Guide to Searching the DLS Law Library

Differences between the Public Search and the internal Legal Module Search

	Internal Search (DLS only)	Public Search
Legal Product Types	All: IGR, BUL, LFO, FAQ, CAS, LPM	IGR, BUL, LFO, FAQ
Product Status	All products available	Only Closed/Public status products

MFLB marks products as Public and approves them for release; DLS users also have access to products that are not authorized for public release (and should therefore not be distributed externally) when searching within the Legal module. Cases were formerly referred to as "opinions" pre-Modernization. Legal Policy Meeting (LPM) is a new product type containing the summary of MFLB's monthly policy meetings.

Searching by Product Number: Using Character Substitution

The percent (%) symbol can be used as a substitute for "all remaining characters" when searching by Product Number. This is useful for finding products of a specific type that were issued in a specific year.

For example, typing "IGR-2016%" in the Product Number search field will return results for all product numbers beginning with IGR-2016.

Example: IGR-2016%

Legal System Product Search

Product Number XXX = CAS, IGR, BUL, LFO, LPM or FAQ and YYYY = year)

Show 50 ventries (Number of Records found: 123)

Select	Action	Create Date ♦	Product Type 🝦	Product •	Record	Title \$
	Open	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016- <u>403</u>	683	Fiscal Year 2017 Guidelines for Determining Annual Levy Limit Increase for Tax Base Growth
	Open	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016- <u>203</u>	676	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System - Annual Preliminary Bills
	Open	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016- <u>202</u>	675	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System - Annual Preliminary Bills
	Open	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016- <u>201</u>	674	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System
	Open	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2015- <u>402</u>	670	Fiscal Year 2016 Guidelines for Determining Annual Levy Limit Increase for Tax Base Growth

The percent sign takes the place of all characters that might appear after "IGR-2016", like "-403" or "-203". This search would return results for all the 2016 IGRs. Searching for Product Number "BUL-2017%" would return results for all 2017 Bulletins.

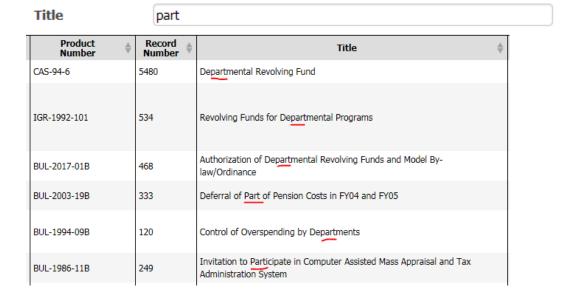
Note: The % sign can also be used in text-based search fields like Keyword and Title, but it's not necessary. Text-based searches automatically include related words unless they're specifically excluded.

Text-based Searches: Using a Single Word

Entering a single word in any of the text-based Search fields will give you results containing that word. You will also see results that contain additional words that contain the word you typed.

Examples:

- "Assessment" will return results containing assessment, assessments
- "Bill" will return results containing bill, bills, billing
- "Part" will return results containing department, departmental, part, partner, participate



Text-based Searches: Combining Words

Combining words in a text search can produce varied results; Gateway considers <u>how</u> the words are combined – not just the words themselves.

Example 1: multiple words

When multiple words are entered in a text box, Gateway will produce only the results containing the entire phrase, with all words appearing in that exact order. For example, if the words "property tax assessment" are entered in the Keyword text box, results will contain all three words in that exact order.

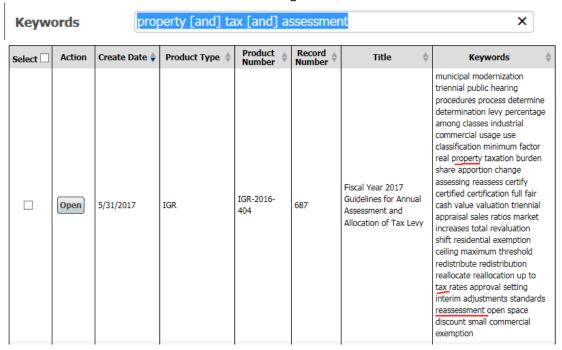
Keywords	property tax assessment
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Product Number	Record Number	Title	Keywords
CAS-2015-858	22797	Restrictive Covenant	restrictive covenant limited restricting limiting use parcel land property thirty 30 years effect impact affected value valuation property tax assessment purposes restrictions recreational tennis courts unbuildable improved real estate allowance reduction reduced benefited duration
CAS-2014-825	21394	121A expiring agreements	121A excise commencement termination property tax assessment end
CAS-2014-129	20698	Proper Assessment of Tax Bill	property tax assessment valuation date value liability fiscal year owners as of January first 1st owed owing who owes due relevant obligation obligated exposure lien collection remedies taking foreclosure sales purchase buyer seller after transaction closing arrangements payment affects interests impairs rights risk
CAS-2014-92	20661	Wind Turbines / Verizon	wind power facility telephone company building municipal property property tax assessment exemption

Products containing all three words *not* in that exact order ("tax property assessment") will *not* appear in the results.

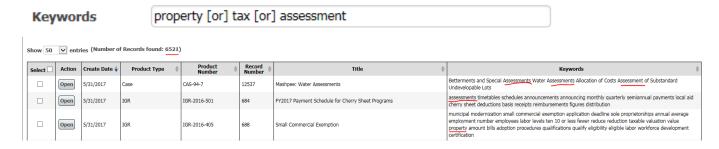
Example 2: multiple words using [and]

To see results containing multiple words where all the words appear, but in any order, separate the words using [and]. "And" can be in upper or lower case, but it must be surrounded by brackets []. The words used in the search can also be part of another word; for example, a search for "tax [and] assessment" would also return results containing the words "taxation assessments."



Example 3: multiple words using [or]

Combining multiple words using [or] will return the largest number of results. This type of search returns products containing <u>any</u> of the words; if eight words are entered with [or] between each word, Gateway will return a result if even one of the words is contained in a product.



Include versus Exclude

When words are entered in both the Include and Exclude columns, Gateway will identify results for all terms entered under Include, then it will discard the results containing anything it finds under Exclude.

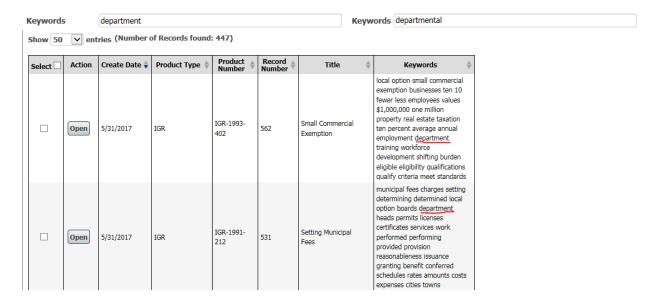
Example: Searching for keyword phrase "municipal modernization" returns 37 results. Adding the words "property tax" in the Exclude column removes 8 of the original results.

	Include	Exclude	
Title		Title	
Keywords	municipal modernization	Keywords	
Show 50	entries (Number of Records for	und: 37)	
Show 50	entries (Number of Records for	und: 37)	
Show 50	entries (Number of Records for Include	und: 37) Exclude	
Show 50			

Because the Search code relies on logic that includes similar words, it is difficult to exclude the variations, but it's not impossible.

Example: Include "department", Exclude "departmental"

Using "department" as a keyword would also return results including "departmental." Typing "departmental" as an Excluded keyword will discard the extra results, and will return only results containing "department."



Searches Using Statutes

The Statutes text box can be used to search for products associated with chapters and sections of either Massachusetts General Laws or the Acts of a certain year.

For **General Laws**, use this format: **chapter:section[clause/subsection]**

Separate the chapter number and section number with a colon (:) and if using a clause or subsection, surround it with brackets.

Example: 59:5[3]

Entering "59:5[3]" in Statues will return results associated with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 59 Section 5, clause 3.

For Acts use this format: acts year chapter:section

Enter the word "acts" followed by a space, the 4-digit year, a space, and the chapter and section separated by a colon (:).

Example: acts 2016 218:91

Entering "acts 2016 218:91" in Statutes will return results associated with the Acts of 2016, Chapter 218 Section 91.

Searches Using "From" and "To" Last Action Dates

In a public search, "Last Action Date" will be the date the product was "closed" and released to the public. For DLS, the last action date is the date on which activity last occurred; activity includes opening a case, saving it, reviewing it or closing it. Prior to Modernization, however, the legal module did not capture process dates, so products or cases opened prior to 6/24/17 will not have dates stored in the system, limiting the usefulness of date searches for legacy products. Post-Modernization, all products will have a standard Gateway status with a corresponding status date, so date searches will be more productive in the future.