

Rule 6. Citations

Citation of Illinois cases filed prior to July 1, 2011, and published in the Illinois Official Reports shall be to the Official Reports, but the citation to the North Eastern Reporter and/or the Illinois Decisions may be added. For Illinois cases filed on or after July 1, 2011, and for any case not published in the Illinois Official Reports prior to that date and for which a public-domain citation has been assigned, the public-domain citation shall be given and, where appropriate, pinpoint citations to paragraph numbers shall be given; a citation to the North Eastern Reporter and/or the Illinois Decisions may be added but is not required. Citation of cases from other jurisdictions that do not utilize a public-domain citation shall include the date and may be to either the official state reports or the National Reporter System, or both. If only the National Reporter System citation is used, the court rendering the decision shall also be identified. For other jurisdictions that have adopted a public-domain system of citation, that citation shall be given along with, where appropriate, pinpoint citations to paragraph numbers; a parallel citation to an additional case reporter may be given but is not required. Textbook citations shall include the date of publication and the edition. Illinois statutes shall generally be cited to the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS) but citations to the session laws of Illinois or to the Illinois Revised Statutes shall be made when appropriate.

Adopted January 20, 1993, effective immediately; [amended May 31, 2011, effective July 1, 2011](#).

Commentary

(May 31, 2011)

Background

The system of case citation that has historically prevailed in the United States relies upon the elements of printed case reporters, that is, volume number, case name, beginning and pinpoint page numbers, and year of filing. In Illinois, citations have been made to our state's official reporters (Illinois Reports and Illinois Appellate Reports), with parallel citations to the appropriate West regional reporter (North East Reporter and/or Illinois Decisions) also allowed. But reliance upon printed reports for access to the courts' opinions has diminished with the rise of electronic databases, such as those found on the Court's own Internet website, Westlaw and Lexis-Nexis, and various CD-ROMs. In this state, the Illinois Supreme and Appellate Courts' opinions have been made available on the judiciary's website since 1996. However, the requirement that case citations be made to printed reporters has prevented direct citation of those opinions, even though they are now widely available on various electronic databases.

To remedy this situation, the Illinois Supreme Court has amended Supreme Court Rule 23, and has entered an administrative order in relation to Rule 23, to direct Illinois reviewing courts to assign, at the time of filing, public-domain case designator numbers (*e.g.*, "2011 IL 102345"), as well as internal paragraph numbers, to all opinions and Rule 23 orders filed after July 1, 2011. Further, any opinions that were filed prior to July 1, 2011, but not released for publication until a later date will be assigned a public-domain case designator number and internal paragraph numbers by the Reporter of Decisions. All opinions that have been assigned public-domain case

designators and paragraph numbers will be posted to the Illinois judiciary's website.

Additionally, Rule 6 has been amended to require the use of public-domain case citations for all Illinois reviewing court opinions filed or released for publication after July 1, 2011. The amendments to Rules 6 and 23 will thus introduce a new system of case citations to Illinois law based directly on the decisions of the courts. It should be noted, though, that while amended Rule 6 requires a citation to the courts' public-domain numbering and paragraphing scheme in lieu of an Illinois Official Reports citation, the rule continues to allow citations to the unofficial regional reporters.

Citations

A public-domain case designators is unique to each opinion and is comprised of the year of decision, the court abbreviation, and a unique identifier number derived from the docket number. A public-domain citation shall include the designator preceded by the case title and will be in accord with the following examples:

Supreme Court

People v. Doe, 2011 IL 102345

Appellate Court Districts

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (1st) 101234

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (2d) 101234

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (3d) 101234

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (4th) 101234

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (5th) 101234

Appellate Court Workers' Compensation Division

Doe v. Illinois Workers' Compensation Comm'n, 2011 IL App (1st) 101234WC

In the above, a citation to *People v. Doe*, 2011 IL 102345, shows *People v. Doe* as the case name; 2011 as the year of decision; the Illinois Supreme Court as the court of decision; and 102345 as the court-assigned identifier number, which, in the Supreme Court, is the docket number and, in the Appellate Court, is the last six digits of the docket number.

Where a subsequent opinion is filed under the same docket number, such as upon reconsideration of the cause after remand, a sequential capital letter will be appended to the unique-identifier number, regardless of the year-designation portion of the citation:

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (1st) 101236
People v. Doe, 2012 IL App (1st) 101236-B

Orders filed under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 23 will have the letter “U” appended to the unique-identifier number:

People v. Roe, 2011 IL App (5th) 101237-U

Additionally, Illinois reviewing court opinions will include internally numbered paragraphs. Where a pinpoint citation to an opinion is appropriate, the citation shall include the public-domain citation followed by the pinpoint paragraph or paragraphs of the opinion. *E.g.*:

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (1st) 101234, ¶ 15

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (1st) 101234, ¶¶ 21-23

People v. Doe, 2011 IL App (1st) 101234, ¶¶ 57, 68

For those opinions filed prior to July 1, 2011, but not released by the filing court for publication until after that date, the Reporter of Decisions office will add internal paragraph numbers, as well as the public-domain designator numbers.