



WILLIE MELTON LAW LIBRARY NEWS

VOL 32 NUM 4 | OCT/NOV 2024

STAY IN THE LOOP WITH UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS!

AT A GLANCE

- What's going on at the Law Library!
- How you can access resources from your home or office!

HOURS

Mon	8 am - 5 pm
Tue	8 am - 5 pm
Wed	8 am - 5 pm
Thu	8 am - 5 pm
Fri	8 am - 5 pm
Sat	CLOSED
Sun	CLOSED



What's New

UPCOMING PROGRAMS



LONE STAR
LEGAL AID

- LAWYER IN THE LIBRARY -- hosted by Lone Star Legal Aid -- is EVERY MONDAY, from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm. [More Information Here](#)
- LAWYER IN THE LIBRARY -- hosted by the Earl Carl Institute is EVERY WEDNESDAY, from 8:30 am - 12:00 pm. [More Information Here](#)
- PRO SE BASICS is EVERY TUESDAY at 10 am - Learn about basic court procedures and resources.
- EXPRESS CLASSES are EVERY THURSDAY at 10 am - Learn basic legal technology.

UPDATES AND CLOSINGS

- The **Virtual Court Kiosk** -- through a grant by Texas Legal Services Center -- can be reserved for virtual court hearings in the mornings, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, and in the afternoons, from 1:30 to 5:00 pm. [Reserve the Kiosk Here](#)
- The **Law Library** and the **Justice Center** will be CLOSED for Veterans Day (MON, NOV 11) & for Thanksgiving (THU & FRI, NOV 28 & 29).

TEXAS
LEGAL
SERVICES
CENTER



UPDATED RESOURCES

- *Federal Criminal Practice*, 2024 Edition
- *O'Connor's Business Organizations Code Plus*, 2024 Edition
- *O'Connor's Probate Law Handbook*, 2024 Edition
- *Texas Insurance Coverage Litigation*, 2024 Edition
- *How to Recover Attorneys' Fees in Texas*, 2024 Edition

THIS MONTH IS ELECTION LAW MONTH!

- We have lots of resources on this topic this month! Come check them out!

Past Program Recordings

ATTORNEY LECTURE SERIES

- **"Immigration,"** given by Attorney Eduardo Franco. See the replay [HERE](#).
- **"Voir Dire,"** given by Attorney Annie Scott. See the replay [HERE](#).

Online Resources

REMOTE DATABASES

- Lexis Nexis Digital Library - Collection of ebooks from publishers LexisNexis, Matthew Bender, and James Publishing.
- Gale Legal Forms Library - Collection of Civil Forms on various topics that can be used in Texas and Federal Courts.



[Sign up for an eCard here to access](#)

PRO SE HANDBOOK - FORMS AND INFORMATION

- General Civil and Family Law Forms and Information from Texas Law Help, Fort Bend County District and County Courts at Law, Fort Bend County District and County Clerks, the Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library, and other Texas Governmental Agencies. [Check it out here.](#)



Technology Corner, by Liane Lopez

TexasLawHelp.Org also available in Spanish and Vietnamese.

Did you know?! Our most-used resource among self-represented litigants who visit our law library is TexasLawHelp.org. TLH contains a great collection of guided forms and self-help articles, available also in Spanish and Vietnamese, written by practicing Texas attorneys. Aside from being a great resource to those unable to afford the fees associated with hiring an attorney to draft and file pleadings, non-English speakers are able to have access to materials available on the site, ranging from family law, divorce, and children to civil matters, Veterans, and Military issues. Simply visit the site texaslawhelp.org and select your desired language from the menu located on the top-right corner of the page. Please note that not all forms are yet available in Spanish or Vietnamese, but the site is.

If you or someone you may know are interested in any of the forms available on TexasLawHelp.org, please visit us at the Willie Melton Law Library -- we will be happy to assist you.



Librarian Musings, by Christine France

Consumer Law

Have you had a bad experience as a consumer with a company? I am sure everyone has had a frustrating experience at one time or another. I had a recent experience when making a purchase. When I received my order, it was not what was promised. So, I thought I should share information based on my experience of informal actions I found without involving an attorney; this is not legal advice or recommendations.

First, I spoke with the salesperson from the company directly and explained the situation that what I ordered was not what I received. Unfortunately, he was unable to correct the problem; so, I asked to speak to the manager. The manager initially said he would look into the issue, but made no promise that they could fix the problem because the item was custom-made, and the sale was final. The manager stated that if he could not resolve the matter, I could contact their corporate headquarters.

While waiting to hear back from the store manager, I considered filing a complaint with the Office of the Texas Attorney General (OAG), Better Business Bureau (BBB), and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Complaints filed with the OAG are reviewed and may involve an investigation. The OAG has the authority to file lawsuits on behalf of the State of Texas and in the public interest. However, this process may or may not lead to a resolution of a complaint.

Second, I considered filing a complaint with the BBB to obtain assistance with a resolution, such as a refund, repair, or replacement. The BBB also can provide a rating of the business, and if the BBB finds a wrongdoing, the company's letter grade can be affected.

Third, the FTC is an additional resource, which I considered to make a report involving fraud, scam, or bad business practices. After a report is made, the report goes into an FTC database, which is available to federal, state, and local law enforcement across the country. These reports can be investigated to bring cases against these entities. However, the FTC cannot resolve reports on behalf of individuals. (*cont.*)



Librarian Musings, by Christine France (*cont.*)

When the FTC brings cases, they try to get money back for people as a refund. These reports also are used to educate the public and to share data about what is happening in local communities.

Fortunately, at this time I have not had to exhaust these resources. After several intense negotiations over the next few days, the matter was resolved. The manager allowed me to return the item and order a replacement.

Although, the resolution was not exactly what I wanted, I felt it was best to compromise. Hopefully, I will receive the replacement shortly and do not experience any additional issues!



Featured Resource, by Jonathan Briggs

The Whole Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library!

Often in this column, I get pretty detailed describing the merits of one of our resources, be it a book or an item from one of our online legal databases. In pondering what to write this time, the old adage “that the forest could not be seen for the trees” came to mind. We have a lot of great trees, but the forest here is the real story -- the collective offerings this Law Library provides.

The Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library does not have a big footprint at its location on the 2nd floor of the Justice Center, but it packs a lot into its relatively modest space. We are a full-service Law Library.

First off, the bread and butter of any Law Library -- its *raison d'être* -- is its collection of relevant, up-to-date, and comprehensive legal materials...the books and online legal reference materials that our budget provides and that are curated by our branch manager and law librarian.

Without having this, you are not a law library. Fort Bend has it. We have Westlaw and Lexis, both of the primary online legal databases...with four of our public computers having Westlaw and three with Lexis. Our subscriptions have their greatest depth of the Texas materials of course: case law; statutes; the administrative code, secondary materials such as practice guides; Pattern Jury Instructions, and forms. Though not as deep as our Texas collection, federal law is well represented: all federal case law; the U.S. Code; the C.F.R.; administrative law materials, secondary resources, and forms. We even have the primary law (case law and statutes) of the other 49 states. Westlaw and Lexis both provide access to most law reviews and journals printed in the U.S. We also have series, such as the A.L.R., Corpus Juris Secundum, Texas Jurisprudence, and so much more. Visitors can print documents from these sources in black and white for 10 cents a page, or the pages can be downloaded to a thumb drive or e-mailed to the individual (in Word, WordPerfect, or PDF) for free. Color printing is a dollar per page...toner cartridges are so expensive! (cont.)



Featured Resource, by Jonathan Briggs

Although the modern world is trying to be paperless, we still maintain a solid collection of legal materials in print. Tangible, in-your-hands books are still a great way to read cases, statutes, or sections of a practice guide. Some even prefer it. Simply because there are new ways of doing things does not mean the old ways are defunct. We have the Texas cases, U.S. Supreme Court cases, federal and Texas statutes, tried-and-true practice guides such as the entirety of the Texas and federal O'Connor's series, and all 26 volumes of Dorsaneo's *Texas Litigation Guide*.

There are some materials that are only available in print, such as the seminal guide *Kurzban's Immigration Law Sourcebook* in our federal collection or Cagle's *Texas Homeowners Association Law* in our Texas Collection, just to name a couple. Once you get beyond the legal materials, we also have much more to provide. In addition to hosting our online legal databases, all 12 of our public computers have all the normal programs, including access to the internet via Firefox or Microsoft Edge, MS Word, PDF, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel, Media Player, etc.

Sometimes the law library is not the most quiet place as we get a lot of visitors in here every day, and they need to talk to our staff so we can help them get the information and materials they need. It can get pretty busy here. We happen to be keeping statistics this week on how many people walk through our door every day. As of this writing, we are averaging more than 100 attorneys and pro se visitors each day. In general, it is a great place to work. Also, on Mondays and Wednesdays respectively, Lone Star Legal Aid and the Earl Carl Legal Institute hold office hours in the mornings at the Law Library. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, library staff present our Pro Se Basics (discussing various legal issues and what our library has to offer on them) and our Express classes (providing information on our various databases). We have small meeting rooms, a larger conference room that can be reserved, and a reservable Viewing Room that houses our Virtual Court Kiosk (a computer setup courtesy of a grant from the Texas Legal Services Center) where patrons can attend their video hearings if they do not have the means to do so at home. (cont.)



Featured Resource, by Jonathan Briggs (*cont.*)

We have several worktables, black-and-white and color printers, copiers with scanning capability, and even a fax machine. We even have windows so you can look out and realize you left your umbrella in the car!

On top of all that, we have a great staff of three full-time law librarians and our part-time law library assistant can even provide translation services for our Spanish-speaking patrons. We are all here to assist you. The Law Library is open 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, excluding county holidays.

Come by and see us!