

Clues to reliable legal information

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There is a lot of legal information available online – so much that sometimes it can be hard to tell what you can rely on. When looking for legal information online, ask:

1. Am I getting the information from a trustworthy source?

Does the organization have the appropriate expertise?

It's important that legal information is reviewed by an experienced lawyer on a regular basis. Government, legal aid, and community legal clinics all have lawyers on staff. If you find legal information on the site of a non-profit and you're not sure if a lawyer was involved in preparing it, check the "About us" page or contact the organization to find out.

Are contact details given?

Reliable legal information providers tell you how to contact them, usually by giving an email address and a phone number, and sometimes a mailing address.

2. Am I getting complete and unbiased legal information?

Is the information free?

Commercial businesses are trying to sell services. Their information can be incomplete or biased as a way of encouraging you to buy their services.

Does the website or legal information have ads?

Most organizations that present complete, unbiased information, such as government, legal aid, community legal clinics, and non-profits, don't have paid ads on their websites.

3. Does the legal information apply to my location?

Does the information apply to Ontario?

Always check to make sure that the law applies to Ontario. Some information may apply to Ontario but be produced by the federal government.

4. Is the legal information up-to-date?

Does the information tell you when the information was produced or most recently reviewed?

Laws change and legal information needs to be reviewed for accuracy on a regular basis. Check when the information was produced or last reviewed by someone with legal expertise.