

Georgia

2007 Report by Terrye Conroy, Coleman Karesh Law Library, University of South Carolina School of Law; 2009-10 Update by Anne Burnett, Alexander Campbell King Law Library, University of Georgia School of Law

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| <p>OFFICIAL STATUS</p> <p>✓</p> <p>Changes since the 2007 report</p> | <p>AUTHENTICATION</p> <p>X</p> <p>No change since the 2007 report</p> |
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Georgia online legal resources are not *official* except for the last two years of Georgia Supreme Court opinions as posted on their website.

Georgia continues to designate only print documents as the official version of codes and regulations. The websites posting electronic versions of these materials still contain disclaimers that the information provided online is not official. However, the Georgia Supreme Court has posted official versions of its opinions for the current year and the previous year.

Georgia is not addressing the authentication of online legal resources.

No relevant official contacted was aware of a current plan or project underway to authenticate Georgia's online legal resources.

Has the state eliminated the print publication of any of these titles in favor of online only since the 2007 report? Georgia eliminated the print version of the *Georgia Register* in 2006. It has not eliminated any other print publication of primary law to date.

Has the state enacted legislation guaranteeing the public's permanent access to state online government information since the 2007 report? Georgia does attempt to guarantee permanent public access to online *executive* agency information via O.C.G.A. 20-5-2, which sets forth the submission requirements for all state agencies but explicitly exempts the courts and legislature from its document submission requirements. The depository administrators have interpreted the provision as requiring state agencies to submit documents produced in all formats, including electronic. See <http://www.libs.uga.edu/govdocs/collections/georgia/require.html> for the depository's stated requirements.

Have courts in your state adopted a medium neutral citation system since the 2007 report? The Georgia Supreme Court has not adopted a medium neutral citation system. Supreme Court Rule 22 still requires citation to the official print reporter.

Have there been any other significant changes to the 2007 state summary? A significant change in Georgia since the 2007 survey is the Georgia Supreme Court's provision of *official* but unauthenticated versions of its opinions on its website, which states that "[a]n opinion designated as "Final Copy" is the Supreme Court's official opinion as published in the advance sheets."

Maintained by Georgia's Secretary of State, the PDF version of the current Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia (at http://www.sos.state.ga.us/rules_regs.htm) may be searched by agency name, rule name, chapter number, or rule number. It is updated monthly. The site's disclaimer language clearly states that the electronic version "should not be regarded as the official copy" of the administrative sources and includes contact information for the publisher of the print *official* version. For questions regarding the website's content, the phone number for the Administrative Procedures Division is provided. The researcher is further advised to contact the appropriate adopting state agency regarding specific questions about a particular rule or regulation.

The *Georgia Register* is an online-only publication mandated by O.C.G.A. 50-25-6. In 2006, the legislature revised the provision to omit any reference to a *print* version and to explicitly state that it would be provided *electronically*. The code requires the *Georgia Register* to provide the text of all adopted rules, summaries of each proposed rule, agency meeting information, executive orders, summaries of state contracts and requests for proposal, Attorney General opinions, selected land acquisitions, information about bills introduced in the General Assembly and hearing calendars for the Georgia Supreme Court and Georgia Court of Appeals. The *Georgia Register* currently provides links to these items at http://www.georgia.gov/00/channel_title/0,2094,4802_64588783,00.html but does not contain the text of them in a separate document.

Georgia session laws are available online through the Georgia General Assembly's website at <http://www.legis.state.ga.us/>. The legislative home page links to pending bills as well as bills introduced and statutes enacted during previous legislative sessions (1995–current). Both are searchable by keyword or by bill number. Current legislation is presented in both HTML and PDF format and previous legislation is available in HTML only. Although the website is designated as the "official website of the Georgia General Assembly," disclaimer language included on the legislative home page notifies the user that the information provided is not an "official record" of the Georgia General Assembly and that "no warranty or guarantee of any kind is provided." The webmaster's e-mail is the only contact information provided. The General Assembly's website links to an online version of the *Georgia Code* as maintained by LexisNexis, the publisher of the *Official Code of Georgia Annotated*. The site makes no claims to provide an *official*

online version, nor are there any disclaimers as to the status of the online version.

Georgia Supreme Court opinions (prior year–current) are accessed by following the “Opinions and Summaries” link on its website (at <http://www.gasupreme.us>), where the opinions are browsable by date in PDF. Disclaimer language on each page of opinions states that all opinions are subject to reconsideration by the court and editorial changes by the Reporter of Decisions. The opinions are designated as *official* but are not certified as *authentic*. Georgia Supreme Court Rule 22 still requires citations in briefs to include the volume and page number in the official reporter. The Georgia Supreme Court website’s “Contact the Court” link provides contact information for the Clerk’s Offices.

The Georgia Court of Appeals website (at <http://www.gaappeals.us/>) links to its opinions at LexisOne (<http://www.lexisone.com>). The researcher must register to gain access to a “rolling wall” of the last ten years of all state and federal cases, searchable by keyword or citation. The site provides no statement regarding the status of these online opinions as official or otherwise. Court of Appeals Rule 24(d) requires all cases cited in briefs to include the volume and page number in the official report.

The Georgia Court Electronic Filing and Data Exchange Project provides information about e-filing and data exchange projects in Georgia courts. The information page at <https://apptracking.gaaoc.us/confluence/display/EF/Home> tracks current developments in e-filing and provides an FAQ for interested courts and attorneys.