Quick tips to create a survey across jurisdictions

Jurisdictional Surveys on Thomson Reuters Westlaw Edge™ allow you to quickly retrieve a customized and relevant compilation of laws across all US jurisdictions on virtually any topic.

Many legal researchers find Jurisdictional Surveys helpful to:

• Identify and analyze statutory variances and similarities across jurisdictions
• Assess laws across jurisdictions to help establish a litigation strategy
• Understand jurisdictional variances as they relate to compliance activities
• Refine a legal argument based on how other jurisdictions have handled an issue
• Identify new or emerging policy trends including immigration, cybersecurity, and more
• Counsel clients on business decisions, such as where to expand operations

Check out these quick tips to help get you started building a survey for any of the tasks above.

Access Jurisdictional Surveys from the Tools Tab

You can quickly access Jurisdictional Surveys from the home page of Westlaw Edge. Select the Tools tab from the browse section and then click Jurisdictional Surveys.

Start Your Search

The materials you need to build your survey are built into the search process. Simply start with the citation of a statute you know, Index terms that describe your topic, or from a predefined topic page that lists several practice areas. Jurisdictional Surveys is designed to help you narrow down to the precise topic and issue you are researching to get you actionable results.
**Break up Terms and Use Synonyms**

When using terms, shorter is better. Instead of searching with one long phrase, for example, *elder financial exploitation*, break up your query. For example, instead search *elderly AND financial exploitation*. These terms are more likely to match the index terms assigned to a relevant statute. Suggested terms will appear as you type, providing additional terms for you to add to your search.

Use synonyms to broaden search results even further. If you add *abuse* to the terms *elderly AND financial exploitation* you are more likely to retrieve additional relevant results.

**Start with a Citation**

If you already have a citation, enter it to begin your survey. From there, you can add keywords that narrow your research down to a more specific legal issue.
Use Precise Terms
Jurisdictional Surveys is meant to provide a tailored starting point for research. Typeahead will provide available terms to add to your query to focus in on the issue.
If you are looking to search for materials on a broad topic, like corporations, start with a WestSearch® Plus query or a practice area page.

Review Related Terms
As you look through your list of statutes, you will see the index terms associated with that statute. Yellow highlighted terms are the terms you’ve entered or selected already. The orange highlighted terms are related to the yellow terms.
If the statutes displayed are not relevant to your issue, look to see if they are pulled in via a related term that you can exclude on the left panel. The related terms may also help to find other relevant terms you can use to create a specific survey.

Leverage the Interactive Map
As you compare laws, click on the interactive map to review the survey results for any given jurisdiction.
Use ‘Search Within’

Use the Search within results feature to narrow in on specific words or phrases throughout the text of the statutes in your survey results list.

Search within results uses Boolean Terms & Connectors rules. A few of the most common are listed below. To view the complete list of Boolean Terms & Connectors, click Show Boolean instructions.

**COMMON TERMS AND CONNECTORS**

/p the search terms must appear in the same paragraph (hearsay /p utterance)
/s the search terms must appear in the same sentence (design /s defect)
" " must include a particular phrase (“res ipsa loquitur”)

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For additional training materials, visit tr.com/westlawedge-training.