Criminal law is the body of law that defines criminal offenses and their punishment, as well as the procedures that regulate the investigation, charging, and trial of suspects. This quick reference guide highlights the criminal law resources on Westlaw and shows you how to retrieve relevant cases.

**Criminal Law**
Criminal law practice typically involves issues such as those relating to the investigation of criminal charges, negotiation of plea agreements, preparation for trial, and pursuit of appeals.

**Criminal law resources on Westlaw**
Westlaw includes an extensive collection of criminal law materials, including primary law, secondary sources, dockets, jury instructions, transcripts of notable trials, sentencing guidelines, and appellate briefs. In each category listed below, a few key databases are highlighted. These databases and other criminal law–related resources can be accessed at the tabbed Criminal Practice page, shown on the following page.

Remember that the easiest way to retrieve a specific document when you know the citation is to use the Find service. Click **Find using a template** in the **Shortcuts** section of the Criminal Law page to display fill-in-the-blank templates.
Statutes and regulations

Statutes and court rules from individual states that relate to criminal acts and the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes are contained in the Criminal Justice–Individual State Statutes (XXCJ-ST) and the Criminal Justice–Individual State Court Rules (XXCJ-RULES) databases, where XX is a state’s two-letter postal abbreviation. The Federal Criminal Justice–U.S. Code Annotated database (FCJ-USCA) contains documents from the United States Code Annotated that relate to criminal acts and the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes, including the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure for the United States District Courts. Federal and state death penalty statutes are contained in the Death Penalty–Federal Statutes (FDP-USCA) and the Death Penalty–Multistate Statutes (MDP-ST) databases.

Case law

Court decisions that construe and review criminal justice laws and regulations are another important source of information when you research criminal justice issues. The Federal Criminal Justice–Cases database (FCJ-CS) includes federal cases that relate to criminal acts and the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes. The Multistate Criminal Justice Cases database (MCJ-CS) contains cases from the state courts of all 50 states and the District of Columbia that relate to criminal acts and the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes.

Secondary sources

The Criminal Justice–Law Reviews, Texts, and Bar Journals database (CJ-TP) includes analytical texts, law reviews, and other legal periodicals that relate to criminal acts and the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes.

Jury instructions and sentencing guidelines