Welcome to the Jacob Burns Law Library @ GW Law

During the Fall and Spring semesters, the law library is open from 8:00 am to 11:45 pm, Monday through Friday; the library is open from 9:00 am to 11:45 pm, on Saturdays and Sundays. The law library is closed for University holidays. Please check our guide Welcome to the Burns Law Library for additional information about our hours.

Food is permitted in several designated areas of the library; please respect our “no food” zones.

Enter the Jacob Burns Law Library with Your GWorld Card

Swipe your GWorld card in one of the turnstiles at either the main entrance or at the second floor entrance.

The law library is open to GW Law faculty, students and staff. We are also open to other GW faculty and staff. Non-law GW students may use the law library for research purposes only. Access to others is restricted, so be sure to bring your GWorld card when you plan to use the library to avoid delays in entering the library.

Remember to secure your personal belongings when using the library. We encourage you to invest in a laptop lock and to keep purses, electronic equipment and other valuables with you at all times.

Your Tour Begins at the Circulation Desk on the Main Floor

The “circ desk” is the only location in the law library where you may check out a circulating item and it is the only location where you may return a book.

The circulation desk is also where you may request print items that are placed on course reserve by professors. Also on reserve are popular study aids, such as “examples and explanations,” hornbooks and nutshells. Current unbound issues of law reviews, journals, magazines, and newspapers are also located here on reserve. Reserve items may be checked out for in-library use for two hours. Law students may also check out laptop chargers and cell phone chargers for a period of four hours. Clip-on lamps and bike locks are also available for loan. Ear plugs are also available from a dispenser at the desk.

If an item is not available in the law library, law students may request that the library borrow it from another library on their behalf through either WRLC’s consortium loan service (CLS) or through interlibrary loan. If you have borrowed a book from another library through CLS or interlibrary loan, you may pick up the book at the circulation desk four hours after you receive an email pick up notice.

The circulation staff may answer questions about locations of items in the library. However, questions about legal research and resources are referred to the reference desk, which is located adjacent to the circulation desk.
Walk past the faculty publications display cases to the Reference Room

The most important feature of this room is the reference desk. During the Fall and Spring semesters, a law librarian is available at the reference desk Monday – Thursday until 8 pm and Friday – Sunday until 5pm. Librarians also respond to chat messages when the reference desk is open. “Chat now” is available on the library’s homepage. You may also call the reference desk, text us or email us for assistance.

Also note the personal computers that are located at the ARC, which are available for students and visitors to access our databases as well as the Internet. Please honor our no food or drink policy when using library equipment.

We have several library research guides available to help you with your research. In the publications display rack, you will find print copies of research guides on various legal topics. Use the library’s homepage to connect with our online research guides.

As you walk around the room following the windows and walking behind the ARC, you will notice encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other reference materials.

You will also pass the doors into the Steven and Barbara Tasher Reading Room, which is designated as a “quiet room.” No talking is allowed in this room and no electronic equipment may be used, including cell phones or headphones; laptop use is permitted for research and studying. No food is allowed but beverages are permitted. The quiet room policies are enforced through cooperation among students studying in these areas.

Walk past the faculty publications display cases to the stairs on your right or to the elevator, which is a few steps beyond the library display. Take the stairs or the elevator to the second floor of Burns.

This floor houses primary materials, including federal court reports and statutes and selected state statutes.

The law school’s lactation room is located on the perimeter in this area; keys to the lactation room may be had from the Dean of Students office.

Walk toward the second floor entrance, near the elevator, and you will see glass doors into the reading room. This room has our collection of primary materials for local state jurisdictions—the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. This is also a quiet area; no food is allowed but beverages are permitted.

Please note that a GWorld card is required to use the second floor entrance. If you do not have your GWorld card, you will be directed to enter through the first floor entrance and to obtain a pass for the day.
Facing the second floor entrance again, note the study area just outside of the library.

If you exit out of this door, turn left to visit the Help Desk located at the Copy Center. The Lexis printers and two WEPA student printers are located in the Stockton Alcove near the Copy Center.

**Turn around and either take the elevator to your left or take the stairs on your right down to the first floor.**

You will arrive by the door monitor station at the main entrance. In the room behind this station are two student computing WEPA printers. Other WEPA printers are located in Stuart 203 and in the Law Learning Center (LLC) on G Street.

**Take the stairs down to Stockton Cellar or the elevator to SL1. If you rode the elevator, walk straight from the elevator and up the ramp to Stockton Cellar.**

The law librarians have offices in Stockton Cellar. You may make an appointment with individual librarians for help; contact them by phone, email or just stop by.

Scanners are also located on this floor. GW Law students may scan documents to their email address, to a USB or to their smart phones with a QR code. There is no charge for scanners. The scanners have on-screen easy to follow instructions.

**Note the map on your left as you walk down the ramp to Stack Level 1 (SL1). Each stack level has a map of the floor elevations. Note how the levels zigzag below ground, which is due to the library occupying two different buildings (Burns and Stockton).**

SL 1 has international materials. You can find books in the library’s collection using JACOB, the library’s online catalog, which is available from the library’s home page. JACOB will give you the call number and location for each title. We use the stack levels—SL1, LL1, SL2, SL 3 and LL2—to designate locations. Each stack level has books that are arranged by classification numbers. The elevator’s floor buttons also correspond to the library’s stack levels.
Go down the short flight of stairs and enter Lower Level 1 through the wooden door or take the elevator to your left and go down to LL1. If you rode the elevator, come forward past the copiers and the carrels.

Lower Level 1 (LL1) is known as Burns Commons. This is a collaborative study area; conversations are permitted as are food and beverages.

Look to your right and locate the windows onto the library's patio. The patio is open from April through November for studying, weather permitting.

If you walk around the perimeter of the room, notice the individual collaboration rooms. There are also study rooms on LL2. These rooms may be reserved through the online room reservation system on the GW Law portal.

Our microfilm and microfiche collections are also located on this floor. Reader/printers are available.

Public restrooms are also located on this floor.

Two fee-based photocopiers are also located on this floor, near the elevator.

You’ve come to the end of the library’s self-guided tour.