labor
This site provides information on laws and regulations, statistics and data, programs and services, agency information and much more.

Economics and Statistics Administration <http://www.esa.doc.gov/>
Site sponsored by Economics and Statistics Administration (ESA)
This site is about the economic and statistics administration. They collect statistical, economics and demographic information made available to the public.

EDGAR Database <http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml>
Site sponsored by Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
The Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis, and Retrieval (EDGAR) database performs automated collection, validation, indexing, acceptance, and forwarding of submissions by companies and others who are required by law to file forms with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

EDGAR Online <http://www.edgar-online.com>
Site sponsored by Edgar Online Inc, and Securities and Exchange Commission
This site provides access to the SEC reports as described above. This is a fee based site. You can access the database for a free two-week trial.

As indicated in the first paragraph of this document, there are thousands of government web sites. If you need any additional help in finding government information on the web, please contact a reference librarian at (734) 973-3431.

Document developed by Sandy McCarthy, Librarian April 21, 2006