Library Instruction Session: Paralegal Studies

By Tim Ream

Spring 2026

Session Objectives

By the end of this session, you will know how to:

- Locate information using secondary sources in *Nexis Uni*
- Locate information using primary sources in *Nexis Uni*
- Understand and use legal citations to locate cases in *Nexis Uni*
- Request research assistance from FC Librarians

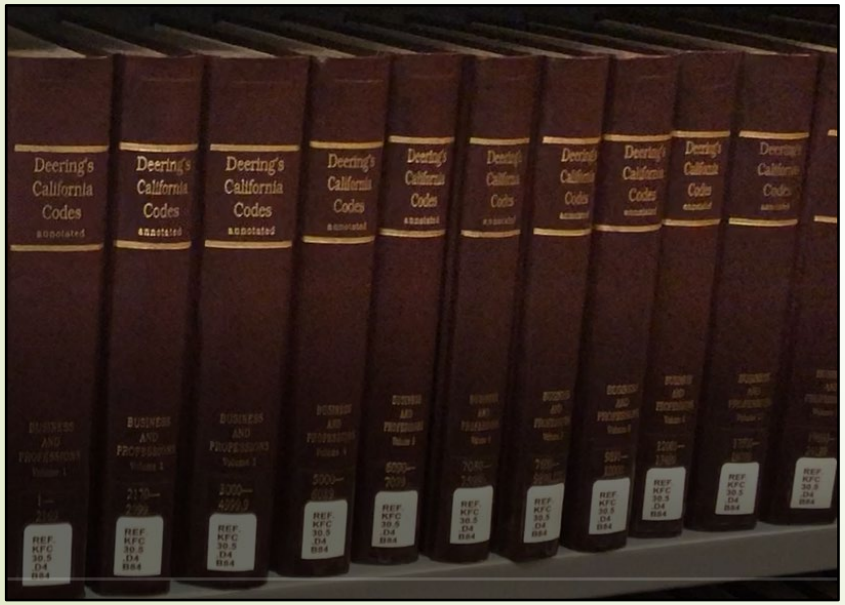
Paralegal Studies Reference Collection

- Our Paralegal Studies Reference Collection is on the 1st floor of the Library (behind the Reference Desk)
- These books cannot be checked out of the Library



Deering's California Codes

- The official CA state codes/laws.
- Arranged by topic in alphabetical order
- Because *Deering's California Codes* is available through Nexis Uni, the Library only keeps a small, sample collection on our physical shelves.



Official California Reports

- These volumes contain the cases decided by the CA Supreme Court
- They are arranged chronologically by year
- They are continually updated as new cases are decided and published



Official California Appellate Reports

- These volumes contain the cases decided by the CA Appellate Courts
- They are arranged chronologically by year
- They are continually updated as new cases are decided and published



West's California Digest

- This series of books allows you to look up a legal topic and review the associated CA cases
- The volumes are arranged by topic in alphabetical order
- They are continually updated as new cases are decided and published



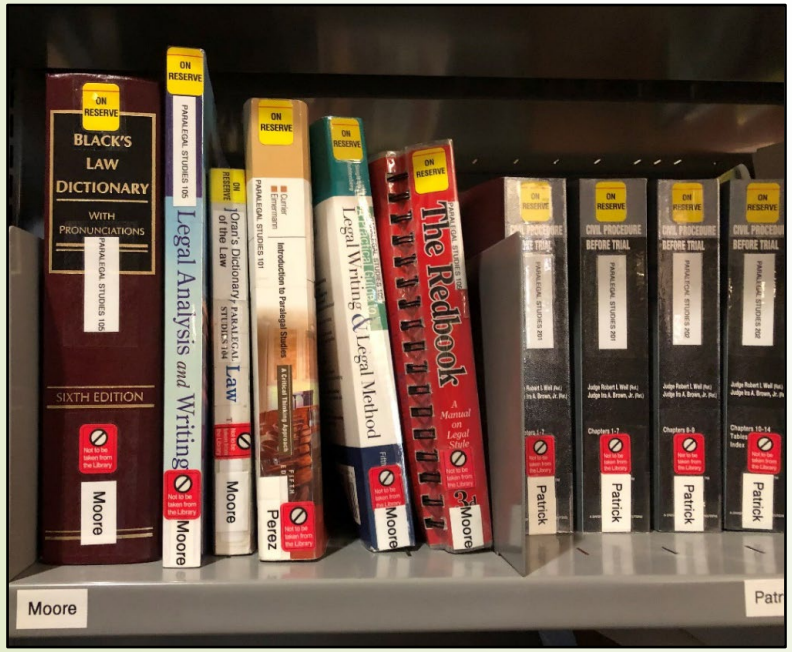
California Forms of Pleading and Practice

- These volumes contain the required legal forms submitted to the courts and between parties
- The volumes are arranged by the type of law. Example: Workers Compensation.
- They are continually updated as laws and forms change



Paralegal Studies Reserves

- The Library has *some* Paralegal Studies textbooks to use for your courses.
- Many of these textbooks can only be used in the Library for a limited amount of time.
- Ask the Circulation Desk Staff if we have your course textbook on reserve.



Books in the General Collection—2nd Floor

- The Library has numerous books on a wide range of legal and criminal justice related topics in its General Collection.
- A Librarian can help you locate these titles
- You can check them out for 2 weeks at a time





Secondary Sources

What are they?

- Research materials that describe and explain an area of law
- Starting points for locating background information
- Summaries and overviews of complex laws and legal issues
- Roadmaps to the *primary sources* that we will discuss later

Example

- *American Jurisprudence 2nd Ed.*

American Jurisprudence is an encyclopedia containing over 400 separate titles on a broad range of legal topics.

Primary Sources

What are they?

- The actual cases, codes, and regulations that make up our system of laws
- Primary sources are grouped by federal and state jurisdictions

Example

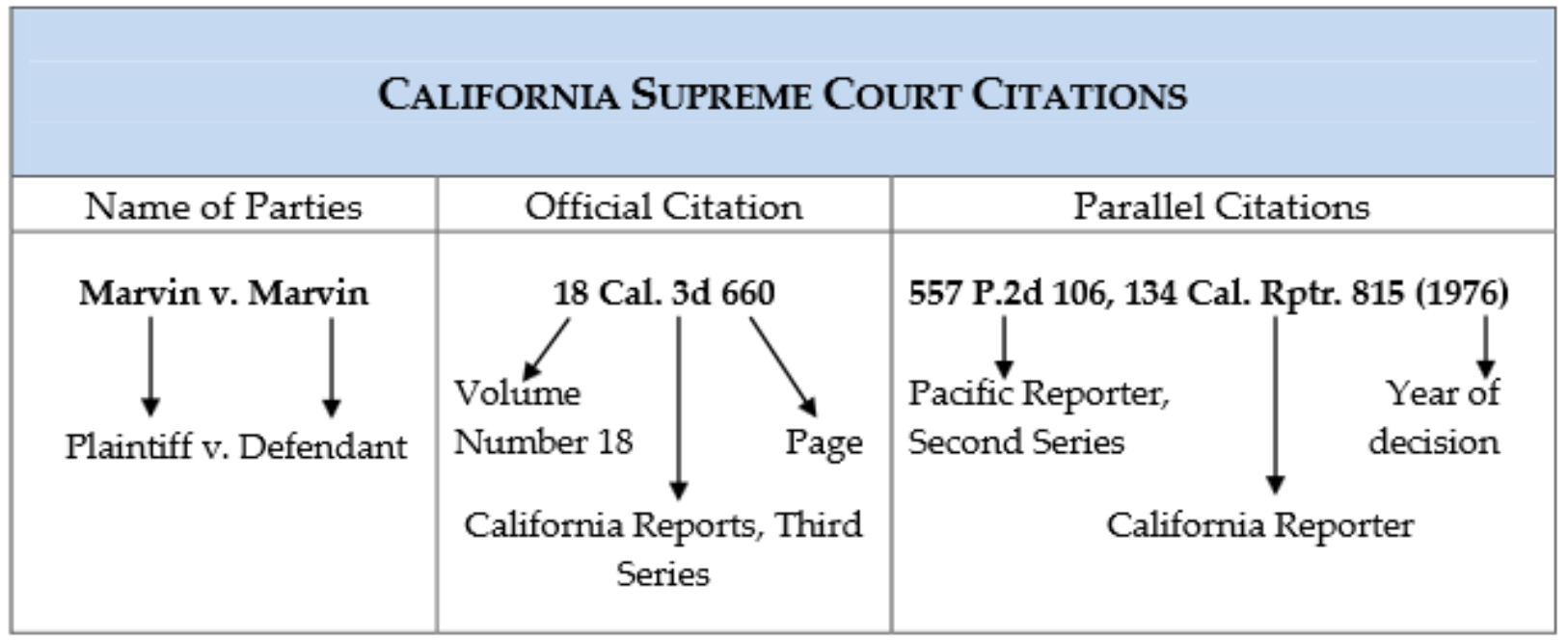
- *Deering's CA Codes, Annotated*

A subject arrangement of general and permanent California laws

Legal citations

What are they?

- A reference to a legal authority, such as a case
- Cases are published in federal and state reporters
- Each case is given a unique citation made up of the following parts:



Get Help

Ask a Librarian

- By phone, email, chat or text

Book a Librarian

- Meet with a librarian in-person or over Zoom to get individual research help

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Thank You!

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