



# William S. Boyd School of Law

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# University Law Library a Modern Practice Resource

BY JUSTIN IVERSON, ESQ.

**For many law students, graduation is a bittersweet time of change. As we trade our sweatpants and casebooks for suits and client files, we also lose access to the near-limitless legal research tools we've become accustomed to in school. Instead, we adapt to whatever subscriptions, sample motions, and support staff are available in our new firm environment—never quite forgetting the days of unlimited (and free) searches in our favorite database.**

Worse off are those among us who valiantly hang a shingle and start with nothing but their own wits and gumption. These heroes must work ceaselessly to build a practice with few (or no) staff and clients. They must spend shrewdly to obtain legal research as well as sample forms. In many cases, these entrepreneurs are also spending hours in court on top of their in-office and after-hours commitments.

Regardless of where you land after law school, however, I'm here to let you in on the secret: you still have access to the university law library in many useful and often-underutilized ways after graduation.

As the only public law school in the state, the Wiener-Rogers Law Library at UNLV's William S. Boyd School of Law is available to all Nevada patrons, including attorneys and their staff.

## Reference Services

Have you ever suspected you're spending too much time researching an issue that should have an obvious and clearly available solution? You might be. The reference librarians at Boyd can assist you with locating a wide variety of resources in Nevada and beyond.

Some examples of ways we might assist you include website links to reliable topic-specific guides and forms, referrals to community organizations, information on how to conduct research in a cost- and time-efficient manner, and delivery of specific documents requested, where appropriate.

Please note, reference librarians cannot give you legal advice or conduct research on your behalf. But as is the case in so many areas of life—it doesn't hurt to ask. If you have a question you think we can help with, email us at [lawlibraryrefdesk@unlv.edu](mailto:lawlibraryrefdesk@unlv.edu) or call 702-895-2420.

If you're in the area, you may also schedule an appointment to do research in the library. There may be access to Westlaw or LexisNexis on site, which you will want to confirm with circulation staff before making the trip.

## Circulation

Did you know Nevada residents can check out most materials from the law library? To do so, you will need to come down to the library, complete a guest borrower application, and activate your new account. The checkout period is three weeks, and you may borrow up to 10 items at a time.

If you are not local to the Las Vegas area, you may still be able to borrow materials through an interlibrary loan (ILL) agreement with a library in your town. For more information, contact your local branch and ask about ILL.

You may also visit our website at <https://law.unlv.edu/law-library> or call 702-895-2400 for information on circulation policies and services.

## Libguides

Many law students pay attention to research strategies and resources only to the extent it feels important at the time. They are so consumed with learning the elements of each intentional tort, how to brief a case effectively, and where to find support for their drafting assignments that research efficiency can feel secondary.

As a result, attorneys and their staff may have glossed over or simply forgotten many of the tips and tricks to conduct efficient legal research. More still have not kept current on changes in the industry for a host of reasons.

We want you to know that legal research instruction does not have to end with law school. For this reason, the Boyd librarians have created an impressive collection of libguides to refresh or teach anew: <https://law-unlv.libguides.com>.

At the link above, you will find step-by-step guides and videos on researching topical areas of law, local resources, and specific types of authorities, as well as information on utilizing technology in the legal office environment.

### Database Access

A final resource conveyed in this article is access to databases. All libraries wrestle with establishing affordable and reasonable access agreements in their database subscriptions. In partnership with the university, Boyd is able to provide a large number of these databases to anyone on campus.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that people are not always welcome, encouraged, or able to visit locations in-person, however. In response, we were able to further expand our offerings to students in addition to adding some flexibility into our document delivery policies for non-students.

What this means for Nevada residents is that we may be able to provide you with access to one or more resources if it is appropriate, given our licensing agreements and other practicalities.

For a full list of our databases, please visit <https://law-unlv.libguides.com/az.php>.

And remember: when in doubt, just ask. We'll let you know if we can assist with your request.

(Editors' note: See information on page 12 regarding Fastcase, a free legal research benefit available to active bar members.)



**JUSTIN IVERSON** is a research librarian and assistant professor at the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV. He is also co-chair of the Nevada Library Association's Leadership and Mentoring Committee, and previously served as chair of the Young Lawyers Section's Home Safe Home program.

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Attorneys with questions about ethics and the Rules of Professional Conduct may reach out to the Office of Bar Counsel for informal guidance during any business day.

Each day, a State Bar of Nevada attorney is assigned to take calls from lawyers with questions about the legal profession in our state.

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