

# South Carolina

[2007 Report](#) and 2009-10 Update by Terrye Conroy, Coleman Karesh Law Library  
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## OFFICIAL STATUS

**X**

No change since  
the 2007 report

## AUTHENTICATION

**X**

No change since  
the 2007 report

### **South Carolina online legal resources are not official.**

*Unlike South Carolina's print publications, the online versions of its legal resources have not been approved or adopted as official. Disclaimer information applicable to the legislative resources investigated here generally state that the information is provided without warranties regarding accuracy or completeness. Disclaimers for both the Code of Laws and Code of Regulations specifically state that the online unannotated versions are "not official." Current issues of the online version of the State Register, which are available by subscription only, retain the exact title of the print official version. Since it became fee-based in 2002, it is published as a PDF copy of the print official version. Absent specific attention to the issue, the online resource easily seems to be official. The online versions of South Carolina court opinions do not state whether they are official or unofficial, although the advance sheets of those opinions became solely available online, in PDF, in July 2009.*

### **South Carolina is not addressing the authentication of online legal resources.**

*From information gathered from representatives of the South Carolina General Assembly and the Judicial Department, as well as the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, it appears that the state is considering how such authentication would occur and who would be responsible. South Carolina, however, has no firm plans to implement authentication technologies.*

**Has the state eliminated the print publication of any of these titles in favor of online only since the 2007 report?** In July 2009, South Carolina Supreme Court discontinued the print publication of the *Shearouse Advance Sheets*, which included published

opinions and orders from the South Carolina Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. The webpage for the online PDF version of the Advance Sheets does not include a disclaimer nor are they designated as *official* or certified as *authentic*.

**Has the state enacted legislation guaranteeing the public's permanent access to state online government information since the 2007 report?** The state has not enacted permanent public access legislation.

**Have courts in your state adopted a medium neutral citation system since the 2007 report?** The state has not adopted a medium neutral citation system.

**Have there been any other significant changes to the 2007 state summary?** South Carolina has not made any changes to the *official* status of any online versions of its legal resources nor has it implemented technology to designate any online resources as *authentic*. It does, however, now specifically state on the Legislature's website that the online versions of the *Code of Laws* and *Code of Regulations* are "not official."

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South Carolina's "Official Web Site" (at <http://www.sc.gov>) provides links directly to its executive, judicial, and legislative branch websites. The portal's sidebar "Government" button also links to those websites, as well as resources from every governmental level.

The *South Carolina Code of Laws*, the state session laws, the *South Carolina Code of Regulations*, and the *South Carolina State Register* are represented on the legislature website (at <http://www.scstatehouse.gov>). Except for the current administrative register, which has been available since 2002 by paid subscription only, these legislative resources are not identified by the same titles as their print *official* counterparts. Moreover, the *South Carolina Code of Laws* is unannotated and the session laws (1980–current) are, for most years, the text of the enrolled bills as maintained in the legislature's bill tracking system.

The Legislature's "Website Policies" page gives a disclaimer that identifies the Office of Legislative Printing, Information and Technology Systems (LPITS) as the website producer and states that the "LPITS makes no warranties or representations regarding its accuracy or completeness" and "disclaims any liability for any damages in connection with its use." Disclaimer language on the search interface for both the *South Carolina Code of Laws* and the *South Carolina Code of Regulations* repeats this disclaimer as to accuracy and completeness and adds that "only the current published volumes" of the *Code of Laws*, *Code of Regulations*, respectively, and any pertinent acts and joint resolutions "contain the official version." None of these resources have been approved or adopted as *official* or certified as *authentic*.

The current versions of the *South Carolina Code of Laws* and the *South Carolina Code of Regulations* are both accessed directly from the home page of the website for the South Carolina legislature (at <http://www.scstatehouse.gov>). Pending bills and regulations as

well as current acts are accessed using the website's "Current Legislation" and "Research" tabs. The "Archives" tab provides access to full text versions of South Carolina Acts (1980–current). Acts are available in HTML and Word format, and pending regulations are in Word. The *South Carolina Code of Laws* and the *South Carolina Code of Regulations* are in HTML and Word format. None of the resources has a PDF version.

The current monthly *South Carolina State Register* is available by paid subscription only, in PDF format (at [http://www.scstatehouse.gov/cgi-bin/state\\_register.exe](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/cgi-bin/state_register.exe)). The "Archives" tab on the South Carolina legislature website provides access to monthly issues of the *State Register* over four years old in Word format (currently issues from January 22, 1999–June 24, 2005). They are browse-able, but not keyword searchable.

The South Carolina Judicial Department website (at <http://www.sccourts.org>) provides links to the published and unpublished opinions and orders of the South Carolina Supreme Court and the South Carolina Court of Appeals. Published opinions and orders of the South Carolina Supreme Court and the South Carolina Court of Appeals (1997–current) are available free in HTML format. They may be searched by keyword or browsed by month and year.

Also available via the Opinions/Orders link at the top of the South Carolina Judicial Department website are the "Shearouse Advance Sheets," so named for the Supreme Court's Clerk of Court. These consist of the published opinions and orders of the South Carolina Supreme Court and Court of Appeals (November 25, 2000–current) in PDF format; they are described as "identical to the paper version." In fact, South Carolina Supreme Court announced in January 2009 that due to reductions in the South Carolina Judicial Department budget, effective July 2009, the South Carolina Supreme Court will discontinue its printing contract and the Advance Sheets will no longer be available in a paper version. The webpage does not include a disclaimer; however the opinions are not designated as *official* or certified as *authentic*.