

Case Law Index Drafting Guidelines

Searching

- I will give you a list of search terms to begin using; however you may want to create better ones as you learn more about the topic. Save all of these new search terms or search phrases in a separate document. I will put them in to Westclips for future updates, so I can keep them constantly up to date.
- How do you develop search terms
 - Saved on the server are previous used search terms for the other CLIs which I will provide you with. This will give you some ideas to start with.
 - There really is magic way to develop search terms. Start with a basic understanding of the area such as the overview article, look at CRS Reports, publications, and cases. Then begin to develop search terms based off of common issues found in those sources.
 - Search all major laws used in your topic. Keyciting cases that reference a statute in a Reading Room is a great way to get a lot of the cases in a given area.
- Use the attached template filling in the areas in Yellow.

Citations

- Use Bluebook citation format when citing cases, here are two examples:
 - CNH Capital Am., LLC v. Wilnot Farming Ventures, LLC, No. 07-0611, 2008 WL 2386166 (W.D. La. June 11, 2008) – notice cases with just a lexis or westlaw database cite should have the docket number included
 - Delta & Pine Land Co. v. Nationwide Agribusiness Ins. Co., 530 F.3d 395 (5th Cir. 2008)
- If the case is recent and has been marked to be published in a reporter, follow this citation method to let me know that I need to add the official cite when published.
 - Swift & Co. v. Elias Farms, Inc., --- F.3d ---, 2008 WL 3891405 (8th Cir. 2008)
- *Again, please save all new search terms that you develop and let me know which ones worked well.*
- Use Bluebook abbreviations for the names of courts, westlaw and lexis abbreviations are usually not correct. Examples:
 - **Not Correct** - Collins v. Tex. Natural Res. Conservation Comm'n, 94 S.W.3d 876 (Tex.App.-Austin 2002)
 - **Correct** - Collins v. Tex. Natural Res. Conservation Comm'n, 94 S.W.3d 876 (Tex. App. 2002)
 - Each States' court of appeals abbreviates its name different. Could be Ct. App., App. Ct., or App. Check the Bluebook to know which is correct.
- Use Bluebook abbreviations for the case names when appropriate. Example:
 - Not Correct - Ranchers Cattleman Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of America v. United States Department of Agriculture
 - Correct - Ranchers Cattleman Action Legal Fund United Stockgrowers of Am. v. U.S. Dep't of Agric.

Parentheticals

- Include a parenthetical at the end of each case to give the reader an idea of what the issue in the case is about. Example:

- United Vaccines, Inc. v. Diamond Animal Health, Inc, 409 F.Supp.2d 1083 (economic loss doctrine)
- Only capitalize important nouns or statute name, and use no punctuation.
- If the case has two or more issues, separate them with a semicolon.

Example:

- Williams v. Dow Chem. Co., 255 F.Supp. 2d 219 (S.D.N.Y. 2003) (FIFRA preemption; pesticide approval fraud)