

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN U. S. FEDERAL
LAWS AND REGULATIONS

LAWS	REGULATIONS
<p>1. Congress passes a law.</p> <p>2. Each step of the way there are corresponding publications:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">BILLS HEARINGS PRINTS DOCUMENTS REPORTS.</p> <p>3. When a BILL finally passes, it becomes</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a PUBLIC LAW,</p> <p>which is eventually published in three forms in the following sequential order:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">SLIP LAW U. S. STATUTES AT LARGE U.S. CODE (U.S.C.)</p> <p>The law creates a mandate for agencies to promulgate REGULATIONS.</p>	<p>Agency publishes regulation to carry out its mandate</p> <p>Regulation appear as agency documents which are published in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FEDERAL REGISTER</p> <p>[The <i>Federal Register</i> is our federal newspaper. It puts all citizens on notice with regard to Rules and Regulations and other federal information. In our system, ignorance of Rules and Regulations is no excuse.]</p> <p>Final regulations are codified annually in the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (C.F.R.)</p> <p>If these regulations are updated or changed, notice is given in the <i>Federal Register</i>.</p> <p>To see if the <i>C.F.R.</i> has been updated, check the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LIST OF SECTIONS AFFECTED in the most recent months of the Federal Register (back pages).</p>
<p><i>If the law is amended, it will be amended by the creation of another PUBLIC LAW.</i></p> <p>The easy way to check for amendments is to use the</p> <p>UNITED STATES CODE ANNOTATED (U.S.C.A.). Available at ILR Ref K A35 and in Lexis, ILR Subscription.</p> <p>Check the main volumes and the pocket parts.</p>	
<p>Find print volumes of some materials by searching the Cornell Library Catalog. Find additional annotated sources and legal analysis by searching electronic library subscription resources, such as Lexis, WestLaw, Congressional Universe, CQ Electronic Library, etc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Need more help? Ask a Reference Librarian!</p>	