

## USER'S GUIDE

The Minnesota Statutes index is a specialized index containing features that may not be familiar to every reader. Readers will find the index easier to use if they understand the thinking behind it.

### What does the Index Cover?

The material indexed is the entire statutes and Minnesota Constitution. Indexes to the court rules are in Volume 15, the court rules volume.

### For Whom Is the Index Written?

Minnesota Statutes, the state's official publication, is used extensively by state employees and by attorneys and law schools. It is also used by the general public and is available online via links from the Web page of the Minnesota legislature at [www.leg.state.mn.us](http://www.leg.state.mn.us). The printed edition is available for use in county and city public libraries.

So the index to Minnesota Statutes is designed to serve three audiences: the employees of state agencies, the bench and bar, and the public. The index terms include popular names and words familiar to lay readers as well as the words of law. The duties of state departments and agencies have been given particular attention.

### How Are the Terms Alphabetized?

Main headings in the index are alphabetized word by word. Word-by-word arrangement differs slightly from letter-by-letter arrangement, the common system. In the letter-by-letter system, word divisions are ignored. Here are examples of the different systems:

<b>Word by word</b>	<b>Letter by letter</b>
fire alarms	fire alarms
fire code	firearms
fire departments	fire code
fire engines	fire departments
fire escapes	fire engines
fire hydrants	fire escapes
fire insurance	firefighters
firearms	firefighters equipment
firefighters	fire hydrants
firefighting equipment	fire insurance

Hyphens and slashes are treated as spaces, so that, for example, "all-terrain vehicles" sorts before "alleys." Arabic numerals are usually sorted as if spelled out. For example, under TAX-EXEMPT CORPORATIONS, the subheading "501(c)(3) corporations" sorts with the F subheadings.

### What Are the Basic Features of the Index?

1. *Main headings, subheadings, and section numbers.* The words in full capitals and boldface type, followed by indented lines and statute section numbers, are main headings. The indented lines below main headings are called subheadings.

Instead of page numbers, the index directs readers to the section numbers of the Minnesota Statutes or articles and sections of the Minnesota Constitution. For an explanation of the statutes' numbering system, see the User's Guide to Minnesota Statutes in Volume 1.

Here is an example of a main heading with a subheading and section number.

---

FISHERS (*main heading*)

Hunting (*subheading*)

Season, 97B.635 (*sub-heading and section number*)

---

2. *"See" references from entry terms.* Sometimes a word in boldface capitals is followed only by a direction to see some other term, as in "JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT, See COURTS." In such cases, the phrase "JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT" is called an entry term. An entry term may be a synonym for the main heading.

It may also be a more specific term; one example is "MIXED MUNICIPAL WASTE, See SOLID WASTE." When you find the main heading SOLID WASTE, You will find "Mixed municipal waste" as a subheading under it.

3. *"See specific index headings" notes.* Very general ideas like "record keeping," "notice," and "appeal," which appear in thousands of places in statutes, are not gathered under their own main headings. If you look under "ADDRESSES," you will find an entry, "See specific index headings." This means that there is no general law about all addresses, so if you are looking for law about the address of a specific person or body, you should look under the main heading for that person or body. You may find "Addresses" as a subheading under that other main heading.

Another type of "see specific" note looks like this:

---

ANNUITIES

Retirement annuities

Public retirement plans, see Annuities under specific plans

---

This type of cross-reference lets you know that you must look under each type of retirement plan for the subheading "Annuities." A reference like this is used instead of a long series of references to each plan individually.

4. *"See" references from subheadings.* There are three kinds of "see" references from subheadings: to another main heading, to a subheading under another main heading, and to a subheading under the same main heading you are reading:

A. References to another main heading:

---

CLERKS

Clerks of court, see COURT ADMINISTRATORS

---

This reference directs you to the main heading COURT ADMINISTRATORS.

B. References to a subheading under another main heading. There are two forms of these references.

The first form leads you from a subheading to that same phrase as a subheading under a different main heading.

---

ACCOUNTANTS

Taxpayers' rights advocates, see under TAXES

---

A cross-reference like this is directing you to look for

---

TAXES  
Taxpayers' rights advocates

---

Look for a subheading that matches the words before "see." The second form leads you from a subheading to a different phrase under another main heading.

---

COURT ADMINISTRATORS  
Supreme Court, see Court administrator under SUPREME COURT

---

This reference directs you to find the main heading SUPREME COURT and under it the subheading "Court administrator."

C. References to a different subheading under the same main heading you are reading. There are two forms of these references. The first form leads you from a sub-subheading to a subheading using the same words that appear before the word "see":

---

ABSENTEE VOTING  
Absentee ballots  
Mail and mailing, see same under this topic

---

A cross-reference like the one above is directing you to look for

---

ABSENTEE VOTING  
Mail and mailing...

---

The second form leads you from a subheading to another subheading using words different from those that appear before the word "see."

---

ABSENTEE VOTING  
Ballots, see Absentee ballots under this topic

---

A cross-reference like this is directing you to look for

---

ABSENTEE VOTING  
Absentee ballots...

---

5. *"See also" references.* The words "See also" point out other main headings that are related to the one you are reading. Under those other main headings you may find other law about topics related to the one you first looked up. For example, under "AFFRAY," you will find a direction: "See also BREACH OF THE PEACE."

## What Search Strategies Should a Reader Use?

1. Learn some background about the main headings. Main headings are usually names of particular officers, organizations, animals, plants, places, objects, documents, crimes, or

commercial activities. They are less often the names of laws or "issues." For example, transfers to minors are dealt with under TRANSFERS TO MINORS, not "Uniform Transfers to Minors Act."

2. Look first for the term as a main heading. Many main headings in this index are very specific. Examples include specific crimes, such as ARSON, and specific game animals, such as FOXES.

3. If you don't find the specific heading you are looking for, try a more general term next. For example, a search for the main heading "GREAT HORNED OWLS" will not be productive, but if you look under "BIRDS," you will find "Great horned owls" as a sub-heading.

4. If you are looking for a law you first read about in a general newspaper, or heard about on the radio or television, try looking up the name as you heard it. For example, the SAFE PLACE FOR NEWBORNS LAW has its own main heading. Such popular names are also listed under the main heading POPULAR NAMES OF ACTS. Very informal names of laws like "Lemon law" and "Green acres law" are included there. Uniform laws are also gathered under UNIFORM LAWS, and interstate compacts under INTERSTATE COMPACTS.

### **How Can Readers Make Suggestions or Comments?**

The index evolves with changes made to the law each year and with suggestions brought to our attention by index users. Users who have comments or questions are encouraged to submit them to the Office of the Revisor of Statutes. Call Maryann Corbett at 651-296-2868, fax comments to us at 651-296-0569, or e-mail your comments to:

**[maryann.corbett@revisor.mn.gov](mailto:maryann.corbett@revisor.mn.gov)**

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