Finding a Regulation by Citation:

There are many ways to find federal regulations. Which method you use depends on what information you have about the regulation you are trying to locate. For example, you might have a C.F.R. citation, or a citation to a relevant statute, or just the general subject of the regulation.

Let's assume you have a citation to a regulation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A citation to the C.F.R. looks like this:</th>
<th>A citation to the Federal Register looks like this:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This citation tells us that the regulation cited is section 1 of part 304 of title 16 of the 2004 edition of the Code of Federal Regulations.</td>
<td>This citation tells us that the regulation appears in volume 53 of the Federal Register, on page 38,942, which is in the October 4, 1988 issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With a citation, we could look up the regulation in the print C.F.R. or Federal Register, or on a free government web site known as FDSys.gov. The regulations can also be retrieved on Westlaw, Lexis, or BloombergLaw.

It is usually best to look at regulations in their codified form, so this tutorial will focus on finding regulations in the C.F.R. Keep in mind, however, that the Federal Register is the only source for proposed (non-final) federal regulations and the only print source for very recent final federal regulations.

So let’s look up a regulation by its citation:

In the Georgetown Williams Law Library, the current print C.F.R. is available in the Reading Room. You can request earlier editions at the Circulation Desk. Browse the volume spines for the volume that covers your title and part. For example, the spine and cover shown here contain parts 0 to 999 of title 16, and therefore includes 16 C.F.R. § 304.1.

When looking up the regulation on FDSYS.gov be aware that the Government Printing Office offers two online versions of the C.F.R. One version, provides authenticated PDF images of print pages, and thus provides the "official" version of federal regulations. This version is no more up-to-date than the print C.F.R.
The other version, called the e-CFR, offers HTML versions of federal regulations. This version is very up-to-date, but unofficial. Because it is more current, it is usually better to use the e-CFR.

Starting at the e-CFR page, http://www.ecfr.gov, you would then select your title from the menu (Title 16) and click GO. From here we just browse for the correct part and section number, 304.1. By scrolling down, we locate part 304. Here’s the correct rule from the e-CFR.

Now let’s look up the regulation on Westlaw, Lexis, and Bloomberg. Remember that Bloomberg Law, LexisAdvance, and WestlawNext allow you to pull up a document just by entering its citation. Entering the citation in the search box is more efficient than searching the full C.F.R. or Federal Register database.

For example, on WestlawNext’s introductory screen, retrieving the section of the CFR is as easy as entering 16 CFR 304.1 in the search box, and pressing Enter. And here’s the regulation retrieved by its C.F.R. citation on WestlawNext. The same procedure works on Lexis Advance.
On Bloomberg Law, you would simply enter the citation into the <GO> bar at the top of the page and select “citation search” from the dropdown menu.