

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL RESEARCH

Almost all documents on Westlaw are composed of several parts called *fields*. Rather than searching entire documents, you can restrict your search to one or more fields. Doing so saves searching and browsing time and makes your search more efficient.

In a case law document the names of the parties, the name of the judge, and the names of the attorneys are each considered a separate field. Other fields, including the synopsis, topic, headnote, and digest fields, contain exclusive West editorial enhancements. To add field restrictions to your Terms and Connectors search, use the *Fields* drop-down list at the database Search page. In the alternative, type the field abbreviation in the *Search* text box, followed immediately by the terms you want included in the field restriction enclosed in parentheses. For example, to retrieve cases dealing with retaliation against whistle-blowers, you could restrict your search to the synopsis (sy) and digest (di) fields by typing `sy,di(whistle-blow! /p retaliat!)`.

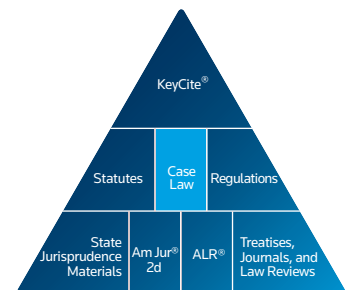
When you search a case law database using the Natural Language search method, you can add court, attorney, and judge field restrictions to your search. Type the terms you want included in the field restriction in the text box following the field name at the bottom of the database Search page.

A sample document on the next page illustrates fields in a case on Westlaw.

Category:

Research Fundamentals

For research assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, call the West Reference Attorneys at 1-800-850-WEST (1-800-850-9378) or click **Help** on Westlaw® for a live help session.



The Westlaw Research Pyramid

Using the Westlaw Research Pyramid

Your 1L studies will focus on case law.

On Westlaw, you can retrieve relevant cases with a keyword search or with West topic and key numbers found in a key number digest.

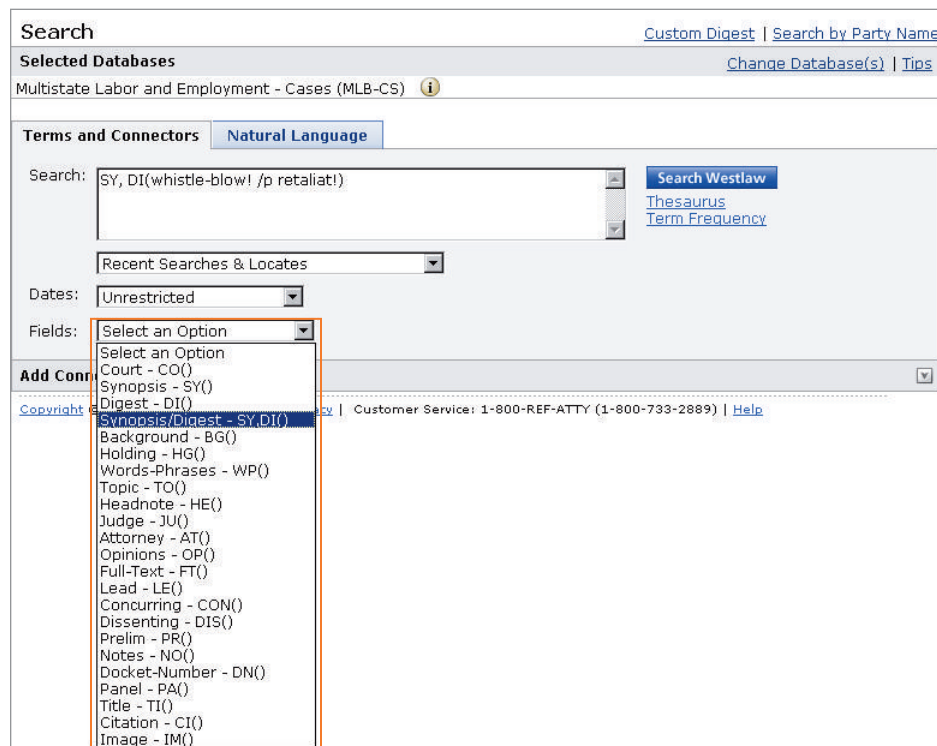
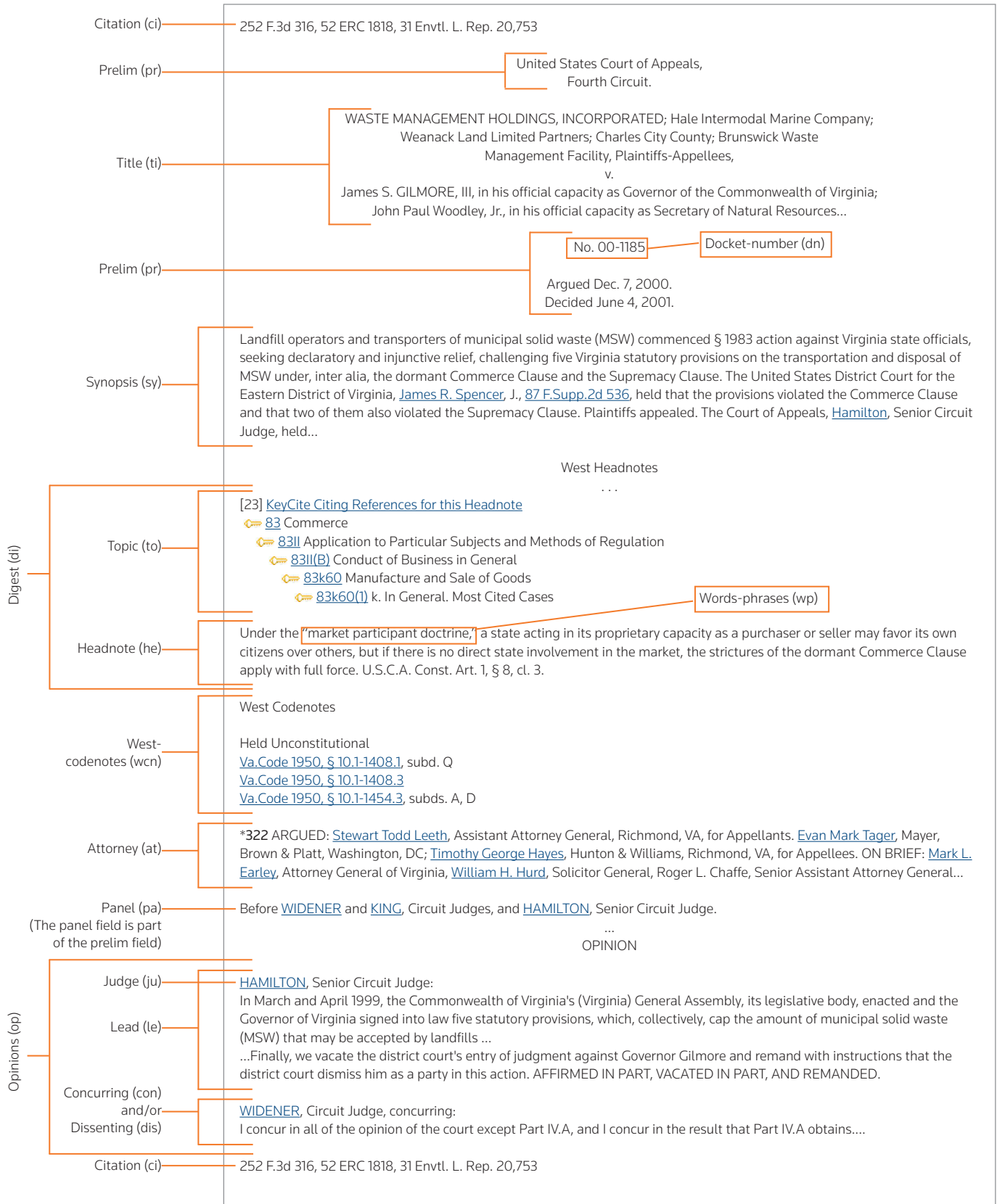


Figure 1. *Fields* drop-down list using the Terms and Connectors search method

Identifying Fields in Cases



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