

# **Sources of Law**

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5 main sources of law are:

- Federal & state constitutions
- Common Law
- Statutes
- Court decisions
- Administrative Law

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## **Constitution**

A country's document which spells out the principles by which the government operates.

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## Common Law

**Precedent** - Doctrine stating that a judge is required to follow an earlier court decision when deciding a case with similar circumstances.

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## Statutes

**Statute** - laws specifically passed by a governing body

- Can order people to do something
  - Ex: Pay taxes
- Can prevent people from doing something
  - Ex: Discrimination

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## **Court Decisions**

Court Law is sometimes called case law.

Courts make laws in 3 ways:

- Common law tradition
- By interpreting statutes (laws)
- By judicial review

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## **Administrative Law**

A power given by the Legislative Branch to an administrative agency with knowledge over certain fields of business or departments.

Also called Regulatory agencies