Law encyclopedias can be useful as indexes and introductory guides to the law. The *Maryland Law Encyclopedia* provides an overview of Maryland law within broad subject areas. Use this secondary source to help you find and understand the primary sources of law (i.e., statutes, regulations, and cases).

**SCOPE**

This encyclopedia provides a narrative text summary of Maryland law, arranged by subject. It includes citations to cases, statutes, Attorney General Opinions, and *Law Review* articles.

**ARRANGEMENT**

Volumes 1-23 contain topical summaries that are arranged in alphabetical order.

For each topic there is a brief overview paragraph of the content, a listing of related articles within the encyclopedia, and other research references.

There is also an outline of the sub-topics included in the article. Each sub-topic has been assigned a section number.

The article itself includes references (citations) to specific Maryland statutes, cases, regulations, and other primary sources.

At the back of each individual volume, there is a title index to the complete contents of that volume.

**SEARCHING**

Use the General Index in volumes 24 and 25 to find specific articles and sub-topics.

Look up words related to your problem in the General Index. You may want to think of specific descriptive terms that relate to the five elements common to most legal problems:

- **parties** involved (e.g., tenant, minor, witness)
- **places** and **things** involved (e.g., motor vehicle, swimming pool, airport)
- **causes** of action (e.g., negligence, trespass, slander)
- **defenses** (e.g., assumption of risk, contributory negligence)
- **types of relief sought** (e.g., compensation, custody, injunction)

You will be directed to a topic and section number within volumes 1-23. Find the volume of the encyclopedia that includes the topic to which you are referred; then look for the specific section number within the topic.

**OTHER INFORMATION**

Volume 26 includes the Table of Laws and Rules. Use this to find where specific provisions of statutes and rules are cited throughout the volumes of the *Maryland Law Encyclopedia*.

Volumes 26 and 27 include an alphabetical Table of Cases. Use this to find the specific article title(s) and section number(s) of the encyclopedia that allude to each specific case.