Check the library’s “Location Guide” and Library Online Catalog for the current location of sources mentioned in this pathfinder.

PURPOSE:

This revised pathfinder is an introduction to the *American Law Reports (ALR)* series. It offers tips on how to use the series. It also shows how the *ALR* fits into the publisher’s *Total Client-Service Library* (TCSL) research system. Please note that references to *ALR* ‘articles’ or ‘annotations’ in this pathfinder refer to the same thing, an essay on a topic of law.

OUTLINE:

I. GETTING STARTED

II. WHAT ARE THE AMERICAN LAW REPORTS?

III. CONTENTS OF AN ALR ANNOTATION

IV. HOW THE ALR SERIES IS ORGANIZED

V. FINDING AN ALR ANNOTATION

VI. ALR ON WESTLAW

VII. UPDATING AN ALR ANNOTATION

VIII. THE "TOTAL CLIENT-SERVICE LIBRARY"

IV. VIDEO GUIDES

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY
I. GETTING STARTED:

1. CALI at http://cali.org/

   CALI is a service that provides students with tools to advance their legal education. Students can learn how to use ALR Annotations while being tested by an online quiz. (Note: students need to register their email address and create a password in order to use the lesson.). The steps are as follows:
   - Click on the Lessons Tab located at the top of the page.
   - Select the category Lessons by Subject.
   - Choose Legal Research.
   - Scroll down and then click on American Law Reports.

2. Westlaw ALR at: http://west.thomson.com/alr/

   - Presents the different uses of the ALR.
   - Explanation of how the ALR is formatted.
   - Includes link to free ALR resources.

II. WHAT ARE THE AMERICAN LAW REPORTS?

The ALR offers researchers annotations (articles) on a narrow point of law. The ALR is not a reporter in the sense that it collects the text of reported cases in a given jurisdiction.

Typical annotations start with the text of an entire appellate case and are followed by a discussion of the legal trend or doctrine that that case represents. These annotations also comment on related decisions from all jurisdictions on the points of law raised by the representative case. A Table of Jurisdictions directs the researcher to cases within specific states. A relevant annotation will also provide the researcher with prevailing policy arguments and legal doctrine for the issue covered in the annotation.

Additionally, a relevant annotation will provide the researcher with citations to cases, statutes, law reviews, and other ALR annotations. These citations typically found in an ALR annotation offer a useful starting point for research on narrow points of law.

Updating:

The ALR series continues to be updated. Updated commentary and case comments are found in the pocket parts. Also, ALR annotations are super-ceded by later, more current annotations. To verify that an annotation has or has not been super-ceded, researchers should check in the History Table at the end of the ALR Index for any references to the annotation that they are consulting.
III. CONTENTS OF AN ALR ANNOTATION


Typical Annotation Contents

1. Fully reported case at the beginning of the annotation that illustrates the point under consideration in the annotation, including a summary of the decision.


3. Related annotations - directs the researcher to related subjects for research.

4. Summary - provides overview of the discussions in the annotation.

5. Practice pointers – provides tips for case preparation and trial tactics.

6. Detailed case analysis - summarizes every case on point, organized according to the legal principles and factual situations involved.

IV. HOW THE ALR SERIES IS ORGANIZED

The ALR series has six distinct sets of ALR annotations. Each set of volumes is augmented by various finding aids and updates. The series includes the following:

- **American Law Reports: Annotated** (1919 – 1948) Vols. 1 – 175 KF 132 Floor 4
  - ALR First Series Quick Index KF132

- **American Law Reports: Annotated. 2d series** (1948 - 1965) Vols. 1 – 100 KF 132 Floor 4
  - ALR 2d Digest (vols. 1-7) KF 132
  - ALR 2d Later Case Service Supplement (vols. 1-100) KF 132
  - ALR 2d Series Word Index to Annotations (vols. 1-75) KF 132

- **ALR 3d** (1965 - 1980) Vols. 1 – 100 KF 132 Floor 4
  - See the ALR Digests and Indexes section below.

  - See the ALR Digests and Indexes section below.

- **ALR 5th** (1992 - 2004) Vols. 1 – 120 KF 132 Floor 4
  - See the ALR Digests and Indexes section below.
V. FINDING AN ALR ANNOTATION

- **ALR 6th (2004 - )** Vols. 1- KF 132 Floor 4
  - ALR 5th and 6th Table of Cases (vols. A-Z, 2006 ed.) KF 132

  - ALR Federal Quick Index (covers Fed. and Fed. 2d, 2001 ed. w/updates) KF 132

- **ALR Federal 2d (2005 - )** Vols. 1- KF 132 Floor 4
  - ALR Federal Table of Cases (covers Fed. and Fed. 2d) KF 132

- **ALR Digests and Indexes** KF 132 Floor 4
  - ALR Digest of Annotations with “Total Client-Service” Library References (covers 3d, 4th, 5th, and Federal) KF 132
  - ALR Quick Index (covers 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th) KF 132
  - ALR Index (covers 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, and Federal) KF 132.6
  - West’s ALR Digest (vols. 1-20) KF 132.1

**Note:** Volume 6 of the combined index contains a history table which lists annotations that have been supplemented or superseded.

This table should always be consulted when using the ALR.

- **ALR Digests:**
  - Organize the law into more than 400 legal topics.
  - Separate sets of digest volumes are available for ALR 1st and ALR 2d.
  - ALR 3d, 4th, 5th, and Fed are combined in one set.
• **ALR Total Client-Service Library:**
  - Other units of the "Total Client-Service Library" (TCSL) often provide references to annotations (see below for more on the TCSL).
  - The TCSL is included in every annotation.

For more details about finding an annotation consult the beginning pages of any *ALR 4th* or *ALR 5th* volume. Each volume in the *ALR 4th & ALR 5th* series has an alphabetical list of subjects annotated as well as a list of annotations in each volume.

**VI. ALR ON WESTLAW:**

- Westlaw updates *ALR2d-ALR6th, ALR Fed*, and *ALR Fed 2d* on a weekly basis, which ensures that your research is current.
- The Westlaw database provides electronic annotations (“e-annos”), which are not available in print. Find them by year and # (i.e. 2005 *A.L.R.6th* 1).
- The *ALR* database can be searched in several ways, including the Table of Contents, the Index, or by West Digest Key Numbers.
- The following search fields will help ease your research:
  - TC for Table of Contents
  - IN for Index
  - TO for West Digest Key Numbers
  - CI for Citation
- Example. To limit your search to the *ALR* index, search using this format: *ci(index)* and your keyword or topic.

**VII. UPDATING AN ALR ANNOTATION**

Check the “History Table” in the *ALR Index* to see a list of updated annotations from *ALR 2d, ALR 3d, ALR 4th, ALR 5th, or ALR Federal*.

In addition, each series has its own form of supplementation. For more details about “How is an *ALR* Annotation Updated” consult the beginning pages of any *ALR 4th* or *ALR 5th* volume.
VIII. THE "TOTAL CLIENT-SERVICE LIBRARY" (TCSL)

The Total Client Service Library (TCSL) is found in each ALR annotation. The TCSL refers the researcher to an integrated package of West’s encyclopedias, case reporters, treatises, finding aids, and practice guides on a given topic. All of these resources are cross referenced to one another and allow the researcher to comprehensively research a given topic.

Resources typically referred to in the TCSL include:

- *American Jurisprudence 2d*; Reference (Encyclopedias Wall); KF154 .A42.
- *American Jurisprudence Pleading and Practice Forms Annotated*; KF 8836 .A45.
- *American Jurisprudence Trials*; KF 8915 .A82.
- *New York Jurisprudence 2d*; Reference (Encyclopedias Wall); KFN5065 .N48 2d.
- *New York Consolidated Laws Service*; Stack 1; KFN 5030 .A45.
- *Federal Procedure*; Floor 5; KF 8835 .F431.
- *United States Supreme Court Reports. Lawyers’ Edition*; Floor 4; KF101 .L38.

IX. VIDEO GUIDE

*How to Use ALR; Reserves; KF 240 .H68*

- Discusses various techniques to successfully use the *ALR.*
X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following titles have sections dedicated to a discussion of the ALR.

MORRIS L. COHEN ET AL., HOW TO FIND THE LAW, 115-134 (9th ed. 1989).
Reserves; KF 240. H68

• Overview with illustrations of an ALR annotation

KF 240 .P76

• Tips for finding ALR annotations online.

Reserves: KF 240 F86

• Overview with illustrations of a typical ALR annotation.

Reference: KF 250.E57

See § 16.2.1.
• Using the ALR as a secondary source, with illustrations of ALR indexes.
• Explains how an ALR is updated.

Reference; KF 240.S585

• Basic explanation of the ALR with illustrations.