Common Abbreviations and Legal Citation Examples for Selected Federal Government Documents

Legislative, Regulatory and Statutory

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Citations for law reviews generally follow the White Pages of The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation which often employs LARGE AND SMALL caps to designate many titles. However, U.S. courts and litigation practitioners generally follow the Blue Pages of that work which often uses italics or underlining. This brief resource generally follows the Blue Pages, but it is important to be consistent and include enough identifying information so a researcher can find the cited document.

Annals of Cong. – *Annals of Congress* (1st Cong. to 18th Cong., 1st Sess., 1789-1824)
Ex: 18 Annals of Cong. 1766 (1819) [ALWD Guide, Rule 15.10(c)(1)]

B – Bid protest decisions have assigned #s given by GAO's Comptroller General, 1921+

Ex: Rev. Rul. 83-137, 1983-2 C.B. 41 [Bluebook Table T1.2]

C.F.R. – *Code of Federal Regulations* (just “CFR” is used by the Office of the Federal Register)
Ex: 47 CFR 73.609 (1999) [OFR Document Drafting Handbook sec. 3-17]

ch. – chapter numbers used for each act before 1957; U.S.C.A authority cites use “c.”

Comm. Print – Committee prints in the House and Senate (also abbreviated “S. Prt.”
for Senate prints and sometimes as “H. Prt.” for House prints.
Prints are generally studies or draft legislation and are often unnumbered or with each committee having its own series of #s
within a Congress. Since 98th Cong. Senate has own print series #s
Ex: *Staff of S. Comm. on the Judiciary, 81st Cong., Rep. on Antitrust Law* 17
(Comm. Print 1950) [Bluebook Rule 13.4(c)]
Ex: *Staff of the H. Comm. on Rules, Rules Committee Print* 115-17, *Thin Blue Line Act* (showing text of H.R. 115 as ordered by the H. Comm. on the Judiciary)
(May 9, 2017).

Comp. Gen. – *Decisions of the Comptroller General of the United States* (selected)
Ex: 61 Comp. Gen. 428 (1982). [bound volumes of selected decisions, 1921-94]
Comp. of Pres. Docs. – *Compilation of Presidential Documents* (“Daily” and “Weekly”)
   Ex: See 1972 Weekly Comp. of Pres. Doc. at 553.

Conf. Rep. – Conference reports are the agreed upon text from a House/Senate conference committee and often have an explanatory statement as well.


Cong. Rec. – *Congressional Record* (daily and bound editions) (“CR” occasionally used)

CRS – Cong. Research Service reports, Library of Cong. (#s with R, RL, RS, or year)

Exec. Order No. – Executive Order (“E.O.” is used by the Office of the Federal Register)
   Ex: E.O. 10530, 19 FR 2709 [OFR Document Drafting Handbook § 3.1]

Fed. Reg. – *Federal Register* (“FR” is used by the Office of the Federal Register)
   Ex: 42 FR 52394, Sept. 30, 1977 [source given at 21 CFR 73.1162]


FRS – Federal Reserve System, documents like enforcement actions
   Ex: Written Agreement Between Ridgedale State Bank and Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Docket No. 03-024-WA/RB-SM (July 29, 2003) [Bluebook Table T1.2]

GAO – Government Accountability Office reports (formerly General Accounting Office)

H. Con. Res. – House concurrent resolution (also as “H.R. Con. Res.” or “H.C.R.”)
Ex: H.R. Con. Res. 133, 94th Cong. (1975) (enacted) [Bluebook Rule 13.2(b)]

H.J. Res. – House Joint Resolution (also abbreviated as “H.R. J. Res.” and “H.J.R.”)
Ex: H.J. Res. 99, 115th Cong. (as passed by House and Senate, Apr. 28. 2015)
Ex: H.R.J. Res. 124, 105th Cong. (1998) [Bluebook Rule 13.2(a)]

H.R. – House of Representatives consecutively numbered bills in a single Congress
To become law bills normally clear both chambers and the President.
GPO uses many different abbreviations for different versions of bills and resolutions. For a complete listing see About Congressional Bills, https://www.gpo.gov/help/about_congressional_bills.htm).
ih – as introduced in the House (must be a House bill #)
rh – as reported in the House (from a House committee)
eh – as engrossed in the House (House bill passed by House)
rfh – as referred to the House (Senate passed bill sent to House)
eah – as an engrossed amendment in House (passed Senate bill)
en – as enrolled and sent to the President (cleared both chambers)

H.R. Con. Res. – House concurrent resolution (also as “H. Con. Res.” or “H.C.R.”)
Concurrent resolutions must clear both chambers but not the President.
Ex: H.R. Con. Res. 133, 94th Cong. (1975) (enacted) [Bluebook Rule 13.2(b)]

H.R. Doc. No. – House of Representatives document (also abbreviated as H. Doc.)
House and Senate documents generally come from the Executive branch.
Ex: Carlton Koepege, The Road to Industrial Peace, H.R. Doc. No. 82-563, at 29-30 (1953) [Bluebook Rules 13.4 and 15.1]

H.R.J. Res. – House Joint Resolution (also abbreviated as “H.J. Res.” and “H.J.R.”)
Joint resolutions must clear both chambers and the President.
Ex: H.R.J. Res. 124, 105th Cong. (1998) [Bluebook Rule 13.2(a)]
Ex: H.J. Res. 99, 115th Cong. (as passed by House and Senate, Apr. 28. 2015)

H.R. Rep. No. – House of Representatives report (also abbreviated as “H. Rep. No.”,
House reports “generally” concern specific legislative measures.
Ex: See H. Rept. No. 1078, 49th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1 [found in 313 U.S. 100]
Ex: H. Rept. 101-247, at 1340 [found at 124 T.C. No. 4 (2005)]

H.R. Res. – House of Representative resolution (also abbreviated as “H. Res.”)
Simple resolutions concern one chamber and are passed by just one.


Proclamation No. – Presidential Proclamation (usually on commemorative matters)
   Ex: Proclamation No. 5366, 50 Fed. Reg. 37,635 (Sept. 14, 1985)

Pub. L. No. – Public Law number (also abbreviated as Pub. L., P.L., PL, Public No.)
   Unique #s assigned US public laws since 1907, officially cited from 1957.
   Ex: Securities Act of 1933 (Public No. 22–73d Congress) [former citation way]

Reg. Deb. – Register of Debates (18th Cong., 2d Sess., to 25th Cong., 1st Sess., 1824-1837) (Note: from 1833 to 1837 the series covered Congressional debate contemporaneously with the Cong. Globe)
   Ex: 11 Reg. Deb. 130 (1836) [ALWD Guide, Rule 15.10(c)(1)]


S. – Senate bills (consecutively assigned to all Senate bills in a single Congress)
   To become law bills normally clear both chambers and the President.
   Ex: S. 516, 105th Cong. § 2 (1997) [Bluebook Rule 13.2]
   Ex: S. 593, 101st Cong. (as passed by Senate May 31, 1989)
      GPO uses many different abbreviations for different versions of bills and resolutions. For a complete listing see About Congressional Bills,
      is – as introduced in the Senate (must be a Senate bill #)
      rs – as reported in the Senate (from a Senate committee)
      eas – as an engrossed amendment in Senate (passed House bill)
      rfs – as referred in the Senate (House passed bill sent to Senate)
      en – as enrolled and sent to the President (cleared both chambers)

S. Con. Res. – Senate Concurrent Resolution (generally a resolution of honor/support)
   Enacted con. resolutions must clear both chambers but not the President.
   Ex: S. Con. Res. 27, 113th Cong. (2013). [Bluebook Rule 13.2 (b)]
   Ex: S. Con Res. 97, 94th Cong., 90 Stat. 3024 (1976) [Bluebook Rule 13.2(b)]

S. Exec. Rep. No. – Senate Executive Report (generally Senate committee recommendations on treaties and other matters)

Serial No. – Serial number assigned to a House hearing within a committee generally from the 98th Congress (1983) forward
Ex: *House Hearing, 111th Congress, Serial No. 111-68 (Committee on Homeland Security) and Serial No. 111-123 (Committee on Foreign Affairs), U.S. Mexico Security Cooperation: Next Steps for the Merida Initiative, May 27, 2010.*

S. Hrg. – Senate Hearing – since the 98th Cong. (1983) each Senate hearing publication has been assigned a consecutive number within a Congress.

S.J. Res. – Senate Joint Resolution (for enactments, joint resolutions must clear both chambers and the President).

S. Misc. Doc. No. – Senate Miscellaneous Document (generally early documents printed by special request during the 19th century)


S. Prt. – Senate committee prints published as studies or draft legislation. Since 1983 (98th Cong.) the Senate has numbered all its pamphlet size committee prints in a series for each Congress.
Ex: S. Prt. 113-31 – *Republican Staff of the S. Comm. on Finance, Staff Report on Comprehensive Tax Reform for 2015 and Beyond* (Dec. 2014).
S. Res. – Senate Resolution
Simple resolutions concern one chamber and are passed by just one.
Ex: S. Res. 150, 115th Cong. [Bluebook Rule 13.2]

S. Treaty Doc. No. – Senate Treaty Document

Stat. – U.S. Statutes At Large (official publ. of U.S. laws chron. arranged, GPO)

SuDoc – Superintendent of Documents, GPO (most U.S. Government publications are assigned a SuDoc item number series and an individual SuDuc class. No.)

Ex: 12 U.S.C. § 339(c) (Off. of Law Rev. Counsel through laws in effect on...)


U.S. Const. – United States Constitution
Ex: See U.S. Const. art. I, § 8, cl. 17 [Bluebook Rule 8(ii)]

Legal Citation Manuals and Practices

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation (most widely used – purchase only)
The Bluebook Table BT2 has jurisdiction-specific citation rules and style guides.
ALWD Guide to Legal Citation (legal writing practitioner guide – purchase only)
Universal Citation Guide, 3rd ed. (AALL pub. series via William S. Hein & Co.- purchase)
Introduction to Basic Legal Citation (free HTML resource by Prof. Peter Martin of Cornell U. Law Sch. on Cornell’s Legal Info Inst. site - uses The Bluebook & ALWD Guide)
The Indigo Book: An Open and Compatible Implementation of the Uniform System of Citation. (free HTML resource by Prof. Christopher Springman, et al. of NYU Law Sch).
The Maroonbook - The University of Chicago Manual of Legal Citation adopted by the University of Chicago Law Review (simple principles; free PDF downloads, 93 p.).
Federal Register Document Drafting Handbook - authority citations & practices
United States Code citation practices for authorities and notes (like 49 U.S.C. § 21301)