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LAW LIBRARY BRIEFS



Volume 8, Number 6

The College of William and Mary
Marshall-Wythe Law Library

April, 1997

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LIBRARY EXAMINATION HOURS

Extended hours for law students studying in the library begin Sunday, April 13, and continue through Saturday, May 3. During this period, the building will be cleared and locked by campus security at 2:30 a.m. each evening. As the library circulation desk opens at 9 a.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. on Sunday, you need to ensure that your ID card is properly programmed to access the building/library security system if you wish to enter earlier.

Restricted access to the law library begins Friday, April 18, at 5:00 p.m. and extends through Saturday, May 3, at 5:00 p.m. During this period, access is limited to Marshall-Wythe law students *and others who require the use of law library materials for research purposes*. Any non-law student or patron needing law library materials may conduct research here during the examination period. Dean Sadler provides study rooms on campus for non-law students who desire a quiet place to study.

As the spring semester draws to a close, the library staff wishes everyone good luck on exams.

LOCKER CLEAN-OUT

THE DEADLINE FOR LOCKER CLEAN-OUT AND KEY RETURN IS FRIDAY, MAY 2, 1997, BY 5:00 P.M. Lockers must be

emptied and the locker key returned (with barcode and key tag attached) to the circulation desk. To continue using your locker during the summer session, you may fill out a locker renewal form in lieu of returning the key. Return the completed form to the circulation desk by the May 2 deadline to renew the locker. There is a \$10.00 replacement charge for keys not returned.

Lockers will be available for the summer session as keys are returned from the spring semester. Any law student who needs a locker for the summer can obtain a key at the circulation desk. **ALL LOCKER KEYS MUST BE RETURNED AT THE END OF THE SUMMER SESSION FOR REASSIGNMENT ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVED BASIS ON THE FIRST DAY OF FALL SEMESTER CLASSES.** . . .PSK

LOOSELEAF SERVICES

As summer and summer jobs loom, we offer a reminder about an important research resource: looseleaf services.

INTRODUCTION

Looseleaf services are given their name because of their format: multi-ringed binders with individually filed pages. Basically, two characteristics distinguish looseleafs from other legal material: their comprehensiveness and their currency.

Looseleaf services can prove to be invaluable resources. For some areas of law, the pertinent looseleaf service functions as a mini-library. It can include relevant state and federal statutes, rules and regulations from administrative agencies, and court decisions from federal and state courts and administrative agencies.

DESCRIPTION

Looseleaf coverage may vary depending on the particular area of law and whether it is heavily regulated or not. For areas of law involving lots of regulation, looseleafs tend to be very comprehensive and include judicial, legislative, and administrative law, as well as editorial material.

On the other hand, looseleaf services covering areas such as family law or criminal law where there is less regulation tend to focus on relevant court decisions for all state and federal jurisdictions.

ADVANTAGES

Looseleaf services can offer many advantages over other resources.

- 1) First, **all** relevant law is collected in one place, regardless of its original form of publication. A typical looseleaf service may include the following primary sources:
 - federal and state statutes;
 - court decisions from federal and state courts in addition to those issued by administrative agencies;
 - rules and regulations of administrative agencies;
 - agency rulings.

Keep in mind, however, that there may be differences in coverage and treatment between the original publication and the looseleaf service. For example, sometimes only portions of decisions are included in a looseleaf service. On the other hand, on occasion a looseleaf may print a decision that is not printed in any official or unofficial reporter.

- 2) A second advantage looseleaf services offer is **currency**. Frequent updates of material are available for filing, often on a weekly basis. The currency of material in a looseleaf is usually superior to that of the official publication.

You can check the currency of the specific page by looking for a date on the bottom of the page. Frequently, the filing instructions are filed at the beginning of the volume so you can check the date of the last update.

- 3) A third advantage in using a looseleaf service is the **secondary material** it may include. Examples of helpful secondary material are:
 - summaries of proposed legislation and regulations, often with accompanying analysis;
 - news coverage of the most recent developments in that area of law;
 - editorial commentary such as interpretations, projections of trends, and background information.
- 4) A final advantage many looseleaf services extend is detailed **indexing**. Many services include subject indexes, tables of cases, and finding lists arranged by citation to rule, regulation, or statute, as well as other access points.

CAVEATS

Despite all the research advantages, however, keep the following factors in mind when using a looseleaf service.

- 1) First, remember looseleaf services are **selective**. The publishers of a looseleaf decide what material to include in their service. While most publishers pride themselves on the comprehensive nature of their particular service, on occasion, relevant material will be overlooked or omitted. Therefore, don't view looseleafs as the definitive source for all material related to your issue.
- 2) Second, your law firm or organization may not subscribe to a particular looseleaf for a variety of reasons. Of course, if your firm does a substantial amount of work in a

particular area, it is more than likely they will subscribe to the applicable looseleaf.

However, if your firm does not do much work in a particular area, such an expensive source can't be justified. Remember to check with your firm librarian to see if your firm has an agreement with other area law libraries to share looseleaf services.

Also, be aware that some looseleafs are available on WESTLAW and LEXIS. However, this may prove to be an expensive way to gather information that is available elsewhere.

There are cost considerations in subscribing to such an expensive resource. Some looseleaf services cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 annually. Most of the material included in a looseleaf service is available in other sources; it just takes additional time and effort to compile the material. Also, looseleaf services require continual attention - updated material must be filed correctly and in a timely manner.

- 3) Also remember that looseleafs are organized differently depending upon the publisher. Binders are labeled differently, material is arranged differently, and different indexes are offered.

TOPICS COVERED

Looseleaf services are available in a variety of areas of law. A reference book entitled Legal Looseleafs in Print (REFERENCE/KF1.L4 1996) lists over 3800 looseleaf services put out by 270 publishers.

Additionally, the law library has compiled topical lists of the looseleaf services to which we currently subscribe. It is available in the circular black files located in the entry to the reference area.

HOW TO USE

Depending upon the publisher, looseleaf services have extremely different arrangements. The best approach to take when using a looseleaf for the first time is to take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the service. Most looseleafs have detailed "how to use" sections. These sections are located in different places depending on the looseleaf. For example, CCH publications include a tab at the top of the divider for the "How To Use" section. Other looseleaf services may include the how-to section near the indexes to the set.

Within the "How to Use" section you may encounter: 1) an explanation of the arrangement of the looseleaf; 2) lists of abbreviations used throughout the service; 3) helpful research tips; 4) lists of other publications of that publisher (hoping to entice you into their services).

FEATURES

Most looseleaf services have at least a few features in common. Being familiar with these features can save you some time and frustration in your research efforts.

- 1) Paragraph number
One especially important fact to remember when using a looseleaf service is the use of paragraphs or sections, rather than pages, to identify material. Because pages are interfiled so frequently, sequential page numbering would be impossible. So paragraph or section numbers are employed as references in the indexes and for citation purposes.
- 2) Indexes
In using indexes, a word of caution. Although there is a tab for the index, there are usually not separate dividers for parts of that index. So there may be the main index, a current index, and a very current index. Remember to check all of them.

3) Citators

Be aware that some looseleaf services have their own citators to direct you to other relevant material. Like Shepard's, these citators are compiled in bound volumes and updated with paperbound volumes.

CONCLUSION

In summary, use a looseleaf service if one is available in the particular area of law in which you are researching. It can save you a lot of time in tracking down the same material in its original form of publication. Remember to consult the "How to Use" section. And remember to supplement your looseleaf research using other relevant sources. ...ST

IN BRIEF

Carrel Clean-up. Independent research carrels should be cleared, with all books returned and all papers removed, by May 2. Also by May 2, organization or review carrels must have all items renewed and arrangements made for keeping papers over the summer. Let's have a sparkling clean library to show Mom and Dad for graduation!

Stolen Property. Be particularly careful about leaving your valuable belongings unattended in the library during the exam period. Thieves often strike academic libraries before and during exams when they know many students will be on campus and studying.

Interim Hours. Interim library hours begin Sunday, May 4 and extend through Monday, May 26. During interims the building is locked between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. each evening. Summer school hours begin Tuesday, May 27.

Exam Period Typing Carrel Usage. There are six typing carrels which students may use for study purposes. A sign-up schedule for these carrels is available at the circulation desk.

Typing carrels and the two student conference/video viewing rooms (rooms 244 & 245) are unavailable for taking exams.

POPULAR LEGAL VIDEOS

The library has a great collection of popular videos with legal themes on reserve for two day check-out. Recently, during an inventory of the collection, we discovered a number of missing videos. If one of these videos is lurking in your home video collection, please return it. No questions/no fines -- we would simply like to have the titles returned to loan to other patrons. Thanks for your cooperation.

LIST OF MISSING RESERVE VIDEOS

It Could Happen to You
The Man Who Broke 1,000 Chains
Defending Your Life
Defenseless
The Godfather, part III TAPE 2
Incident at Oglala
Prince of the City TAPE 1
A Cry in the Dark
In Cold Blood
The Last Innocent Man
The Music Box
The Silence of the Lambs
12 Angry Men
True Colors

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