

# LEX LOCI

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*“Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.”*

Benjamin Franklin



Northern  
Kentucky  
Bar  
Association

# FOLLOW THE MONEY! WHAT ARE YOU SPENDING ON RESEARCH?

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## Part One: Know the Basics.

The current economic climate makes saving more important than ever. If you are like everyone else, you are probably reviewing your overhead costs and looking for places to cut. Legal research costs are one of those overhead costs that you should closely monitor! The next three research articles in this series will focus on different ways to reduce your research costs, while continuing to conduct effective research. There is no magic wand that will make the need to spend money on research disappear, but you may discover methods of whittling away at these costs.

### RESEARCH BASICS

This article outlines effective techniques for quickly analyzing and addressing your legal issues. At the time you receive or give out an assignment think in terms of what is called the **JUST ASK Rule**. Adapted from a handout by Firm Librarian, Ellen Callinan, *Crowell & Moring, Washington, DC (1993)*.

**Jurisdiction** Find out if you need to examine federal, state, or administrative decisions, regulatory or legislative sources, or some combination.

**Useful Tips** Do you know of experts in the field, recent publications, or internal documents that could help you? Try to get names of people, and copies or cites of documents.

**Scope** How much information do you really need? Do you need exhaustive research, or just an overview?

**Terms of Art** Are there standard terms of art and their definitions? Knowing the right terminology will save you time, effort, and money.

**Acronyms** Clarify the spelling and meaning of acronyms. Attorneys in specialized fields tend to throw these around without realizing they may be meaningless to those new to the field.

**Sources** Find out if there are "bibles" of research in the field. Look for titles

of key journals, looseleaves, treatises, and databases in the field.

**Key Cost Constraints** Is the client a stickler on certain charges, such as Westlaw or Lexis? How many hours should you be billing on this project? Can you use faxes, document delivery services, messengers? Find out before you start spending.

### STARTING FROM SCRATCH

What can you do when you have few leads and/or when you are new to the area of law? Recommendation: Start your research in a secondary source, and check the annotated statutes if relevant. What if you have easy access to the statutes but not to secondary sources? Here are some tips on locating the secondary resources quickly and efficiently.

### FINDING TREATISES & RESEARCH GUIDES

There are two inexpensive reference books that will jump start your research by offering leads to secondary sources on your topic. The first resource is specific to Kentucky research and the second resource identifies the major legal treatises in different areas of law. You can use these handbooks to identify treatises on your topic and then verify if they are held by the big three: Chase Law Library, Hamilton County Law Library, or University of Cincinnati Law Library.

Kurt Meitzeier et al., **Kentucky Legal Research Manual** (3rd ed. 2005) \$79.00. Published by the UK, Office of Continuing Legal Education. This handbook reviews all aspects of conducting legal research in Kentucky: case law research, statutory authority, legislative history, administrative law, legal ethics, practice materials, and Kentucky legal citation. Additionally, it offers a useful bibliography of secondary sources specific to Kentucky research.

Kendall F. Svengalis, **Legal Information Buyer's Guide & Reference Manual**, (Annual Publication). \$149.00 new and older editions \$60+. Published by Rhode Island Law Press and available used via Amazon or Alibris. This resource tool

can be used as an acquisition guide, budgeting tool, bibliography, reference book, directory, and consumer awareness vehicle. The manual helps the researcher find the best, most cost-effective



sources of legal information. Half of the book is dedicated to substantive reviews of 1,600 legal treatises in 61 subject specialties. Each entry includes historical annual supplementation costs and critical information to help you avoid a stealth drain on your budget. Another major portion cites the primary law sources for each state and the District of Columbia.

### LOCATING SCHOLARLY ARTICLES

**Google Scholar** is the quick and dirty approach to locating legal journals and articles in other fields. The search interface is similar to Google. You can use the Advanced Search Feature to search by topic, case name, jurisdiction, or any distinctive words. The advantages are that the search is free, does not require any log-in, and the results are very fast. The downside is that the results are not posted in a specific order, and you may miss some well known scholarly articles available via Hein Online but not posted in Google Scholar! Google Scholar does not index 100% of the articles available on Hein Online.

**Hein Online Law Journals** The primary goal of Hein Online is to provide full-text access to legal journals. The coverage is from inception up through the most current volume allowed by contract. There are more than 1,300 journals and the library is not solely U.S. based but also contains periodicals from other countries. You can access Hein Online while at the Chase Law Library, and certain levels of membership at the Hamilton County Law Library provide remote access to this database.

### TRY FREE LIBRARY DATABASES

Kentucky funds a shared database sys-

tem, the Kentucky Virtual Library. The consortium helps defray database subscription costs and offers a number of scholarly research databases to the public. The public library offers remote access to a number of business and medical databases. The databases are free and can be accessed remotely with a library card. The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County also offers an array of research databases that can be accessed via a library card. Northern Kentucky citizens with a local library card can apply for

a reciprocal library card from the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

#### ASKING FOR HELP

Be sure to call the Chase Law Library and ask for assistance. We can recommend resources in our collection that may address your legal issue. The Chase Library Reference Desk phone number is 859.572.6484.

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## LEGAL AID ANNUAL CAMPAIGN REQUEST

The annual campaign of the Northern Kentucky Volunteer Lawyers (NKVL) and Legal Aid of the Bluegrass (LABG) is underway, and they are counting on your support. Together these organizations closed some 2,000 cases in the Northern Kentucky area last year, serving elderly and low-income people in family law, probate, eviction and foreclosure defense cases. What is most remarkable is that they were able to accomplish this despite suffering unprecedented budget cuts. In 2008, the Kentucky General Assembly cut the legal aid appropriation statewide from 1.5 million dollars per year to .5 million. The IOLTA Fund, which gave out nearly 1.7 million dollars in 2007, awarded only \$400,000 this year due to declining interest rates, and for the first time gave nothing to bar sponsored pro bono projects such as NKVL. Accordingly, LABG's Covington office has two fewer attorneys than it did two years ago.

You can help these worthy organizations by making a generous financial donation. Contributions are accepted by check payable to: Legal Aid of the Bluegrass, 104 E. Seventh Street, Covington, KY 41011 or visit their website: [www.lablaw.org](http://www.lablaw.org). Click on the "send a gift" button to pay using your Visa or Mastercard.

Won't you consider adding your name to their roster of donors? Please help NKVL and LABG continue their mission of opening doors of hope for a better life to thousands of people who have a right to justice. (Both organizations have 501 C 3 status so your contribution will likely be tax deductible.)

## Don't Shop Rates. Shop Companies.

Nothing says more about a company's good reputation than a long-standing commitment to the people it serves.



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