CFR vs. Federal Register

What’s the difference?

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

- Contains the text of all federal rules currently in effect.
- A rule must be FINAL and published in the Federal Register BEFORE it appears in the CFR.

Federal Register

- Contains final rules, proposed rules or other notices when published by an agency
- PLUS a summary section explaining the rule.

Which comes first?

A rule must be FINAL and published in the Federal Register BEFORE it appears in the CFR.

Which one do I use?

Use the CFR when you need to find all the regulations currently in effect on a topic.

Use the FEDERAL REGISTER when you want to see the background on a rule OR when you want to see a proposed rule or notice (and its background) before it is finalized.

Where do I find them?

Find the CFR at FDSys, eCFR.gov, Westlaw or Lexis. Westlaw and Lexis provide helpful CASE NOTES and CROSS-REFERENCES.

Find regulations in the FEDERAL REGISTER at Regulations.gov, FDSys, Westlaw or Lexis.