



LOOSELEAF SERVICES RESEARCH GUIDE

H. DOUGLAS BARCLAY LAW LIBRARY

Check the library's "Location Guide" and Summit/Voyager the Online catalog for the current location of sources mentioned in this pathfinder.

PURPOSE:

This pathfinder will introduce researchers to a particular type of legal research tool: the looseleaf service. It will describe what looseleaf services are, what they contain, how to find them in the law library, common features of looseleaf services, and tips on using them for legal research.

OUTLINE:

- I. WHAT ARE LOOSELEAF SERVICES?**
- II. WHAT DO LOOSELEAF SERVICES PROVIDE?**
- III. HOW TO FIND LOOSELEAF SERVICES**
- IV. EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF LOOSELEAF SERVICES**
- V. COMMON FEATURES OF LOOSELEAF SERVICES**
- VI. TIPS ON USING LOOSELEAF SERVICES**

WHAT ARE LOOSELEAF SERVICES?

Looseleaf services are law books in three-ring or post-binder format. The content is updated frequently. Looseleaf services are published for numerous areas of law, especially areas of state or federal law which are heavily regulatory, e.g. taxation, labor and communication.

There are four major publishers of these legal services:

- Bureau of National Affairs (BNA)
- Commerce Clearing House (CCH)
- Prentice-Hall (PH)

- Matthew Bender (MB)

WHAT DO LOOSELEAF SERVICES PROVIDE?

A looseleaf service can be considered as a mini-library of primary and secondary material on a given law topic or subject. The typical service can include, among other things, the following:

- Recent court opinions and/or summaries of opinions.
- Relevant legislation - reprinted and usually explained in detail.
- Administrative regulations, decisions and advisory opinions and/or summaries of same. (Some of these may not be available elsewhere).
- References to relevant studies and reports.
- Editorial comments and practice tips.
- Internal finding aids.

HOW TO FIND LOOSELEAF SERVICES

As you start a research project, determine whether one or more looseleaf services exist which cover your research topic or parts of it. Looseleaf services can reduce your research time by providing, in one place, information you will need to cover a topic thoroughly.

- *SUMMIT*
 - You can search the library’s online catalog by subject, title or author heading.
For example:
Environmental Law (subject search)
BNA’s Health Law Reporter (title search)
Bureau of National Affairs (author search)
 - You can search the term “looseleaf” in a keyword search.
For example: **tax +looseleaf**
- *Legal Looseleaves in Print* **Reference KF1 .L436**
 - This work is indexed so you can find looseleaves by subject, title or publisher.
 - Do a title search on Summit, the library’s online catalog, to determine if the library owns a particular service listed in this work.
 - Please note that looseleaf services at the Law Library do not circulate.
- *LEXIS/WESTLAW*
 - LEXIS and WESTLAW carry some services in full text online.
 - Check the *Westlaw Database Directory* and the *Lexis Directory of Online Services*, under the publisher’s name or under a topical law area, to determine if a service is online.

- Westlaw and Lexis provide parallel citations to decisions which are reported in looseleaf services. You may need to check a guide to abbreviations for the names of the reporters cited.

EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF LOOSELEAF SERVICES

- BNA's *United States Law Week*.
- CCH's *Labor Law Reporter*.
- BNA's *Labor Relations Reporter*.

COMMON FEATURES OF LOOSELEAF SERVICES

- **Detailed Instructions on How to Use the Service**
 - Designed to help you become a proficient user quickly.
 - Look for a tabbed section "HOW TO USE THIS SERVICE".
- **Multiple Indices and Tables**
 - Good quality indexing is one of the most important features of a looseleaf service.
 - Multiple tables provide access to the service by case name, statute, regulation, etc.
- **Paragraph Number or Section Number Arrangement**
 - Citations in the indices will often be to paragraph numbers or section numbers instead of page numbers.
- **Current Materials or News Sections**
 - Report Letters or Newsletters summarize the latest developments in the area.
 - The Report Letter usually provides a reference to treatment of the news item in the body of the service.
- **Separately Bound Decisions Volumes or Transfer Binders**
 - As reported decisions accumulate, the publisher will reissue those decisions in bound volumes or send transfer binders to hold them, making room in the looseleaf binders for new decisions.
 - Volumes of decisions may be:
 - 1) indexed within the looseleaf binders;
 - 2) indexed volume by volume; or
 - 3) indexed in separate digests which cover a multi-year period.

VI. TIPS ON USING LOOSELEAF SERVICES

- **Currency of the Service**
 - Check the date on the latest report letter, newsletter or set of filing instructions.
 - Check date each set of filing instructions as they are put into the set.

- **Citing Looseleaf Services**
 - Rarely cite a looseleaf service unless the material does not exist elsewhere.
 - Use the looseleaf service for background research purposes and as a search tool to find primary sources (cases, statutes, etc.).
 - Citations to primary sources reprinted in the service will be provided. Do not assume that these citations conform to your required style manual!