

# USING THE TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR STATUTES ON WESTLAW

Prepared by Diane Murley, SIU Law Library — Summer 2005

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Statutory codes, such as the USC and the ILCS, are arranged hierarchically by topic. When we say that information is arranged hierarchically, we mean that it is organized from the most general topic to the most specific, with related topics grouped closely together and subtopics appearing directly after the topics to which they relate. The visual representation of a hierarchical arrangement is a detailed outline.

Usually researchers retrieve a statutory section by using a known citation, going through the index, or searching the full text of the statutory code. Even if these methods seem to retrieve exactly what you want, however, you should not stop there. Because statutory sections are part of a larger collection of laws; they rarely stand alone. There may be definitions in another section that control how your section will be interpreted. There may be a section about enforcement of your section. Or you may find yet another section that is more specifically applicable to your research project.

Because of the hierarchical arrangement of statutory codes, you can see where your section fits into the statutory scheme and find related sections by reviewing the table of contents. The table of contents method works on LexisNexis and Westlaw, in print, and with most statutory codes on the web. This research guide is about using the Table of Contents on Westlaw.

Westlaw has a link from each statutory section to the Table of Contents of the statutory code in which the section appears. Once you retrieve a section by using Find or searching the code, click on the Table of Contents link in the left frame. This will change the display in the right frame to an outline that has been expanded to show the sections around your section. Scan the outline above and below your section for related sections.

- [-] CHAPTER 126-EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
  - [42 USCA Ch. 126, Refs & Annos](#)
  - [§ 12101. Findings and purpose](#)
  - [§ 12102. Definitions](#)
  - [+] SUBCHAPTER I-EMPLOYMENT
  - [+] SUBCHAPTER II-PUBLIC SERVICES
  - [-] SUBCHAPTER III-PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS AND SERVICES OPERATED BY PRIVATE ENTITIES
    - [42 USCA Ch. 126, Subch. III, Refs & Annos](#)
    - [§ 12181. Definitions](#)
    - [§ 12182. Prohibition of discrimination by public accommodations](#)
    - [§ 12183. New construction and alterations in public accommodations and commercial facilities](#)
    - [§ 12184. Prohibition of discrimination in specified public transportation services provided by](#)
    - [§ 12185. Study](#)
    - [§ 12186. Regulations](#)
    - [§ 12187. Exemptions for private clubs and religious organizations](#)
    - [§ 12188. Enforcement](#)
    - [§ 12189. Examinations and courses](#)
  - [+] SUBCHAPTER IV-MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

For example, after we found 42 U.S.C. § 12182, Prohibition of discrimination by public accommodations, which is part of the Americans with Disabilities Act, on Westlaw, we clicked on the Table of Contents link in the left frame. That changed the display to an expanded outline showing all of the sections in Subchapter III, Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities, as shown above.

To make sure our research is complete, we would need to read § 12181, Definitions, § 12186, Regulations, and § 12188 Enforcement. Scrolling up a little further in the outline display, we also find § 12101, Findings and Purpose, and § 12102, Definitions, which apply to all the subchapters in Chapter 126, Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities.

Westlaw also provides links from each statutory provision to specific points in the statutory hierarchy. On Westlaw, you will see a mini-outline of the hierarchy in which your section appears at the top of the screen. For example, at the top of 42 U.S.C. § 12182, the following outline appears:

Statute

42 U.S.C.A. § 12182  
§ 12182. Prohibition of discrimination by public accommodations  
Effective: [See Text Amendments]  
Approx. 38 pages

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**FOR EDUCATIONAL USE ONLY**  
42 U.S.C.A. § 12182

United States Code Annotated [Currentness](#)  
Title 42. The Public Health and Welfare  
    \* [Chapter 126](#). Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities ([Refs & Annos](#))  
        \* [Subchapter III](#). Public Accommodations and Services Operated by Private Entities ([Refs & Annos](#))  
            \* **§ 12182. Prohibition of discrimination by public accommodations**

(a) General rule

No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation.

If you click on the link for Chapter 126 or Subchapter III, a small window will pop up showing the text of all of the sections within Chapter 126 or Subchapter III, respectively, without notes or annotations. (Make sure that your browser's pop-up blocker settings allow pop-ups from web2.westlaw.com.) Click the Maximize button at the bottom of the pop-up window to display the text of all of the sections in the right frame.

### ***PRINT TIPS***

If you click on the Print Doc button at the bottom of the right frame while it is displaying the full chapter or subchapter as described above, you can print the text of all of the sections displayed, without notes or annotations, in one continuous document.

If you want to print an individual statute without the notes, case annotations, and other references, you must limit the display before you go into Print Doc. In the lower right corner, click on Tools and select Limit Display by Fields. To display/print just the text of a statute, click in the box to the left of Substantive-Doc and then click on the OK button at the bottom of the screen.