

# Master Sheet

A master sheet is a comprehensive list of all laws relevant to your research study.

Master sheets are organized by jurisdiction, meaning researchers will create one master sheet for each jurisdiction in the study. Master sheets include the relevant law's citation, title, credit history and effective dates. Master sheets are created when researchers collect and build the law.

## Contents of a Master Sheet

### CITATION

The master sheet must contain citations for all the relevant law in that jurisdiction. Citations are the numbers and letters that are used to identify laws, and are usually followed by the title for that law. Citations are used to easily find laws that are referenced.

### STATUTORY HISTORY

The master sheet must contain statutory history for each law when creating a longitudinal study. The master sheet may contain statutory history for each law when creating a cross-sectional study. The statutory history is the session law number for bills and agency notice for regulations.

### EFFECTIVE DATES

The master sheet must contain effective dates for all laws included in the study. The effective date is the date the legislation becomes effective, which may differ from the approval date or the signature date.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any additional information recorded on a master sheet is at the discretion of the researcher. However, it is important to remember that other team members will use the master sheet, so any information that may be relevant to locate, update, or check the law should be included. Examples of additional information are:

- A note that the law is not included in the final text because it is out of scope or repetitive, or
- A note indicating that an effective date could not be located.

Below you will find part of a master sheet on distracted driving laws in Alaska, as an example:

## Sample Master Sheet

### Alaska Stat. § 12.55.135 Sentences of Imprisonment for misdemeanors

- SLA 2006, ch. 87, §§ 4, 5
  - Effective October 4, 2006

Statutory history

Effective date

Citation

### Alaska Stat. § 28.01.010 Provisions uniform throughout state

- SLA 2010, ch. 29 § 38
  - Effective July 1, 2010

Law has not  
been amended

### Alaska Stat. § 28.35.161 Use of electronic devices while driving; unlawful installation of television, monitor, or similar device

- SLA 2009, ch. 42 § 1
  - Effective September 18, 2009
- SLA 2012, ch. 14, § § 2-5
  - Effective May 11, 2012

Law has been  
amended

Notice that some laws only have one effective date listed, while the last law on the Sample Master Sheet has two effective dates. The laws with one effective date, such as Alaska Stat. § 28.01.010, have been enacted but have not had any amendments. However, as you can see from the statutory history, Alaska Stat. § 28.35.161, has been amended, with the second effective date reflecting this amendment. As a project is updated with amendments to laws, the master sheet should be updated to include new amendment. It is important to collect new effective dates when a law is amended, so that your study can track the evolution of that law over time.