

## **Resources for Researching Tribal and Federal Indian Law**

This is a brief summary of the tools and resources available for researching decisions of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court and Court of Appeals and the Tribal laws. In addition, this pamphlet contains information and suggestions on researching other tribal court decisions and Federal Indian law, in general.

### **Mashantucket Pequot Tribe:**

#### **Tribal Laws:**

The **Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Laws** presently are published in a three-volume binder set containing the general laws, the Probate Code and Rules of Court. These binders have been converted to a softbound version through **Juris Publishing, Inc.**, which is a legal publisher. To subscribe or obtain further information, call 1-800-887-4064.

The laws are also available on-line at **[www.mptnlaw.com](http://www.mptnlaw.com)**. This web site is updated as new laws are enacted or amendments to existing laws are made. The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Laws can also be accessed through the web site of the State of Connecticut's Judicial Branch at **[www.jud.state.ct.us/LawLib/Federal.htm](http://www.jud.state.ct.us/LawLib/Federal.htm)**.

#### **Tribal Court Decisions:**

The decisions of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court and the Court of Appeals are published in the **Mashantucket Pequot Reporter**, a multi-volume set. These volumes (updated 4 times a year) can be obtained through Juris Publishing, Inc. The decisions are also available for your reference at the Tribal Courthouse and at Connecticut State Libraries, including the Courthouse libraries in New London and Norwich.

Another source for obtaining Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court decisions is at **[www.versuslaw.com](http://www.versuslaw.com)**. Versus Law offers an on-line Native American Tribal Court Database which allows for searching tribal court decisions using key terms and phrases. Currently, Versus Law has decisions from nine (9) different Tribal Courts, including the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe and the Mohegan Gaming Disputes Court. A subscription to Versus Law is needed to access information from their web site and information is available from the web site regarding a subscription. Some of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court decisions also can be obtained through the web site of the State of Connecticut's Judicial Branch at **[www.jud.state.ct.us/LawLib/Federal.htm](http://www.jud.state.ct.us/LawLib/Federal.htm)** under American Indian Law, which links you to the Tribal Court Clearinghouse web site, **[www.tribalinstitute.org](http://www.tribalinstitute.org)**, another great source of information.

Recently, the National Tribal Justice Resource Center has created a web site with links to various other sites for information on tribal laws and decisions. Some of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court decisions can be accessed through this web site at **[www.tribalresourcecenter.org](http://www.tribalresourcecenter.org)**.

## **Other Tribal Courts and Laws:**

The **Indian Law Reporter**, is a monthly publication with a topic/subject matter index, that collects cases concerning Indian law and Tribal law from federal, state and tribal courts from 1975 through the present. The Indian Law Reporter is published by American Indian Lawyer Training Program, Inc. To subscribe to this publication, call 1-510-834-9333.

The **Native American Law Digest** is another resource for obtaining Tribal Court decisions. The Native American Law Digest is a monthly publication that summarizes legal decisions and discusses legal developments in the Native American community. To subscribe to this monthly publication, call 1-800-992-4489.

Decisions and laws from other tribes can be obtained through the **Tribal Court Clearinghouse** at [www.tribal-institute.org](http://www.tribal-institute.org) and from the **National Tribal Justice Resource Center** web site at [www.tribalresourcecenter.org](http://www.tribalresourcecenter.org). These web sites provide information concerning tribal court decisions, tribal codes and constitutions for Native American and Alaskan Native tribal justice systems. In addition, these web sites provide links to other resources such as federal and state laws, Indian Law Reviews, supreme court decisions, and pending federal legislation.

## **Federal Indian Law:**

There are several treatises and casebooks concerning Federal Indian Law. The leading treatise in this area is Felix S. Cohen's *Handbook of Federal Indian Law*. William C. Canby's *American Indian Law in a Nutshell* is also a good general reference.

**Native American Report** is an independent news source on Native American issues that covers legislative updates, litigation, federal news, the Federal Register, and funding opportunities. Native American Report is published twenty-five times a year. To subscribe call 1-800-274-6737.

In addition to searching via Internet, computer-assisted legal research services such as Westlaw are available. Westlaw provides access to federal and state cases, statutes, and administrative regulations through searchable databases. Specifically, Westlaw has a database called Native American Law in which cases, statutes, and rules can be accessed, as well as, law reviews and periodicals relating to Indian Law. Fees are associated with the use of Westlaw.

Title 25 of the United States Code (25 U.S.C.) and Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations (25 C.F.R.) contain the majority of federal statutes and regulations concerning Indians.

Another source for receiving updates on current legal issues in Indian Country can be found at various web sites, including [www.pechanga.net](http://www.pechanga.net) and [www.indianz.com](http://www.indianz.com).

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