

Mississippi Legal Research

Kristy L. Gilliland

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Series Note

The Legal Research Series published by Carolina Academic Press includes titles from states around the country as well as a separate text on federal legal research. The goal of each book is to provide law students, practitioners, paralegals, college students, laypeople, and librarians with the essential elements of legal research in each jurisdiction. Unlike more bibliographic texts, the Legal Research Series books seek to explain concisely both the sources of legal research and the process for conducting legal research effectively.

Preface and Acknowledgments

While this book is intended as a resource for all legal researchers, including experienced attorneys, paralegals, and librarians, its focus audience is the law student. To balance the needs of these very different audiences, a few formatting and other editorial choices were made that deserve brief explanation.

First, to help new researchers, significant legal or bibliographic terms are italicized whenever they are introduced or defined. The index at the back of the book provides the page where these terms are introduced. (For more information about these specialized words and phrases, the reader is encouraged to consult a reputable legal dictionary like *Black's Law Dictionary*.) In contrast, terms used in search queries or other step-by-step instructions appear in bold type (e.g., search for **wills and Mississippi**), as do online links (e.g., click on **Shepard's**).

Second, this text reflects the movement today towards “next-generation” commercial online legal information services, in particular, the shift from Lexis.com to Lexis Advance and Westlaw Classic to WestlawNext. (To distinguish these services from their publishers, which also produce many of the print resources that are discussed within, the latter are referred to as “LexisNexis” and “West.”) While an overview of case-finding using Lexis Advance, WestlawNext, and Westlaw Classic is provided in Chapter 5, detailed instructions for online searching are generally not included. This decision was driven largely by the constant and rapid change in search methodologies and site organization; any explanation would be outdated before the book was off the presses. Instead, the reader is directed to the extensive collection of tutorials and training materials available via the Lexis Advance and WestlawNext websites, as well as the many helpful guides created by law librarians and other experts that are maintained free of charge on the web.

And, finally, I would like to thank Professor Suzanne Rowe, editor of this series, and Lindsay Gardner and Lindsay Massara for their dedication to this project. I am very grateful for their careful reading of this book's manuscript and many excellent suggestions for its improvement.