I. Purpose

The Law Library owns and provides access to materials in a variety of electronic formats, including Internet resources, to support the educational and instructional needs of its students, faculty and staff. “Electronic resources” are defined as resources that require computer access. Examples include, but are not limited to, periodical indexes, reference databases, Adobe Acrobat PDF documents, and multimedia files. Data may be accessible via the Internet, online services, DVD, CD-ROM, or diskette. This policy provides guidelines for the selection, acquisition and provision of access to these resources.

II. Internet Resources

This section of the Electronic Resources Collection Development Policy will guide the selection of Internet resources, both unrestricted/free and fee/subscription based resources. With the increasing importance of the Internet as a legal research tool, the Library recognizes that careful selection of and availability of these resources can greatly facilitate the use of these resources by the Library’s users.

A. Selection

Selection of Internet resources is based on the same general criteria that are applied to all other formats included in the collection. Applicable criteria from the list below should also be considered:

- relationship the resource may have to other resources in the libraries collection
- improvement or enhancement that the resource will give to existing print materials
- long term reliability of the resource (especially when considering web sites)
- the user-friendliness of the resource in terms of interface design and functionality
- the compatibility of the resource with existing hardware
- availability of access/authentication via IP address
- necessary amount of staff time to provide access, maintenance, training, and assistance

If the selection of a fee based or subscription Internet resource duplicates an existing print resource, the following criteria should also be considered:

- whether a cost benefit for purchasing multiple formats exists
- the desirability of multiple formats to meet the different needs of library patrons
- the feasibility of canceling the print subscription and relying on the electronic version

A resource should not necessarily be excluded from consideration if it does not meet all of the applicable criteria. However, resources should be selected which adequately meet as many of the selection criteria as possible.

B. Provision of Access

The Library will maximize access to Internet resources through a variety of means including:
• appropriate staff and user support and training for in-building use
• access to selected resources through the Law Library web page
• prompt updating of information, including periodic verification of URL links found on the Library’s web page

C. Deselection

Periodic examination of Internet resources is required due to the dynamic nature of such resources. These guidelines should provide some suggestions for when to deselect a resource:

• an Internet resource is no longer available or maintained
• the currency and reliability of the resource’s information has lost its value
• the design and utility of the resource do not remain fresh and beneficial to users

III. CD-ROM, DVD, Diskette Materials

This section of the Electronic Resources Collection Development Policy will guide the selection of CD-ROM, DVD and Diskette materials. These materials are acquired by the Library through a variety of sources and means including: direct purchase or license agreements with a commercial vendor/publisher, as accompanying material to print titles, through government depository programs, and donations.

A. Selection

Selection of CD-ROMs, DVDs and Diskette materials will be based on the same general criteria that are applied to all other formats included in the collection. Applicable criteria from the list below should also be considered:

• currency of the resource’s information, if deemed necessary for subject matter
• the improvement or enhancement that the resource will give to existing print materials
• the user-friendliness of the resource in terms of interface design and functionality
• the compatibility of the resource with existing hardware and software
• the necessary amount of staff time to provide access, training, and assistance
• the availability and adequacy of technical and customer support, including documentation and phone support service
• the long-term viability of the product

B. Duplication

If the selection of a CD-ROM, DVD or Diskette duplicates an existing print resource in the Library’s collection the following criteria should also be considered:

• whether a cost benefit for purchasing multiple formats exists
• the desirability of multiple formats meet the different needs of library patrons
• the feasibility of canceling the print subscription and relying on the electronic version

C. Provision of Access

The Library will maximize access to its CD-ROM, DVD and Diskette materials through a variety of means including:

• appropriate staff and user support and training for in-building use
• access to selected resources through the Law Library web page
• prompt updating of information, including periodic verification of URL links found on the Library’s web page
D. Deselection

Periodic examination of CD-ROM, DVD and Diskette materials is required due to the dynamic nature of such resources. These guidelines should provide some suggestions for when to deselect a resource:

- a product is no longer available or maintained
- the currency and reliability of the resource’s information has lost its value
- an Internet site or resource offers more comprehensive coverage or other advantages

E. Licensing

The Director will negotiate all licensing agreements and will act as the signer of the agreements. The Library will comply with all applicable vendor licensing agreements.

F. Policy Review

Because of the complex and dynamic nature of providing access to such resources, the Director and the librarians will need to review this policy regularly.