

RESEARCH GUIDE SERIES 3 – GENERAL LEGAL RESOURCES



Guide #3D - USING AND UPDATING ALR

American Law Reports (ALR) (KF 132 A5) published by Lawyers Cooperative/ Bancroft -Whitney, offers an encyclopedic approach to various topics, using a major case as the core about which it builds its discussions. Gathered in the annotations are references to cases from all jurisdictions, making this series a useful starting point for any type of legal research. Citations to ALR can be found in many other services printed by these publishers (Am Jur 2nd, Deering's, USCS, etc.) or by using one of its many indexes.

Six series of ALR exist:

ALR 1st (1919-1948), ALR 2d (1948-1965), and ALR 3d (1965-1980) all include state and federal topics to 1969, but only state topics from 1969-1980. ALR 4th (1980-1991), ALR 5th (1992-) and ALR 6th (2005-) cover only state topics. ALR Fed (1969-) and ALR Fed 2d (2005-) covers only federal topics.

Each of the series has its own index and digest. Cases found in ALR can be updated by Shepardizing the official or regional citations. Annotations found in ALR are updated differently depending on the series. ALR 1st is updated using the ALR Blue Book of Supplemental Decisions (shelved after ALR 1st,) 10 volumes with an annual pamphlet. Check each volume as they are not cumulative. ALR 2d is updated by the ALR 2d Later Case Service (shelved after ALR 2nd,) 100 volumes arranged by original ALR 2d citation, supplemented with annual pocket parts. ALR 3-6 and ALR Fed are supplemented by annual pocket parts in each volume.

Other ALR Tips

The last volume of ALR Index has something called, innocuously, "Annotation History Table." Consult this! It will tell you if the ALR annotation you have has been superseded or supplemented by later annotations.

Finally, ALR is a library on both Lexis and Westlaw. If you cannot find an annotation through the indexes or digests, you can try an electronic search query in the ALR library.

Finding an ALR annotation on point will give you a cohesive view of the law. The annotation will give you helpful references to other Lawyer's Co-operative publications such as the Am Jur series.

For Further Information Consult a Librarian

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