

# ALWD Federal Citation Formats

Below are examples of the Association of Legal Writing Directors (ALWD) style citations most commonly used by students at College of DuPage. For additional examples and rules, please consult the *ALWD Guide to Legal Citation*. ALWD & Coleen M. Barger, *ALWD Guide to Legal Citation* (6th ed., 2017).

The below citation examples have been compiled by Lorri Scott, J.D., Maria Mack, J.D., and Linda Jenkins, J.D., from the [C.O.D. Paralegal Studies Program](#). They were updated by Linda Jenkins, J.D. and Anne Knight, J.D., in December 2012. They were updated by Todd Holes and Linda Jenkins, J.D., in January 2018.

## ALWD Federal Citations

### General Rules

- Follow General Abbreviations (ALWD Appendix 3) when listing states, cities, districts, dates, etc.
- Case names are italicized, which is preferred, (*Smith v. Johnson*) or underlined (Smith v. Johnson). ALWD R. 1.1, 1.3(a), 12.2(a)(1).
- Do not italicize or underline the comma after the case name. ALWD R. 1.3(b).
- Abbreviate versus to "v." ALWD R. 12.2(c).
- When an abbreviation uses consecutive single letters, omit spaces between the letters. ALWD R. 2.2(b).
- Treat ordinal contractions, such as 2d or 5th, as a single letter. ALWD R. 2.2(c).
- Do not superscript ordinal contractions. ALWD R. 4.3(b).
- Once you have cited a source in full, use a "short citation" in later references to it. ALWD R. 11.2.
- Where it is appropriate, "Id." is the preferred short citation. ALWD R. 11.3(a).
- Use short citations when the reader will neither be confused about the source being referenced nor have trouble quickly locating the source's full citation. ALWD R. 11.2.
- By common practice, do not use "Id." more than five times consecutively.
- The first word in a citation sentence starts with a capitalized letter, and the sentence ends in a period. ALWD R. 34.1(a).

### United States Supreme Court

[*Case Name*], [official reporter volume number], [official reporter abbreviation], [initial page number], [pin page number] (Date).

*Smith v. Johnson*, 491 U.S. 397, 399-400 (2018).

- One should cite *only* the official reporter, unless it is unavailable. ALWD R. 12.4(b)(3).

Red triangles▲ are used throughout this document to illustrate required spacing within citations.

*Tip:* You can tell this is a United States Supreme Court case in two ways. First, the "U.S." indicates the reporter is the United States Reports, which only report United States Supreme Court cases. Second, when nothing but a year is in the final parentheses, it indicates that the case was decided by the highest court in a particular jurisdiction.

### **Short Citations—United States Supreme Court**

Examples of short citations based on the full citation shown above:

1. *Id.* (*Id.* by itself, with no “at” designating the pin page, is only used when the pin page of the official reporter is the *same page* as the previous cite.) ALWD R. 12.16(d).
2. *Id.*▲at▲399.
3. *Johnson*,▲491▲U.S.▲at▲398-99. (This format used when the textual sentence has no reference to the case name and *Id.* would be inappropriate.) ALWD R. 12.16(b).
4. 491▲U.S.▲at▲402. (This format used when the textual sentence uses all or part of a case name.) ALWD R. 12.16(c).

### **United States Court of Appeals**

[*Case Name*],▲[Reporter volume number]▲[Reporter abbreviation]▲[initial page number],▲[pin page number],▲([Circuit court abbreviation]▲[Date]).

*Anderson v. Jones*,▲481▲F.3d▲303,▲315▲(7th▲Cir.▲2018).

- “F.3d” is the Federal Reporter Third Series. ALWD Chart 12.2.
- “7th Cir.” indicates the case was heard by the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (located in Chicago).

### **Short Citations—United States Court of Appeals**

Examples of short citations based on the full citation shown above:

1. *Id.* (*Id.* by itself, with no “at” designating the pin page, is only used when the pin page of the official reporter is the same page as the previous cite. Note: the unofficial reporter, if it is a parallel citation, may never be shortened to *Id.*) ALWD R. 12.16(d).
2. *Id.*▲at▲316.
3. *Anderson*,▲481▲F.3d▲at▲317-18. (This format is used when the textual sentence has no reference to the case name and *Id.* would be inappropriate.) ALWD R. 12.16(b).
4. 481▲F.3d▲at▲318. (This format used when the textual sentence uses all or part of a case name.) ALWD R. 12.16(c).

## United States District Court

[*Case Name*], [Reporter volume number] [Reporter abbreviation] [initial page number], [pin page number], ([Circuit court abbreviation] [Date]).

*Anderson v. Waters*, 158 F. Supp. 3d 341, 352 (N.D. Ill. 2018).

- F. Supp. 3d is the Federal Supplement Third Series
- N.D. Ill. is the Northern District of Illinois

### Short Citations—United States District Court

Examples of short citations based on the full citation shown above:

1. *Id.* (*Id.* by itself, with no “at” designating the pin page, is only used when the pin page of the official reporter is the same page as the previous cite.)
2. *Id.* at 341.
3. *Anderson*, 158 F. Supp. 3d at 352. (This format is used when the textual sentence has no reference to the case name and *Id.* would be inappropriate.) ALWD R. 12.16(b).
4. 158 F. Supp. 3d at 349. (This format is used when the textual sentence uses all or part of a case name.) ALWD R. 12.16(c).

## United States Statutes

[Title number] [Code] § [Section number] (Year of publication).  
or

[Title number] [Code] § [Section number] ([Publisher] [Year of publication]).

11 U.S.C. § 523 (2018).

- Correct format for United States Code (official code, published every six years).

11 U.S.C.S. § 523 (Lexis 2018).

- This is the United States Code Service, published by Lexis. It is unofficial, annotated, and always current.

11 U.S.C.A. § 523 (West 2018).

- This is the United States Code Annotated, published by West. It is unofficial, annotated, and always current.

## **Short Citations—United States Statutes**

Examples of short citations based on the full citation shown above:

*Id.*

*Id.*, § 523. (When a citation refers to a statute within the same title or chapter as the statute cited in the immediately preceding citation, use *Id.*, changing the section or paragraph as needed.)  
*ALWD R. 14.5(a).*

§ 523.

11 U.S.C. § 523.

Section 523 specifies exceptions to discharge. (This style is used when you wish to refer to a specific section to begin a textual sentence. Note: Never begin a sentence with a symbol.)  
*ALWD R. 6.6.*

**Note:** *The cases in this document are fictitious.*