



TRUTH, JUSTICE AND INFORMATION FOR ALL

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLIN COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

ISSUE 2008-04

WWW.COLLINCOUNTYTX.GOV

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

Researching Legislative History and Intent

(Taken from the Legislative Reference Library website, <http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legis/intent/intentguide.html>)

Legislative histories in Texas must be compiled by the individual researcher from many materials. For histories from the 73rd Legislature (1993) forward, this information can be found through Texas Legislature Online (<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/>).

Follow these basic steps:

1. Determine the bill number that enacted the statutory language and the session.

(a) If you do not have the bill number, you will need to search by the subject of the legislation, Vernon's statute, or session law chapter number. For a complete discussion of how to find the bill

number using one of these methods, see the Legislative Research Library website.

(b) If you have the bill number, you can search by that number.

2. Examine the bill file

The bill file is the collection of official documents produced during the bill's movement through the legislative process. It may contain (a) Introduced version; (b) House committee report with vote sheet and bill analysis; (c) Engrossed version; (d) Senate committee report with vote sheet; (e) Senate amendments printing; (f) Conference committee report with side-by-side analysis; (g) Enrolled version; (h) Fiscal notes; and (i) Senate Research Center bill analyses.

3. Find the bill history.

The bill history is a list of all legislative actions on a bill and the dates on which each action took place. When using Texas Legislature Online, click on "Actions." On rare occasions, statements of legislative intent will be recorded into the House and Senate Journals. Always check the House and Senate Journals rather than relying on a bill's actions to signal such a statement.

4. Listen to tape recordings of legislative discussion.

In the 63rd Legislature (1973), the Legislature began audio taping public hearings held by committees and the floor debates in the House and Senate. These tapes are often the best source of information on

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**RECEIVE THIS
NEWSLETTER
VIA E-MAIL!**

Federal Register grants online access

The Office of the Federal Register has created an Electronic Public Inspection Desk to provide free worldwide electronic access to public documents.

The desk grants the public access to documents that will

be published in the next day's Federal Register as early as 8:45 am EST. Every Federal business day documents governing Federal Regulations regarding business, health and safety can be accessed via computer.

To view the documents go to: www.federalregister.gov.

Click "View Online Documents" under *Public Inspection Desk* on the left side of the screen.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please call the library at 972-548-4260 or email us at: ldodds@co.collin.tx.us



Audio tapes are often the best source of information on legislative intent.

“You can even locate pathfinders on how to find changes to a law and how to find the text of a bill . . .”



You can make a difference!

Legislative History and Intent (continued)

legislative intent. In order to listen to or order these tapes, you will need the following from the bill history: (a) names of the House and/or Senate committees to which the bill was referred; (b) dates the bill was considered by committee or subcommittee in public hearings; and (c) dates of the bill’s second and third readings in the House and/or the Senate. Audio tapes may be ordered through mail or obtained in person at the

House or Senate media offices.

5. Consult other helpful documents.

Companion bills, House and Senate Journals, Legislative Interim Reports, newspaper clippings and publications from State Agencies and Commissions are the kinds of additional documents it is helpful to consult when trying to determine legislative intent. On Texas Legislature Online,

click on “Companion” from the Bill History to find companion bills. A link to Senate and House Journals can be found on the dropdown menu for each legislative branch.

For additional information on how to research legislative history and intent, see the Legislative Reference Library website: <http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/lrlhome.cfm>.

Have you visited our website lately?

The library’s website is updated on a regular basis.

Our FAQ page answers many questions typically asked by users of the law library.

Legal Research links to Texas and Federal law, law reviews

and journals, law libraries, and public resources such as Texas Law Help, Findlaw and SMU research guides provide a wealth of information.

Under our “Guides and Resources” link, you can even locate pathfinders on how to

find changes to a law and how to find the text of a bill using Texas Legislature Online.

So, go online to http://www.co.collin.tx.us/law_library/index.jsp and have a look!

Legal Aid of NorthWest Texas now linked from Lawtoons

Legal Aid of Northwest Texas is now a featured link on Suzan Charlton’s *Lawtoons* website. Ms. Charlton is Special Counsel with the firm of Covington & Burlington, LLC in Washington, DC and a professional cartoonist.

LANWT is the only legal aid program in the country with a link on the *Lawtoons* site. Go to www.lawtoons.com and click on LINKS.

LANWT holds monthly clinics in Allen and Plano. Clinic dates for 2009 are as follows:

ALLEN: 1/8, 2/12, 3/12, 4/9, 5/14, 6/11, 7/9, 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, and 12/10.

Allen Location:

First United Methodist Church, 601 S. Greenville Avenue

PLANO: 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18, 7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19, 12/17.

Plano Location:

Salvation Army, 3528 E. 14th Street

All clinics start at 6:00 pm.

To volunteer or for more information, please contact the McKinney office at 972-542-9405 or 800-906-3045.

If you have ideas, suggestions or any other tips for the clinics, please contact Jan Kearney at 972-542-9405, ext. 3016.

New on the Shelves

Advanced Elder Law Course 2008;

Appellate Boot Camp 2008;

Collection and Creditors' Rights Course 2008;

Electronic Discovery and Digital Evidence Institute 2008;

Family Law Bootcamp: practice in the trenches 2008;

Immigration Law Institute 2008;

9th Annual Building Blocks of Wills, Estates, and Probate Course, 2008;

22nd Annual Civil Appellate Practice Court, 2008;

24th Annual Litigation Update Institute, 2008;

34th Annual Advanced Criminal Law Course, 2008;

34th Annual Advanced Family Law Course, 2008;

Federal Sentencing Guidelines Manual 2008;

Handbook of Texas Family Law: a quick reference guide to the family code, 2008;

Handbook of Texas Lawyer and Judicial Ethics: attorney tort standards; attorney ethics standards, 2008;

Handbook on Texas discovery Practice: the new rules governing discovery, 2008;

Texas Rules of Evidence Handbook, 2008.



New CLE materials are in!

Law Library announces YouTube contest!

In the coming year, the Law Library will be holding a video contest entitled "How to Best Use the Law Library."

Any member of the Bar living or practicing in Collin County is eligible to enter the contest.

Video entries must be three minutes or less in length.

A Grand prize will be awarded for the best entry. A People's Choice award will also be given for the entry with the most hits.

We hope that all eligible attorneys will take this opportunity to be creative, have fun and show everyone how they can best use the law library!

Please watch for more details in the next newsletter.

Your video could be the winning entry!

Law Library catalog is easy to use

To find titles in our collection:

Ask CLOE!

Our **online catalog** can be accessed at <http://gateway.gscweb.com:84/> or linked to from the Library website.

CLOE is searchable by: Author, Title or Subject.

Use the **command buttons** on the navigation bar to move quickly between search options.

To search using another

search type, click the command button you want to use.

The current search type command button appears in **reverse image** on the navigation bar.



Search for titles using CLOE!



Collin County Law Library

2100 Bloomdale
Suite 10216
McKinney, TX 75071

VISIT US ON THE WEB!
WWW.CO.COLLIN.TX.US



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Hours of Operation:
Monday—Friday
8:00 am—5:00 pm

Staff is available for a presentation to your organization.



*The Courthouse will be closed for the
Christmas holidays.*

Courthouse Holiday Office Closures

The Collin County Courthouse (and the Law Library) will be closed on the following upcoming holidays:

Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24 (close at noon.)

Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25.

Friday, December 26.

New Year's Day, Thursday, January 1.

MLK Day, Monday, January 19.

A full listing of county holidays can be found on the county website at:

[http://
www.co.collin.tx.us/
holidays.jsp](http://www.co.collin.tx.us/holidays.jsp)