Research Guide to Real Estate and General Law

Real estate, real property, and realty are all legal terms that refer to land and any improvements on it, such as buildings, fences, and other immovable structures. Real estate transactions are governed by a wide range of federal, state, and local rules and regulations, which often vary significantly from one jurisdiction to the next. This research guide is designed to provide a foundation and launching point for further research into the world of real estate laws. The resources derive from an assortment of government, academic, non-profit, for-profit, and non-governmental organizations. It is up to you to determine a resource’s bias, veracity, authenticity, and date currency.

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General Legal Resources

NAR Legal Affairs Podcast

The NAR Legal Affairs podcast is a resource for reporting current legal issues related to real estate professionals. Episodes feature interviews with practicing attorneys and others involved in real estate legal issues.

- **Legal Podcast: Pocket Listings**  
  California Association of REALTORS® attorney Elizabeth Miller-Bougdanos discusses the legal issues raised by pocket listings in a preview of this year's Risk Management Forum.

- **Legal Podcast: Flood Insurance Program**  
  Russell Riggs, Senior Regulatory Policy Representative, and Ralph Holmen, Associate General Counsel of the National Association of Realtors®, discuss recent changes to the Flood Insurance Program and potential disclosure issues for real estate professionals.

- **NAR Activity Update - National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)**

- **Legal Podcast: Appraiser Independence**  
  REALTOR® Vic Knight, also licensed as an appraiser, discusses how real estate professionals can continue to work with appraisers following Dodd-Frank.

  - [Appraiser Independence](#)
  - [10 Tips for Brokers to Help the Appraisal Process](#)
  - [A Guide to Understanding a Residential Appraisal](#)

Laws, Rules, & Statutes

- **U. S. Code (USC)** (Legal Information Institute - Cornell University Law School).
- **Uniform Commercial Code (UCC)** (Legal Information Institute - Cornell University Law School).
- **State Law Resources** (Legal Information Institute - Cornell University Law School) - Links to state constitutions, agency rules, statutes, and other resources.

Government Agencies

- **Real estate regulatory agencies** (Association of Real Estate License Law Officials) - Contact information for real estate regulatory agencies for each U.S. state and Canadian province, and other countries.
- **Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System**
- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**
- **US Bureau of Reclamation**
- **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)**
- **U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**
• Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (OFHEO)
• Fannie Mae
• Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
• Federal Housing Administration (FHA)
• Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA)
• Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
• US Forest Service - Lands & Realty Management
• Freddie Mac
• Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae)
• Internal Revenue Service
• USDA Rural Development
• Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC)
• Small Business Administration (SBA)
• Department of Veterans Affairs - Loan Guaranty Service

Tools

• U.S. Courts - Information for Researchers
  Legal glossary, statistics, court records, FAQs, and other general legal resources from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.
• Court Locator (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts).
• Google Scholar - Find legal opinions & journals
• Legal Information Institute (LII) (Cornell University Law School).

Databases

• EBSCO
  A collection of more than 5,000 scholarly and industry-related journals, newspapers, and magazines, and company information.

Journals

• ABA Banking Journal
• American Business Law Journal
• Business Law Today
Real Estate Law

Websites & Tools

- **Real estate regulatory agencies** (Association of Real Estate License Law Officials) - Contact information for real estate regulatory agencies for each U.S. state and Canadian province, and other countries.
- **Association of Real Estate License Law Officials (ARELLO)**
- **2011 Legal Scan**
  The Legal Scan is a biennial research project undertaken by NAR Legal Affairs. The Scan systematically collects information on 94 issues in eleven major topic areas that involve the legal liability of real estate brokers, salespeople, and real estate managers.
- **ABA Section of Real Property, Trust and Estate Law**
- **Real estate rules and laws** (Association of Real Estate License Law Officials) - Directory of laws and rules regulating the real estate business in each state.
- **Competition & Real Estate by State** (U.S. Department of Justice) - Overview of antitrust laws as they pertain to real estate in each state.

eBooks

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Books

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**Journals**

• [Probate & Property](#)
• [Real Estate Law Journal](#)
  Table of contents available using "More Information" links on left. For full text, contact the RU Library.
• [Real Estate Issues](#)

**Land Use Law**

**eBooks**

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**Books**

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**Journals**

• [Journal of Land Use & Environmental Law](#)
• [Land Economics](#)
• [Journal of the American Planning Association](#)
• [On Common Ground](#)

**Mortgage finance law**
eBooks

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Books

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Websites & Tools

- [RESPA - Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act](https://www.fdic.gov/regulations/consumer-laws/respa.html)  
  (U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development) - Includes "RESPA in Plain English," interpretive rules, FAQs, and other resources.

Journals

- [ABA Banking Journal](https://www.ababankingjournal.org)