What is the Law?

- Created by the government, laws are necessary so people can live peacefully with each other. The law provides a way to resolve disagreements in an orderly way.
- There are state, federal, and local laws.
- Sometimes these laws overlap. For example, both Maryland and the federal government have laws that govern the same criminal behavior.

Where Does it Come From?

- There are many sources of law.
  - **Statutes** are laws made by the legislature.
  - **Regulations** are rules made by state agencies like the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA).
  - **Case law** is made by courts interpreting statutes and regulations.

Where to Find it:

- Statutes are organized by subject in the Maryland Code. You can find the Code online at [www.lawlib.state.md.us/researchtools/sourcesmdlaw.html](http://www.lawlib.state.md.us/researchtools/sourcesmdlaw.html) or in print at a law library.
- Regulations are organized and printed in a publication called COMAR which stands for *Code of Maryland Regulations*. You can find COMAR online at [http://www.dsd.state.md.us/COMAR/ComarHome.html](http://www.dsd.state.md.us/COMAR/ComarHome.html) or in print at a law library.
- Case law can be found online at [mdcourts.gov](http://mdcourts.gov) or on Google Scholar. You can also find case law on fee-based databases called Lexis and Westlaw. Case law is published in books called “reporters” which are available at a law library.

For More Information:

- Maryland has a number of law libraries that are open to the public.
- You may also contact a law librarian by phone, email, or by visiting in person.
- To find a law library near you, visit the Maryland State Law Library’s directory at [mdcourts.gov/lawlib](http://mdcourts.gov/lawlib).