

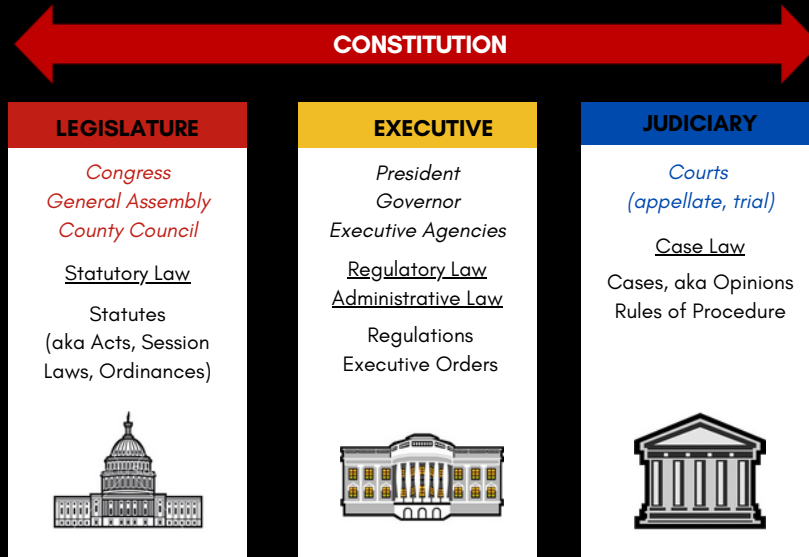


# Foundations of Law

## What is Law?

- Language passed by government bodies that holds force over all parties in a particular jurisdiction.

## Three Branches and the Law They Make

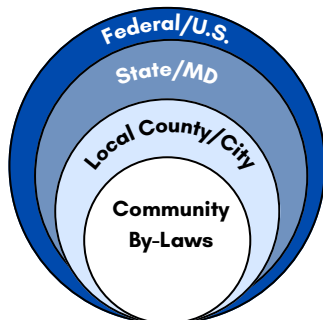
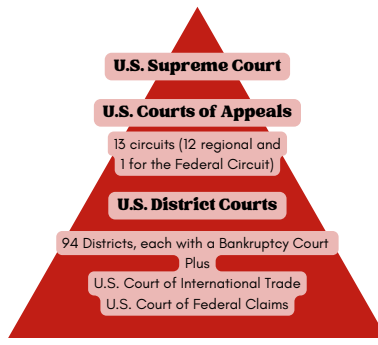
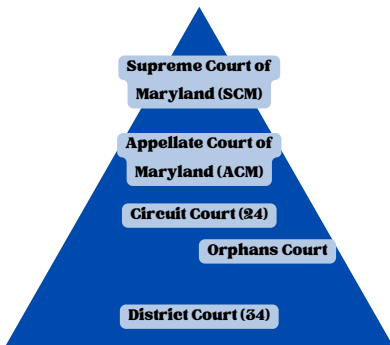


Source: MD Code

Source: COMAR

Source: Case Reporters

## Court Structure



Three "Levels" of Government

## Citation Formats

### Code of Maryland Format:

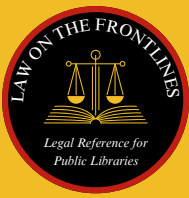
Md Code, Family Law § 5-104  
Article Name Section Number

### Code of Maryland Regulations Format

07.01.02.05  
Title. Subtitle. Chapter. Regulation

### Case Law Format:

Doe v. Johnson 413 Md. 817  
Party 2 Vol. Number Title Page Number



# Foundations of Law

## Dates and Language Matter

- Assess any materials for their timeliness to the research needed
- EXAMPLE - Maryland expungement laws changed on October 1 (change to forms too)
- Maryland still uses latin phrases (Writ of mandamus)
- If a person has paperwork, ask if you can see it. Example: jury duty asking where their trial would be held
- Paperwork may also have relevant citations to laws or rules



Finding the Law



[Gateway to Maryland Law](#)

## Secondary Sources

- Can provide citations to primary law
- [People's Law Library of Maryland](#)



## Case Law Databases

- Westlaw/Lexis (fee-based)
- [Google Scholar](#) (free)

## Self-Education Resources

- [MD Judiciary - What is the Law?](#)
- [Frontlines - Past Sessions](#)
- [Frontlines Homepage](#)

## When You Hit a Wall...

Reach out to your local

Public Law Library: [Maryland Law Libraries](#)



## Maryland Public Library Toolkit

Designed for public library reference staff as a guide to Maryland primary and secondary legal resources.

[Public Library Toolkit](#)



*\*This sheet is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice. It is intended to complement and enhance your understanding of the subject matter covered during training sessions.\**