



Locating a California Court Brief

Research Guide

Last Updated: May, 2010

Scope:

This guide explains how to locate and review a California Appellate or California Supreme Court brief in our collection.

Our collection of briefs:

The San Diego County Public Law Library is a California brief depository. We have access to briefs filed in the California Court of Appeals (all six districts) and California Supreme Court. The table below shows the dates of coverage and format of briefs in our collection. Please note however, that our collection is not complete and we do not have access to every brief filed within the below time periods. The only way to be certain if we have a specific brief in our collection is to search for it in the available resources.

Court	Date	Format of Brief	How to Access
CA Supreme Court	1895 thru 1935	Microform	Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Supreme Court	*1959 thru current	Microform	Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Supreme Court	1972 thru 1995 Selected high-usage cases	HTML	California Public Law Library Briefs Service Database
CA Supreme Court	1972 thru current	PDF	Briefserve Database - Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Supreme Court	1990 thru current	HTML	California Public Law Library Briefs Service Database
CA Court of Appeal	1895 thru 1935	Microform	Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Court of Appeal	*1969 thru current	Microform	Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Court of Appeal	1972 thru 1995 Selected high-usage cases	HTML	California Public Law Library Briefs Service Database
CA Court of Appeal	1972 thru current	PDF	Briefserve Database - Ask a Reference Librarian for Assistance
CA Court of Appeal	1996 thru current	HTML	California Public Law Library Briefs Service Database



*We do not have any briefs from the California Supreme Court between 1935 and 1959, or from the Courts of Appeal between 1935 and 1969. If you are seeking briefs from this missing period, contact one of the depositories below, as the holdings vary among brief depositories.

Los Angeles County Law Library: <http://lalawlibrary.org/>

Bernard E. Witkin Law Library, Alameda County: <http://www.co.alameda.ca.us/law/index.htm>

California State Library, Bernard E. Witkin State Law Library: <http://www.library.ca.gov/>

Information needed to locate briefs:

The Reference Librarians can assist you in locating briefs for any case for which you have the case name (the names of the parties), the docket number, or the reported case citation.

Unfortunately, our online databases and microform collections are NOT searchable by keyword or topic. If you wish to search by keyword or topic, you will need to perform a search using Westlaw, Lexis, or our print digests first to locate relevant cases. Once you locate a relevant case we can assist you in locating briefs for that case in our databases or microform collection.

Reviewing briefs in the library:

Patrons who are present in the library may review without charge any briefs available on microform or in our California Public Law Library Briefs Service. Briefs located in the Briefserve database may only be accessed by the Reference Librarians and can be downloaded to your CD-ROM or USB storage device for free, depending on Reference Librarian availability and reasonable limits.

Using Our California Public Law Library Briefs Service:

Briefs are searchable in our briefs service database by case name, by docket number or by date as follows:

Search by Case Name:

1. Click on the **By Case Name**
2. Type all or part of the case name in the *Enter Case Name(s)* text box.
3. To narrow your search to specific courts, select the check box next to the court or division you want to search.
4. When your results appear, click on the blue hyperlink of the case name to view the available briefs for that case.

Search by Docket Number:

1. Click on **By Docket Number**
2. Type the docket number in the *Search for* text box.
3. To narrow your search to specific courts, select the check box next to the court or division you want to search.
4. When your results appear, click on the blue hyperlink of the case name to view the available briefs for that case.



Search by Date:

1. Click on **By Date**
2. Select a date by using the drop-down lists.
3. When your results appear, click on the blue hyperlink of the case name to view the available briefs for that case.

Printing and saving briefs when in the library:

- Microformed briefs can be copied at the microform readers for \$0.15 a page.
- Briefs found in a database can be printed for \$0.20 a page.
- To print from the California Public Law Library Briefs Service, first copy the document and paste onto Microsoft Word. After pasting the document, you may either save to a flash drive or select print.
- Most briefs require too much memory to save to a disk, but our patron computers can save materials to CD-ROMs or USB storage devices. You may use your own storage device, or you can purchase a CD-ROM at the library's Circulation Desk. Briefs located in microform can only be printed and cannot be saved in a digital format.

Retrieving briefs from your home or office:

For a fee, you may contact us with a request that particular briefs be sent to you. Please note that you must complete a Document Delivery Request and have the docket number, reporter citation, or name of the case for us to retrieve the briefs. You must also specify what briefs you are requesting (example: appellant's opening brief, respondent's brief, appellant's reply brief, petition for rehearing, answer to petition for rehearing, or amicus curiae brief).

Document delivery request forms, fees and information can be found online at:

http://www.sdcpll.org/services/document_requests.htm Prices for retrieval and delivery will vary depending on the format of the original brief and how you would like the brief delivered to you.

Consult a Reference Librarian for Additional Assistance