

## 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  × (Format XXX-YYYY-999 where XXX = CAS, IGR, BUL, LFO, LPM or FAQ and YYYY = year)

Show  entries (Number of Records found: 123)

Select <input type="checkbox"/>	Action	Create Date	Product Type	Product Number	Record Number	Title
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-403	683	Fiscal Year 2017 Guidelines for Determining Annual Levy Limit Increase for Tax Base Growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-203	676	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System - Annual Preliminary Bills
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-202	675	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System - Annual Preliminary Bills
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-201	674	Fiscal Year 2017 Tax Bills - Semi-annual Payment System
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2015-402	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

Title <input type="text" value="part"/>		
Product Number	Record Number	Title
CAS-94-6	5480	Departmental Revolving Fund
IGR-1992-101	534	Revolving Funds for Departmental Programs
BUL-2017-01B	468	Authorization of Departmental Revolving Funds and Model By-law/Ordinance
BUL-2003-19B	333	Deferral of Part of Pension Costs in FY04 and FY05
BUL-1994-09B	120	Control of Overspending by Departments
BUL-1986-11B	249	Invitation to Participate in Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal and Tax Administration System

### Text-based Searches: Combining Words

Combining words in a text search can produce varied results; Gateway considers how 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

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 <u>property tax assessment</u> 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 <u>property tax assessment</u> 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 <u>property tax assessment</u> 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.”

<b>Keywords</b>		<input type="text" value="property [and] tax [and] assessment"/>					
Select <input type="checkbox"/>	Action	Create Date	Product Type	Product Number	Record Number	Title	Keywords
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-404	687	Fiscal Year 2017 Guidelines for Annual Assessment and Allocation of Tax Levy	municipal modernization triennial public hearing procedures process determine determination levy percentage among classes industrial commercial usage use classification minimum factor real <u>property</u> taxation burden share apportion change assessing reassess certify certified certification full fair cash value valuation triennial appraisal sales ratios market increases total revaluation shift residential exemption ceiling maximum threshold redistribute redistribution reallocate reallocation up to <u>tax</u> rates approval setting interim adjustments standards <u>reassessment</u> open space discount small commercial exemption

### 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 any 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.

Keywords

property [or] tax [or] assessment

Show 50 entries (Number of Records found: 6521)

Select	Action	Create Date	Product Type	Product Number	Record Number	Title	Keywords
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	Case	CAS-94-7	12537	Mashpee: Water Assessments	Betterments and Special <u>Assessments</u> <u>Water Assessments</u> Allocation of Costs <u>Assessment</u> of Substandard Undevelopable Lots
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-501	684	FY2017 Payment Schedule for Cherry Sheet Programs	<u>assessments</u> timetables schedules announcements announcing monthly quarterly semiannual payments local aid cherry sheet deductions basis receipts reimbursements figures distribution
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-2016-405	688	Small Commercial Exemption	municipal modernization small commercial exemption application deadline sole proprietorships annual average employment number employees labor levels ten 10 or less fewer reduce reduction taxable valuation value property amount bills adoption procedures qualifications qualify eligibility eligible labor workforce development certification

## 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.*

<b>Include</b>	<b>Exclude</b>
Title <input type="text"/>	Title <input type="text"/>
Keywords <input type="text" value="municipal modernization"/>	Keywords <input type="text"/>

Show  entries (Number of Records found: 37)

<b>Include</b>	<b>Exclude</b>
Title <input type="text"/>	Title <input type="text"/>
Keywords <input type="text" value="municipal modernization"/>	Keywords <input type="text" value="property tax"/>

Show  entries (Number of Records found: 29)

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.”

Keywords <input type="text" value="department"/>	Keywords <input type="text" value="departmental"/>
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Show  entries (Number of Records found: 447)

Select	Action	Create Date	Product Type	Product Number	Record Number	Title	Keywords
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-1993-402	562	Small Commercial Exemption	local option small commercial exemption businesses ten 10 fewer less employees values \$1,000,000 one million property real estate taxation ten percent average annual employment <u>department</u> training workforce development shifting burden eligible eligibility qualifications qualify criteria meet standards
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Open</a>	5/31/2017	IGR	IGR-1991-212	531	Setting Municipal Fees	municipal fees charges setting determining determined local option boards <u>department</u> heads permits licenses certificates services work performed performing provided provision reasonableness issuance granting benefit conferred schedules rates amounts costs expenses cities towns

## 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 Statutes 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.