

National Survey of State Laws

Quick Reference Guide

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National Survey of State Laws | Quick Reference Guide

Getting Started in NSSL

Richard Leiter's [National Survey of State Laws](#) provides an overall view of some of the most frequently sought-after and controversial legal topics in the United States. This database is derived from the print edition's convenient chart format and enables users to make basic state-by-state comparisons of current state laws. The current 8th edition, along with the 7th, 6th and 5th editions, are included in database format. Browse the eight major legal categories, or browse laws by topic.

2019 (8th Ed.)

2019 (8th Ed.) | 2015 (7th Ed.) | 2008 (6th Ed.) | 2005 (5th Ed.) | [Browse Print Editions](#)

Browse Laws by Category

BUSINESS AND CONSUMER LAWS
CRIMINAL LAWS
EDUCATION LAWS
EMPLOYMENT LAWS
FAMILY LAWS
GENERAL CIVIL LAWS
REAL ESTATE LAWS
TAX LAWS

Browse Laws by Topic

ABORTION
ADOPTION
ADVERSE POSSESSION
ANIMAL WELFARE
ANNULMENT AND PROHIBITED MARRIAGE
ANTITRUST
ATTORNEYS
BULLYING *Recently Added*

Selecting a law from either the list of categories or the list of laws will produce an easy-to-use state by state comparison chart which includes the code section and other relevant information pertaining to the law of each state. This chart can be manipulated based on the user's research needs.

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There is great variety among states regarding adoption laws, perhaps due to the very personal (show more...)

Show only checked states

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State Name	Code Section	Uniform Act?	Who May Be Adopted	Age That Consent of Child Is Required	Who May Adopt	Adoptive Home Residency Prior to Decree?	State Agency/Court	Statute of Limitations to Challenge	Edition
<input type="checkbox"/> ALABAMA	26-10A-1 to 26-10A-38	No	Any minor; any adult under following conditions: permanently disabled; determined to have intelligence (show more...)	14 and older unless adoptee does not have mental capacity to give consent	Any adult person or husband and wife jointly; no rule or regulation of Department of Human Resources (show more...)	60 days, unless waived by court when good cause is shown	Dept. of Human Resources/Probate Ct.	1 yr., except for grounds that minor was kidnapped	2019 (8th Ed.) View Previous
<input type="checkbox"/> ALASKA	25.23.010 to 25.23.240	Yes	Any person	10 and older unless court dispenses with minor's consent in minor's best interest. (show more...)	Husband and wife together; unmarried adult, including father or mother of person to be adopted; m (show more...)	Yes, but no specified length of time required	Health & Social Services/Superior Ct.	1 yr.	2019 (8th Ed.) View Previous

1. Select one or more states to view the laws for only those states.
2. Print or download the chart as a PDF for a handy paper reference.
3. Use the toggle icon to show more or less text.
4. Click Related Subject Compilations of State Laws Subjects to view a list of corresponding topics in Cheryl Nyberg's Subject Compilations of State Laws.
5. Easily view whether or how a law has changed for each state by clicking View Previous under the Edition header.

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Searching in NSSL

The main search bar and the **Advanced Search** link located beneath the search bar will search the *National Survey of State Laws* database. Search using several available metadata fields, including keywords, topic, code section, state, and edition. Search results can be sorted by relevance, date, and title; results can be refined to specific categories, laws, states, and editions using the facets on the left side of the screen. Matching search terms will appear bold.

The screenshot shows the NSSL search interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Full Text', 'Citation', 'Catalog', and 'Case Law'. Below these is a search bar with the text 'Search National Survey of State Laws...'. Under the search bar, there are links for 'Advanced Search', 'NSSL Print Ed. Search', 'Search Help', and 'Search History'. Below these links, there is a section for 'State Laws' with a 'Quick Reference Guide' link. The main search area has three input fields: 'Keywords' (containing 'adoption'), 'Topic', and 'Code Section'. There are also 'AND' buttons and an 'Add field' button. Below these fields, there is a 'Select Titles' section with a 'Choose By Citation...' dropdown. At the bottom, there are 'Date: (YYYY)' and 'To: (YYYY)' fields, a 'Sort by: Relevance' dropdown, and a 'Search' button.

The screenshot shows the NSSL search results page. At the top, it says 'Databases > National Survey of State Laws > Quick Reference Guide'. Below this, there is a 'Refine Your Search' section with a 'Category' dropdown. The main results section shows '267 results searching for ((adoption)) in National Survey of State Laws'. There is a 'Sort by: Relevance' dropdown. Below this, there are buttons for 'Check All', 'Uncheck All', 'MyHein Bookmarks', and 'Save/Email'. The results list shows two items: 1. 'ADOPTION FEDERAL 25 U.S.C. §§1901, et seq.; Indian Child Welfare Act 2008 (6th Ed.)' and 2. 'ADOPTION ALABAMA 26-10A-1 to 26-10A-38; No 2008 (6th Ed.)'. A tooltip is visible over the second item, showing the full citation: '6th Edition (2008) FEDERAL FAMILY LAWS ADOPTION Code Section:25 U.S.C. §§1901, et seq.; Indian Child Welfare Act Age that Child:Placement preferences Adoptive Home Residency Prior to Decree:Indian Tribe exclusive jurisdiction/Tribal State Agency/Court:2 years (unless otherwise permitted under state law)'.

Clicking any search result will pull in the portion of the chart that pertains to the result. To quickly compare laws between states, select additional states from the **State Filter** box and click **Reapply State Filter**.

The screenshot shows the NSSL search results page for 'ADOPTION'. It features a 'State Filter' box with 'ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA' selected and a 'Reapply State Filter' button. Below this, there is a table comparing adoption laws between Arizona and California. The table has columns for 'State Name', 'Code Section', 'Uniform Act', 'Who May Be Adopted', 'Age that Child', and 'Who May Adopt'. The text 'There is great variety among states regarding adoption laws, perhaps due to the very personal (show more...)' is displayed above the table. A 'Toggle (show more...) text' button is also present.

State Name	Code Section	Uniform Act	Who May Be Adopted	Age that Child	Who May Adopt
ARIZONA	8-101 to 8-145; No 14-8101	Any child under 18 years of age or foreign born person under age 21 who is not illegal alien; any adult person who is a stepchild, niece, cousin, nephew, or grandchild of the adopting person; an adult who was placed in the care of the adopting parent as a foster child as a juvenile. §14-8101	12 years and older in open court	Any adult resident of the state is eligible to adopt; husband and wife may jointly adopt children. Adults may adopt adult relatives.	No
CALIFORNIA	Family §§8500-9340; No	Any unmarried minor child at least 10 years younger than prospective adoptive parent or parents; any married minor or adult	12 years and older	Any adult; must be 10 years older than child unless stepparent, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, or first cousin and court approves	No

To see whether or how a law has changed since the previous edition of *National Survey of State Laws*, click **View Previous**, which will expand the chart to include information from available previous editions.

The screenshot shows the NSSL search results page for 'ADOPTION'. It features a 'State Filter' box with 'ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA' selected and a 'Reapply State Filter' button. Below this, there is a table comparing adoption laws between Arizona and California. The table has columns for 'State Name', 'Code Section', 'Uniform Act', 'Who May Be Adopted', 'Age that Child', 'Who May Adopt', 'Adoptive Home Residency Prior to Decree', 'State Agency/Court', 'Statute of Limitation to Challenge', and 'Edition'. The text 'There is great variety among states regarding adoption laws, perhaps due to the very personal (show more...)' is displayed above the table. A 'Toggle (show more...) text' button is also present. The table shows two rows: one for the 2008 edition and one for the 2005 (5th Ed.) edition. A 'View Previous' button is visible next to the 2008 edition row.

State Name	Code Section	Uniform Act	Who May Be Adopted	Age that Child	Who May Adopt	Adoptive Home Residency Prior to Decree	State Agency/Court	Statute of Limitation to Challenge	Edition
ARIZONA	8-101 to 8-145; No 14-8101	Any child under 18 years of age or foreign born person under age 21 who is not illegal alien; any adult person who is a stepchild, niece, cousin, nephew, or grandchild of the adopting person; an adult who was placed in the care of the adopting parent as a foster child as a juvenile. §14-8101	12 years and older in open court	Any adult resident of the state is eligible to adopt; husband and wife may jointly adopt children. Adults may adopt adult relatives.	No	Economic Security/Superior, Juvenile Division	1 year		2008 (6th Ed.)
ARIZONA	8-101 to 8-145	Any child under 18 years of age or foreign born person under age 21 who is not illegal alien; any adult person who is a stepchild, niece, cousin, nephew, or grandchild of the adopting person; an adult who was placed in the care of the adopting parent as a foster child as a juvenile. §8-132	12 years and older in open court	Any adult resident of the state is eligible to adopt; husband and wife may jointly adopt children. Adults may adopt adult relatives.	No	Economic Security/Superior, Juvenile Division	1 year		2005 (5th Ed.)

Note that the current edition and the three most recent previous editions are available in database format. Using the **Advanced Search** link will search the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th editions.

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Print Editions Online

The HeinOnline *National Survey of State Laws* collection also includes all previous print editions of this valuable title. Although only the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th editions have been converted into database format, all other prior editions are fully searchable and browsable in HeinOnline's familiar image-based PDF format.

To access all print editions of the *National Survey of State Laws*, click **Browse Print Editions** from the upper right side of the collection homepage. This will expand all editions and enable users to search within all volumes, create eTOC alerts for the title, and set up an RSS feed.

The image shows two screenshots from the HeinOnline National Survey of State Laws collection. The top screenshot is the collection homepage, featuring a header for the 2019 (8th Ed.) with links to previous editions (2015, 2008, 2005) and a 'Browse Print Editions' button. Below this is a 'Browse Laws by Category' list including Business and Consumer Laws, Criminal Laws, Education Laws, Employment Laws, Family Laws, General Civil Laws, Real Estate Laws, and Tax Laws. The bottom screenshot is a detailed view of the 'Browse Print Editions' section, showing a search bar, 'Create eTOC Alert' and 'RSS' buttons, and a list of editions from 1st to 8th. A red box highlights the 'NSSL Print Ed. Search' link in the main search bar of the bottom screenshot, and a red arrow points from the 'Browse Print Editions' button in the top screenshot to the detailed view.

2019 (8th Ed.)
2019 (8th Ed.) | 2015 (7th Ed.) | 2008 (6th Ed.) | 2005 (5th Ed.) **Browse Print Editions**

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The print editions can also be searched using the **NSSL Print Ed. Search** link, located beneath the main search bar at the top of the page. This will open search fields that will enable users to search the indexed metadata and full text of all print editions.

For questions about searching in HeinOnline's *National Survey of State Laws* collection, contact the HeinOnline Team at (800) 277-6995 or via [e-mail](#) or [Live Chat](#).