

# How to Navigate AELE’s Online Law Libraries



*The AELE Law Enforcement Legal Center*

[www.aele.org](http://www.aele.org)

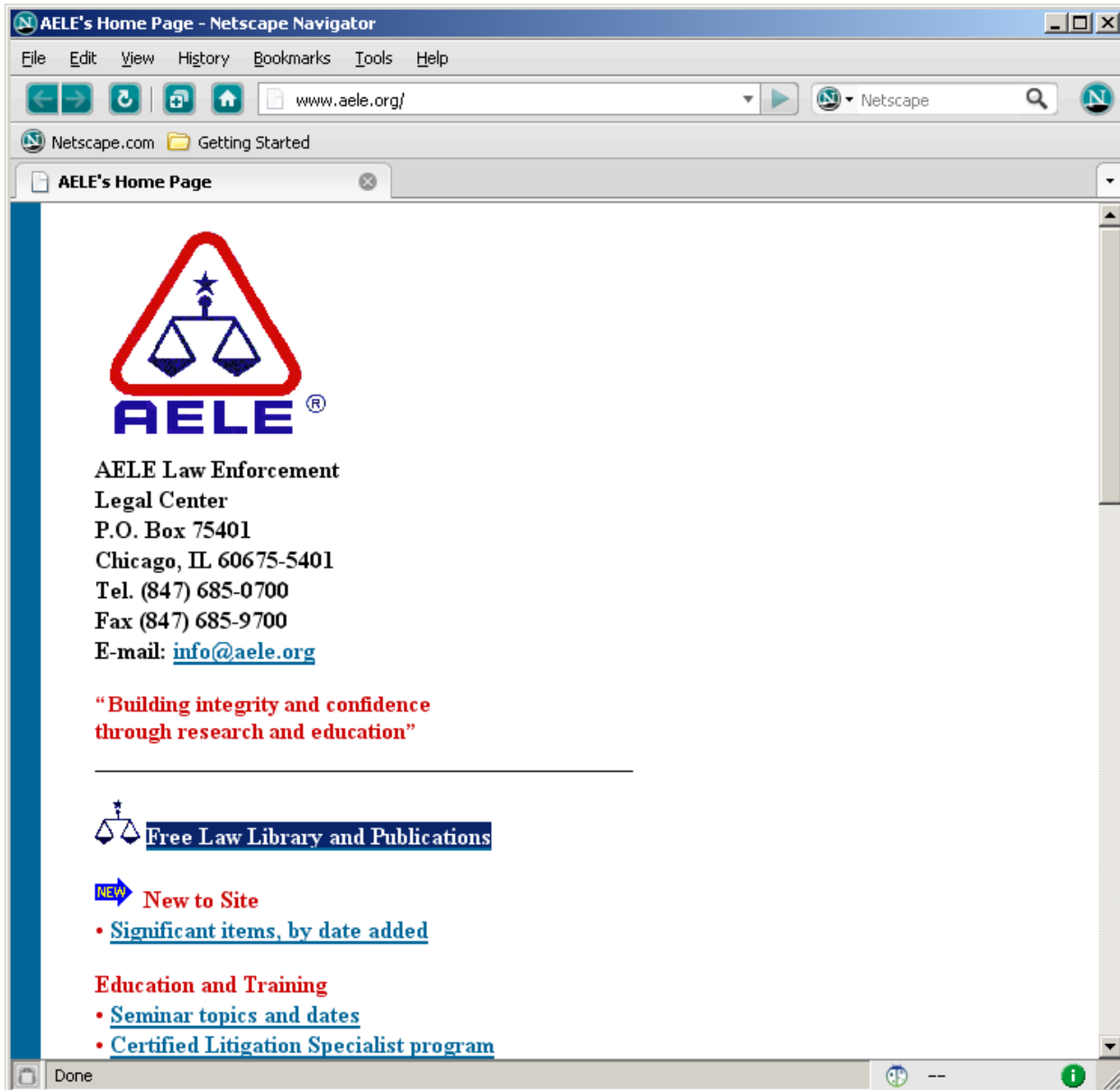
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## How to Navigate AELE's Online Law Libraries

AELE's home page is at [www.aele.org](http://www.aele.org)

Select and click on [Free Law Library and Publications](#)



### Choice of Publications

Choose a publication to read, or begin your research. There is a *Monthly Law Journal* and three specialized monthly law reporters.

- Discipline and employment law cases, for example, are summarized in the *Fire and Police Personnel Reporter*, under the yellow banner.



You can access the current and back issues, for each of the three law reporters, since 2000.

- Before 2007, each issue of the law reporters contained 10- 12 very short narratives of recent cases, chosen by the editors; additional decisions were “noted in brief.” In 2007, all three reporters were reformatted; they now contain 30-36 *Case Summaries*. All AELE publications became free in June, 2006.

## Monthly Law Journal

The *Monthly Law Journal* also began in 2007. Each edition has an article on police civil liability, another on discipline or employment law, and a third article on jail liability or corrections law.

- Unlike the three law reporters, articles in the *Monthly Law Journal* focus on a single topic, and discuss both old and newer cases

There also may also be a special article, usually written by a guest author. Writers are invited to submit an article.

- The *Monthly Law Journal* is published in PDF format, with citable pagination, and has a Library of Congress assigned ISSN (1935-0007).

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window with the address bar set to [www.aele.org/](http://www.aele.org/). The browser's menu bar includes File, Edit, View, History, Bookmarks, Tools, and Help. The address bar contains navigation icons and the Netscape logo. The page title is "May 2008 AELE Monthly Law Jou...".

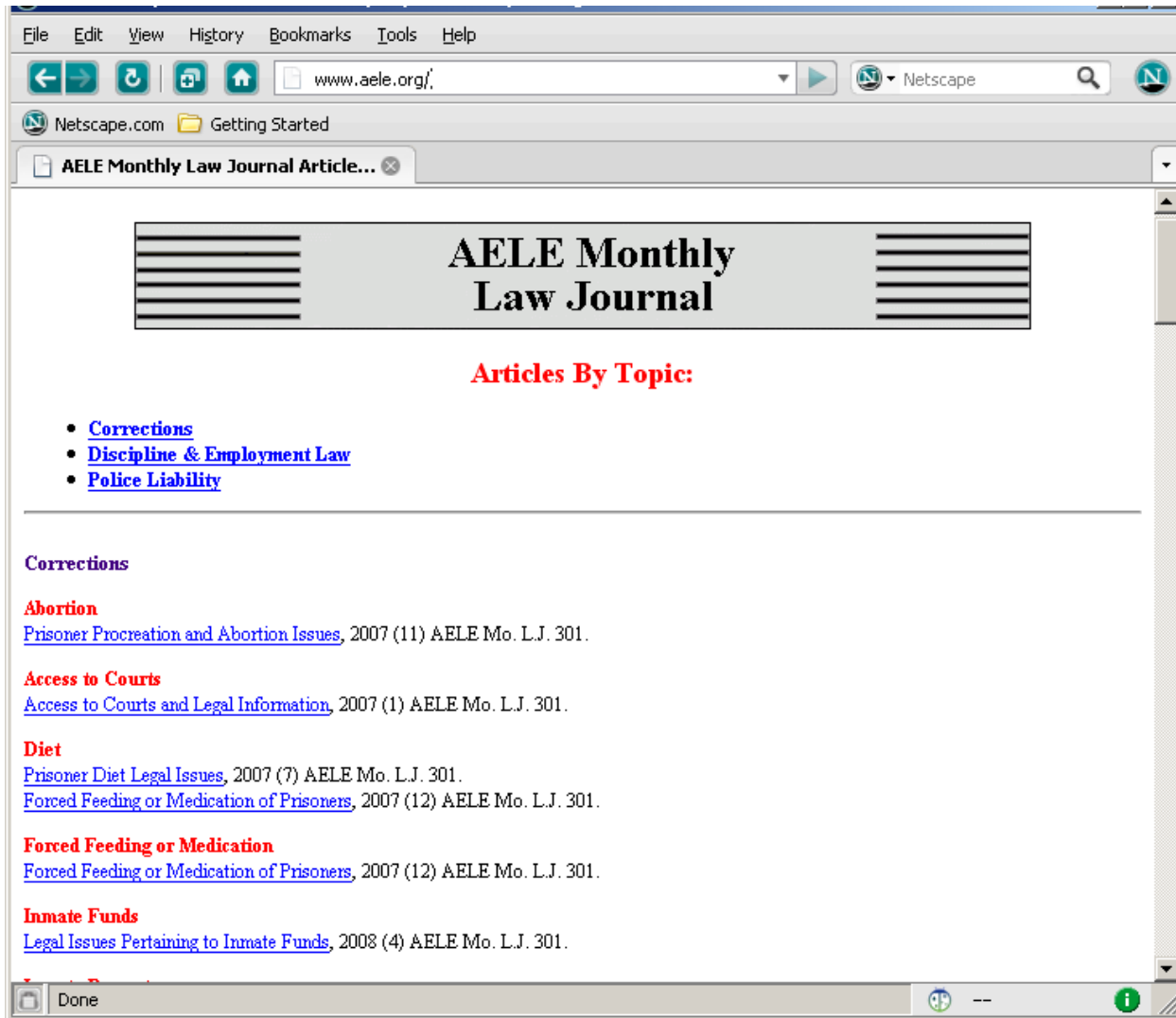
The main content area features a header with the text "AELE Monthly Law Journal" centered between two sets of horizontal lines. Below the header, the text reads: "ISSN 1935-0007 Cite this issue as: 2008 (1) AELE Mo. L.J. Citations for particular articles listed below Articles are in PDF format - [Adobe Reader™](#) must be used to view content May 2008 Click [here](#) for more information about AELE Seminars".

The "Journal Sections:" are listed as follows:

- ★ **Police Civil Liability**  
[Civil Liability and Domestic Violence Calls -- Part One](#), 2008 (5) AELE Mo. L.J. 101.
- ★ **Discipline and Employment Law**  
[Investigative Detention of Employees Part Two: Non-testimonial Evidence](#), 2008 (5) AELE Mo. L. J. 201.
- ★ **Corrections Law**  
[Legal Issues Pertaining to Visitation -- Part One](#), 2008 (5) AELE Mo. L.J. 301.
- ★ **Criminal Law and Procedure**  
*Reserved*
- ★ **Special Articles**  
[Long v. Honolulu Police Sharpshooter Decision](#), 2008 (5) AELE Mo. L.J. 501.

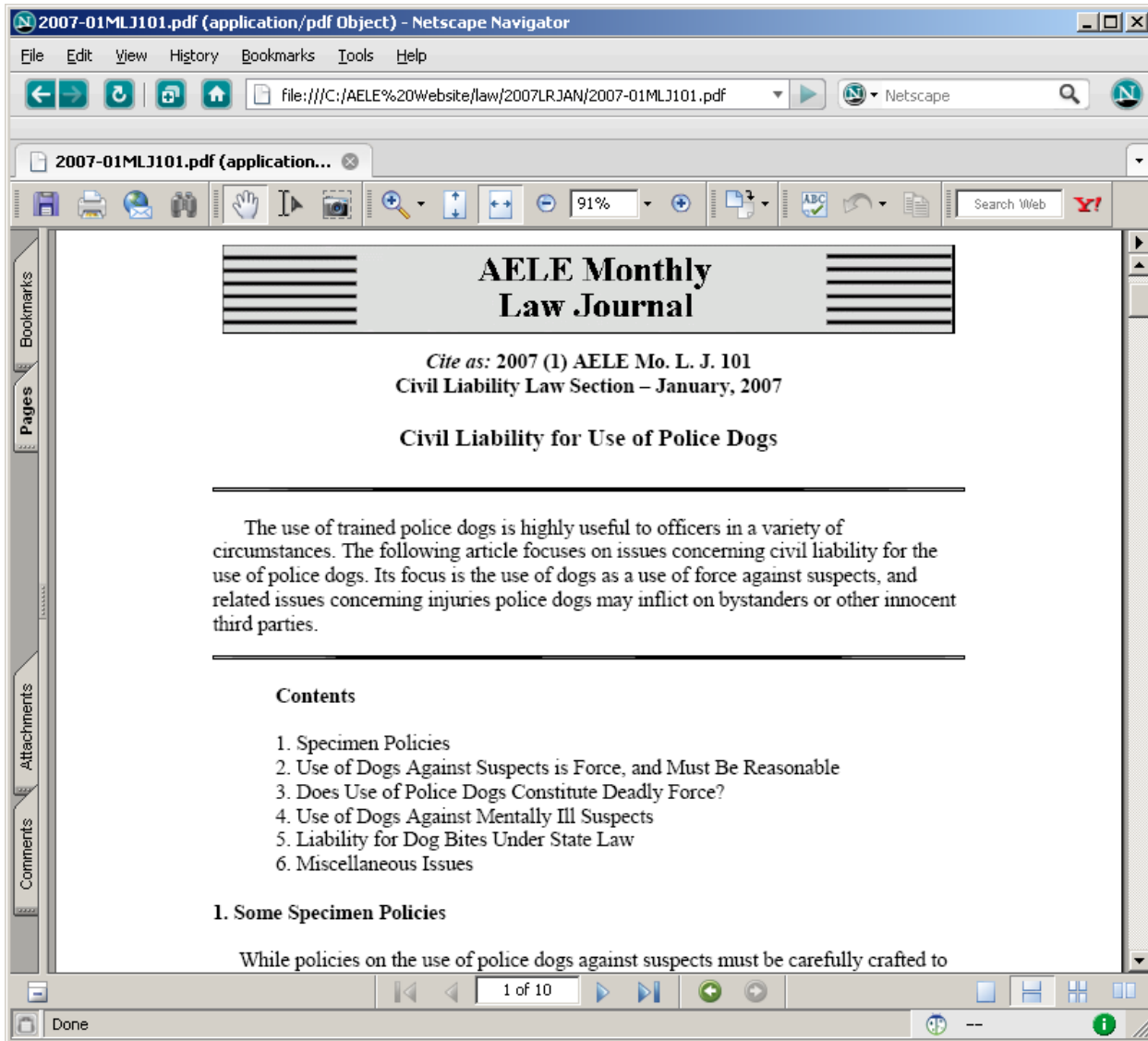
At the bottom of the page, the copyright notice reads: "© Copyright 2008 by AELE, Inc. Contents may be downloaded, stored, printed or copied, but may not be republished for commercial purposes." The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done" and various system icons.

Readers also may view a list of articles by topic. Be sure to scroll down. ↓



A sample *Law Journal* article appears below. It discusses “Civil Liability for Use of Police Dogs.”

- It has hyperlinks to specimen canine policies collected from five police agencies of various sizes.



## The Law Reporters

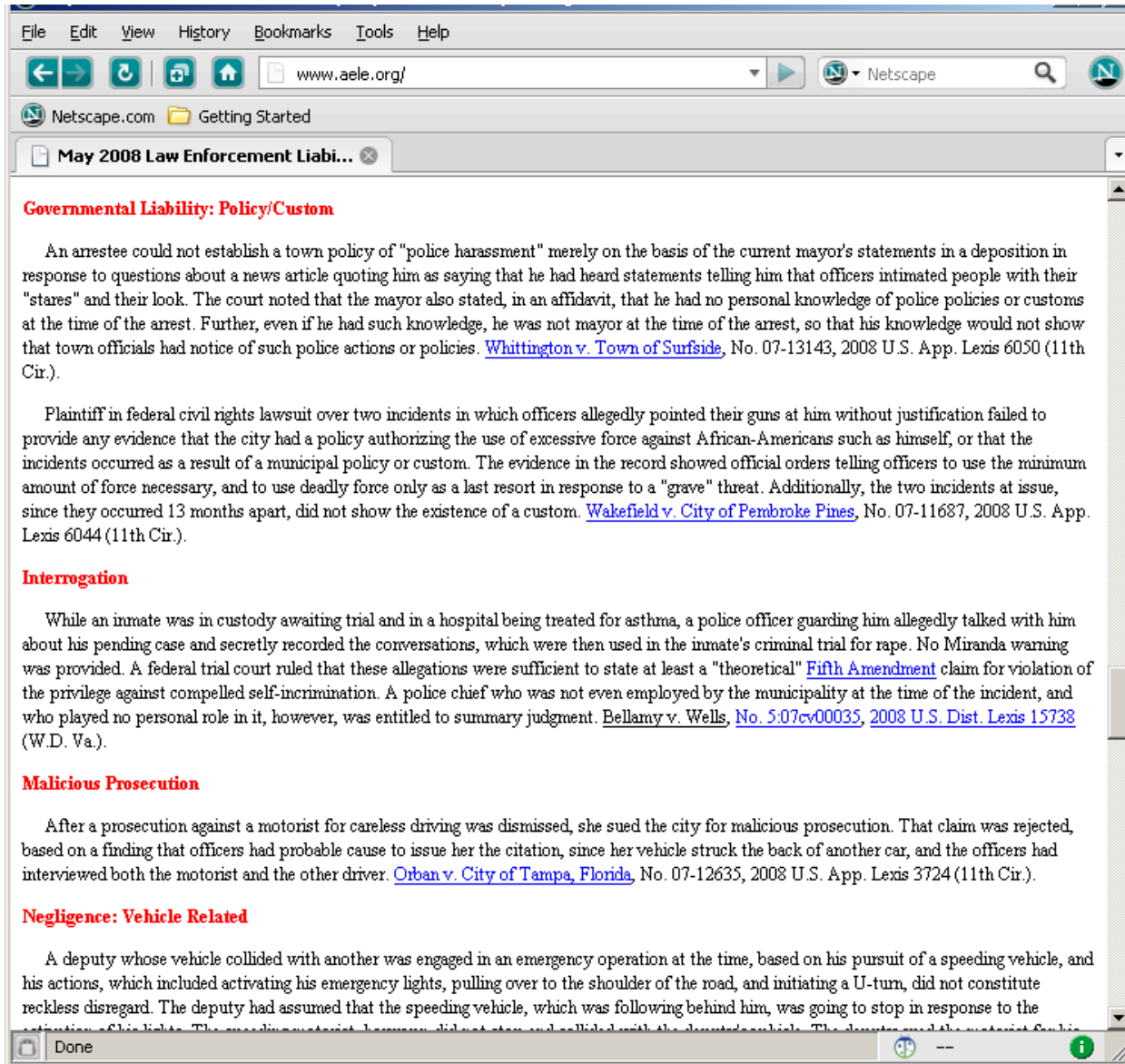
As mentioned, the three monthly reporters no longer contain extensive case narratives (short articles). They have 30-36 succinct *Case Summaries*, along with the style of the case, the citation, and (*if available*) a hyperlink to the full text of the decision. Entries are categorized by topic.

Below is the opening page of an issue of the *Law Enforcement Liability Reporter*.



By scrolling down ↓ you can view the 36 *Case Summaries* in that issue.

- Because the *Law Reporters* summarize current decisions, topics will differ. Some appear regularly, and others occur less frequently.



- **Note: Court websites sometimes delete older cases. Redesigned websites may change the Internet address (URL). For that reason, some of the links in AELE publications may not work after several months or years. They are current when an issue is put online, but AELE does not check for discontinued links to other websites.**

### **Online Case Summaries**

**One of the most important research tools are the AELE Libraries of Case Summaries. There are three of them: Law Enforcement Civil Liability,**

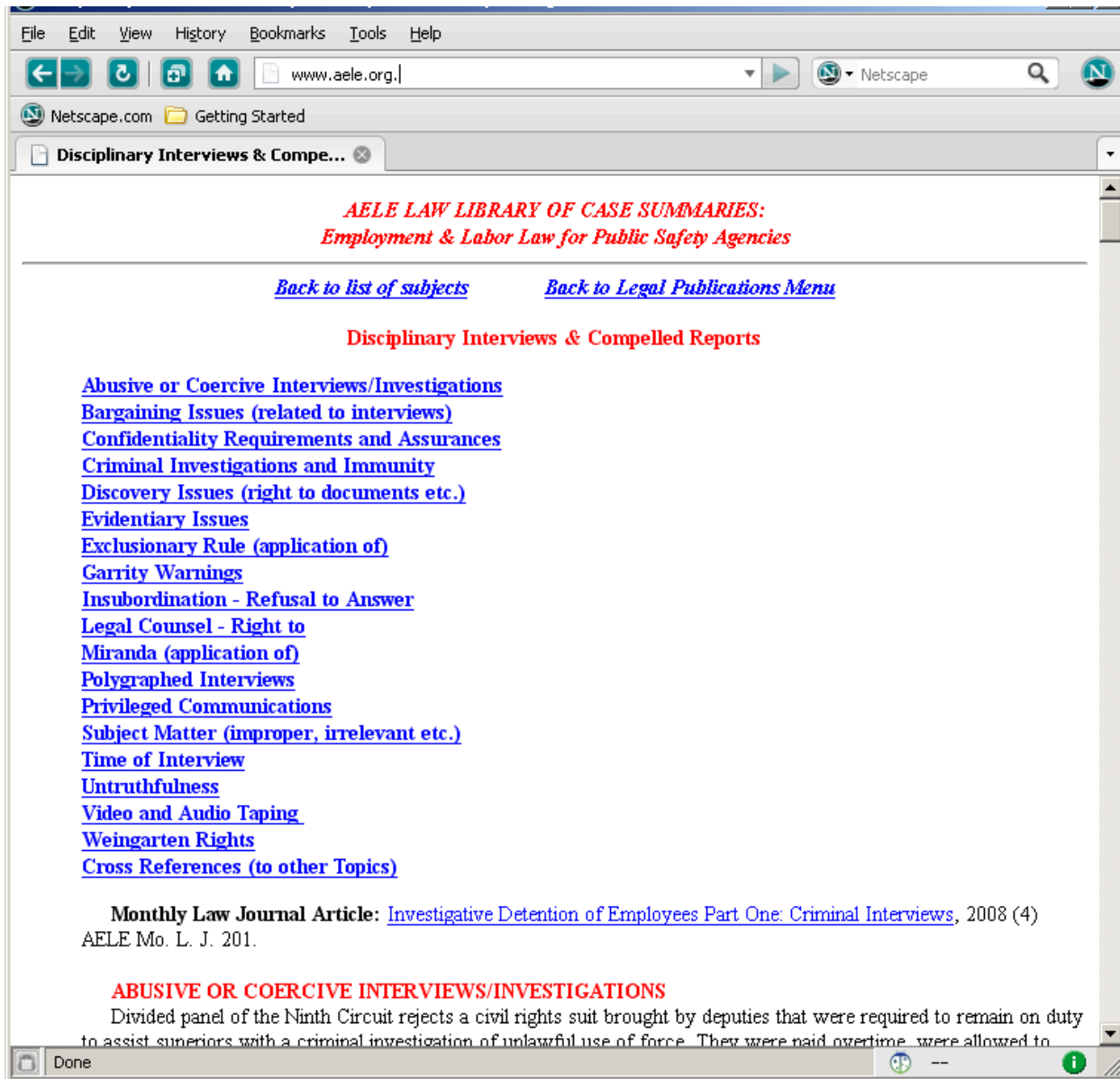


Employment Law, and Corrections Law. There are about 700 different topics in the three *Libraries of Case Summaries*. Here is the Corrections menu:



## Submenus

A few topics have so many cases that a submenu appears, to refine your research. Below is the submenu for "Disciplinary Interviews & Compelled Reports" in the *Library of Case Summaries for Employment Law*.



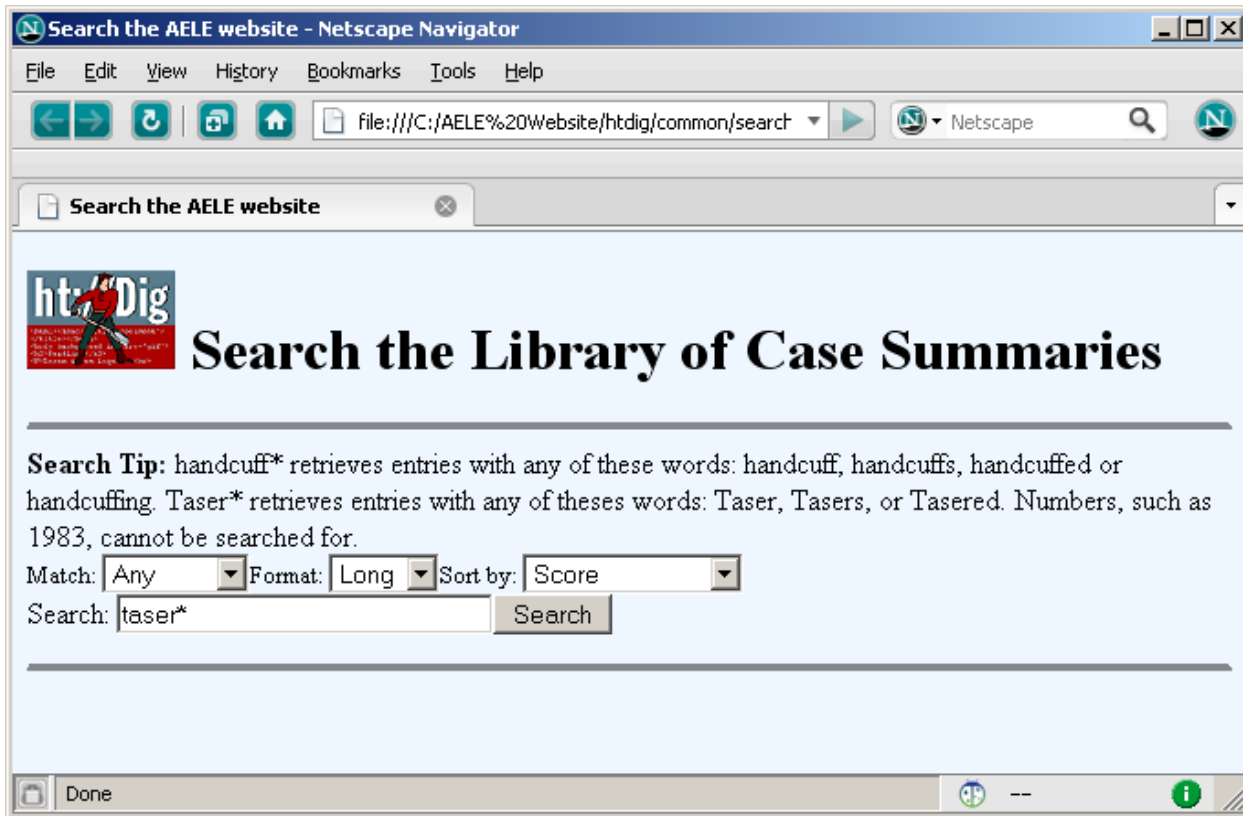
- **Warning:** Some of the older cases in the *Summaries* (and back issues of our reporters) may no longer be good law! The libraries have more than 25,000 case entries and it is impossible for the editors to research whether cases have been reversed, superseded or modified. The listings are only a research source, not legal advice.

## Search Engine

Throughout the library are links for a *KEYWORD* search:

[Search the Library of Case Summaries](#)

Click on the underlined link (not the search icon). That will open a new screen:



Be sure to type an **\*** at the end of a *KEYWORD* to find variations in word endings! All 25,000 *Case Summaries* will be searched.

- The *KEYWORD* **taser\*** will access **Tasers** and **tasered** wherever those words appear, in the *Case Summaries* that are compiled from the *Liability Reporter*, the *Fire and Police Personnel Reporter* or the *Jail and Prison Law Bulletin*. All three libraries are queried. The search engine cannot search for numbers or symbols, e.g., §1983, 2008, etc. Either capital and lower case letters work.

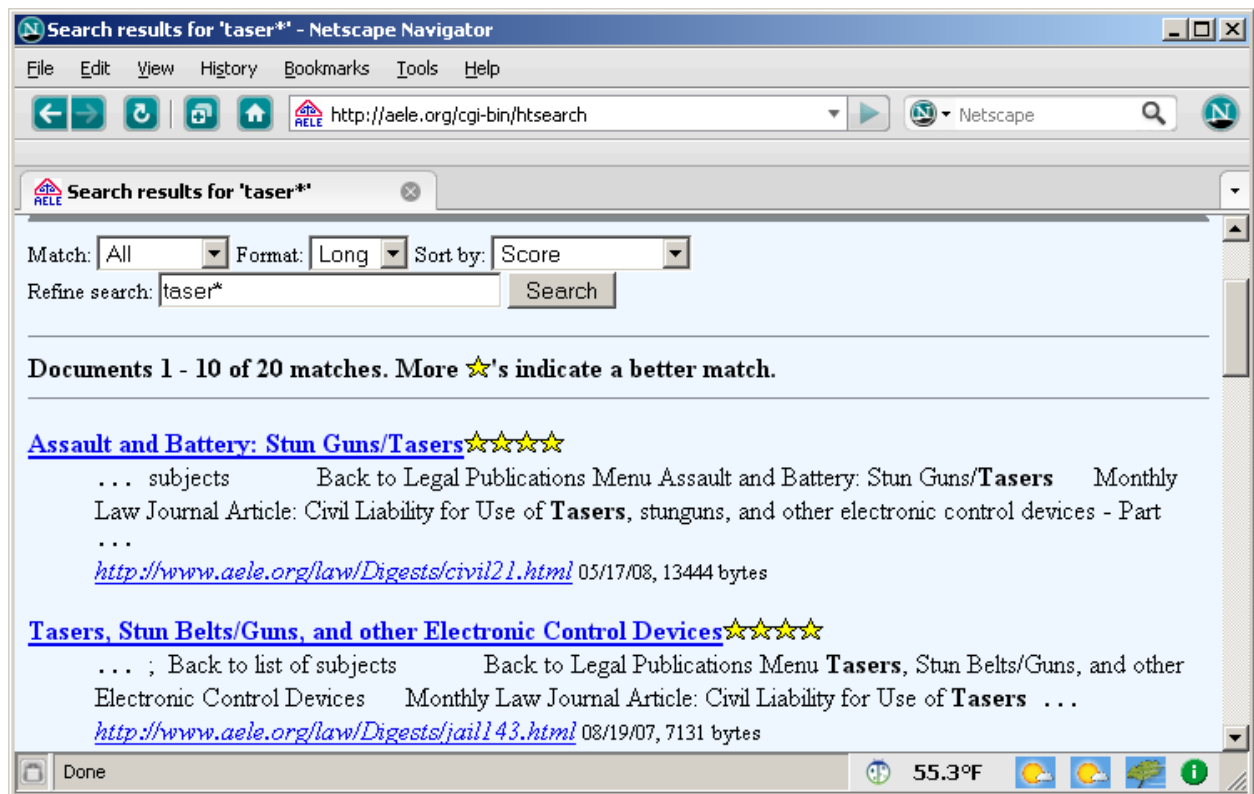
The *Libraries of Case Summaries* contain entries since 1975, although the editors have added summaries of a few older, noteworthy decisions.

For example, in the *Employment Law Library of Case Summaries*, under the topic “*Inefficiency, Performance Standards, Negligence and Incompetence*,” is a summary of a 1968 case about the demotion of a police major who was fired for his alleged incompetency as a senior-level executive:

“Missouri Supreme Court reverses a police board decision to fire a police major who was promoted beyond his level of competence. City ordered to reinstate him, then to demote him to a lesser rank for which he was qualified. *McCallister v. Priest*, 442 S.W.2d 650 (Mo. 1968).”

Every month, when new *Case Summaries* are added to the libraries, the search engine re-sorts the information, so that the database is updated and current.

The search engine will generate the results on a new screen:



When you click on an item, it will open one of the 700 different topical menus.

- Using your browser’s toolbar “Find” or “Search” function, enter the *KEYWORD* again (but without the \* at the end of the word). You should drop down to the first entry with that *KEYWORD*. Browsers, unlike search engines, will find plural words and those with added suffixes, e.g., **handcuffed**.
- Do this repeatedly, until you have read all entries with that *KEYWORD*.

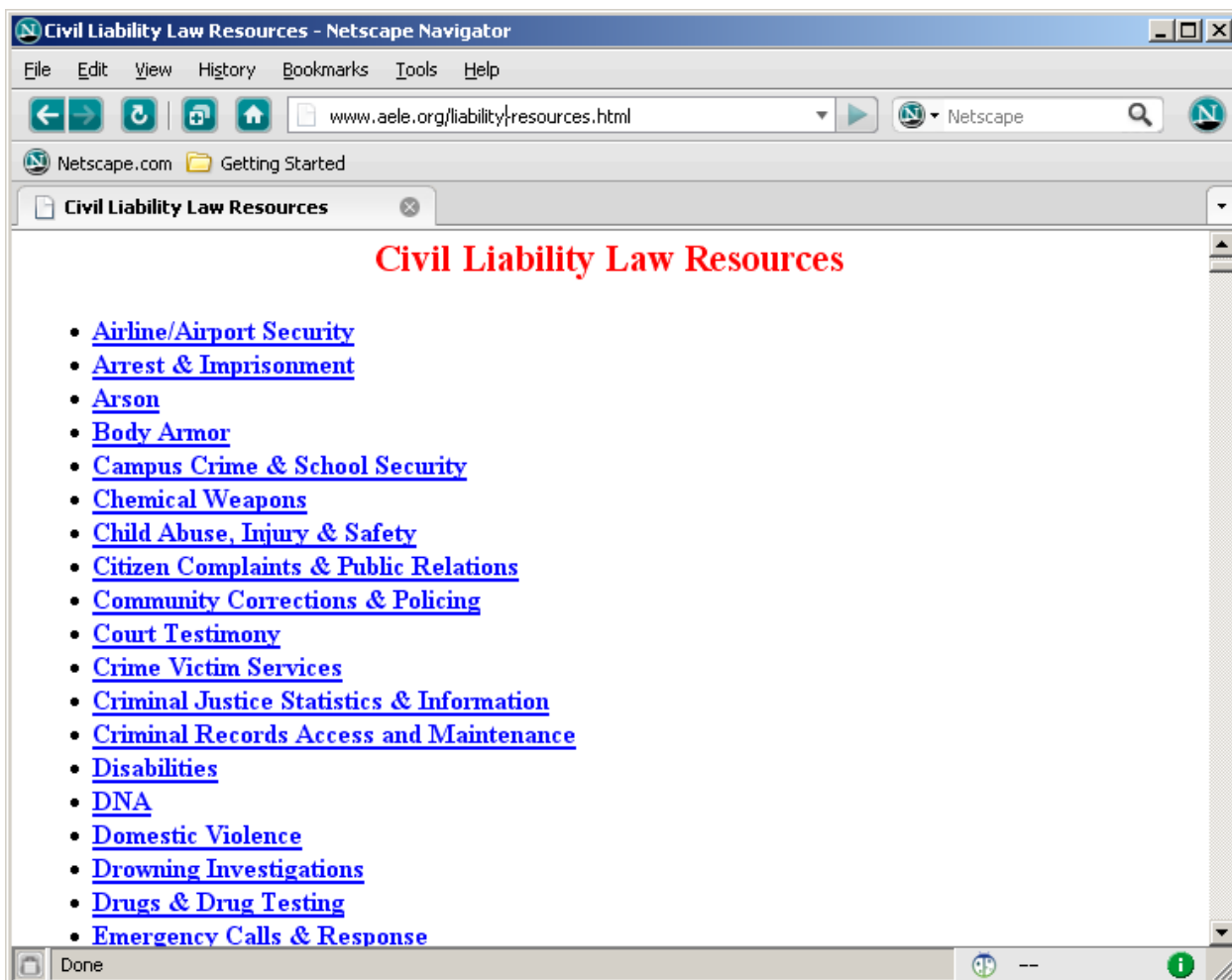
**Remember:** The search engine accesses all three *Libraries of Case Summaries*, so it is unnecessary to search for the same *KEYWORD* for each reporter.

To read the full text of decision that is not posted on the Internet, visit an online retrieval service, such as [Lexis.com](http://Lexis.com) or [Westlaw.com](http://Westlaw.com)

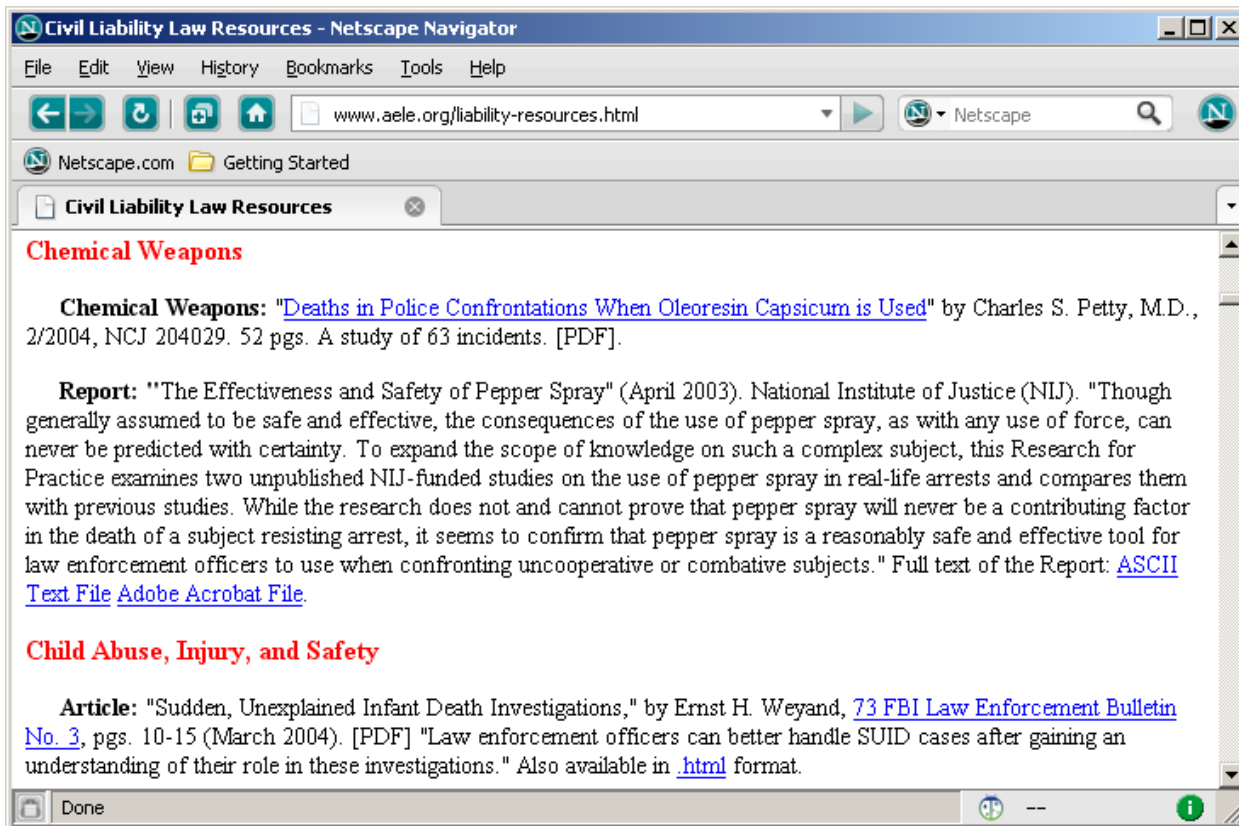
AELE lacks the resources to update its free database of 25,000 entries. If you find that a case is no longer valid, or if you locate a case that the editors have missed, please write us at [editor@aele.org](mailto:editor@aele.org)

### **List of Resources**

Another useful tool is the “*Resources*” link. There are three of them, one for each reporter. Here is the one for *Civil Liability Law Resources*:

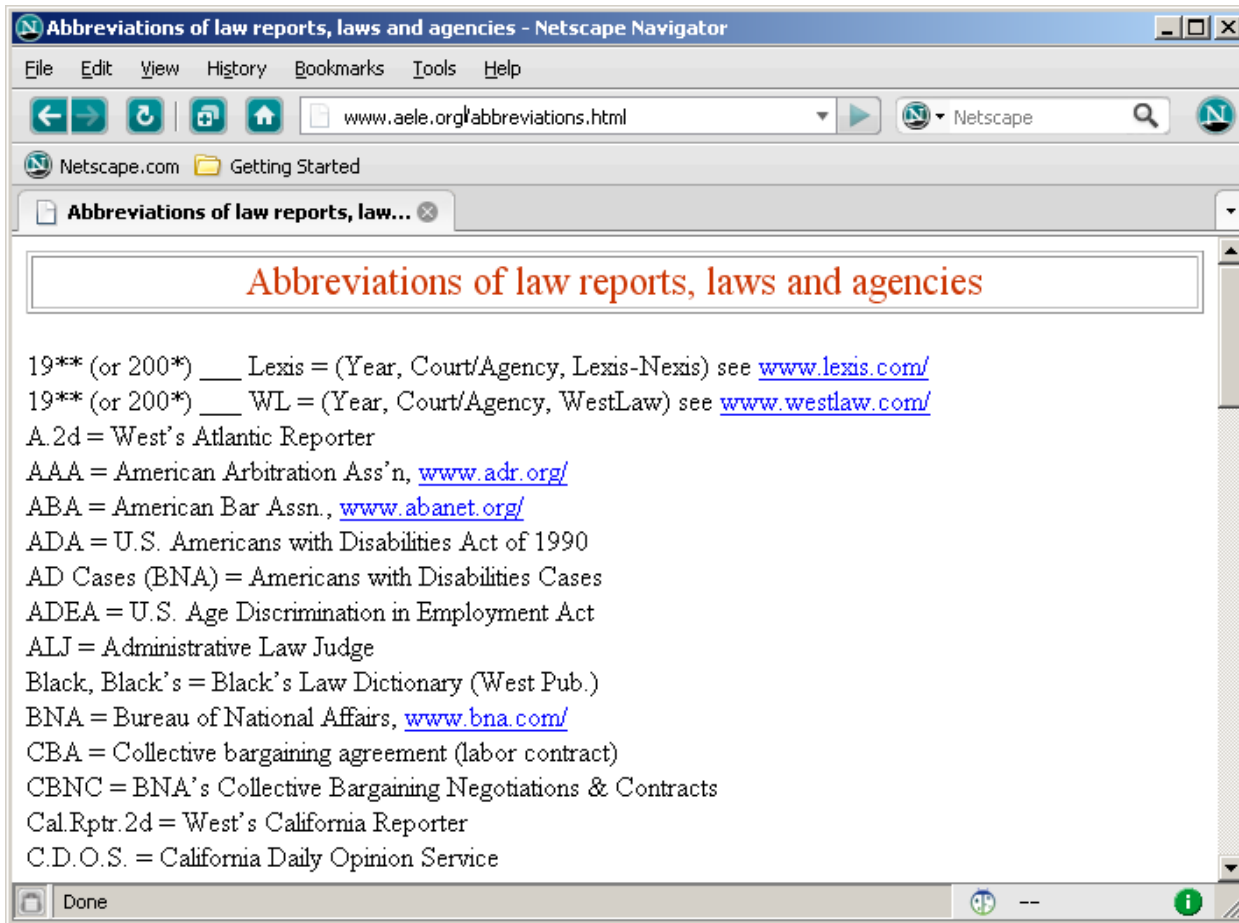


The entries will direct your browser to another website, where the document was originally located by AELE editors. There are likely to be a number of bad links, as those websites are revised or updated. Here are a few specimen entries:



## Abbreviations

AELE uses commonly accepted abbreviations. You can access a list at: [Abbreviations of law reports, laws and agencies](#), which will open this page:



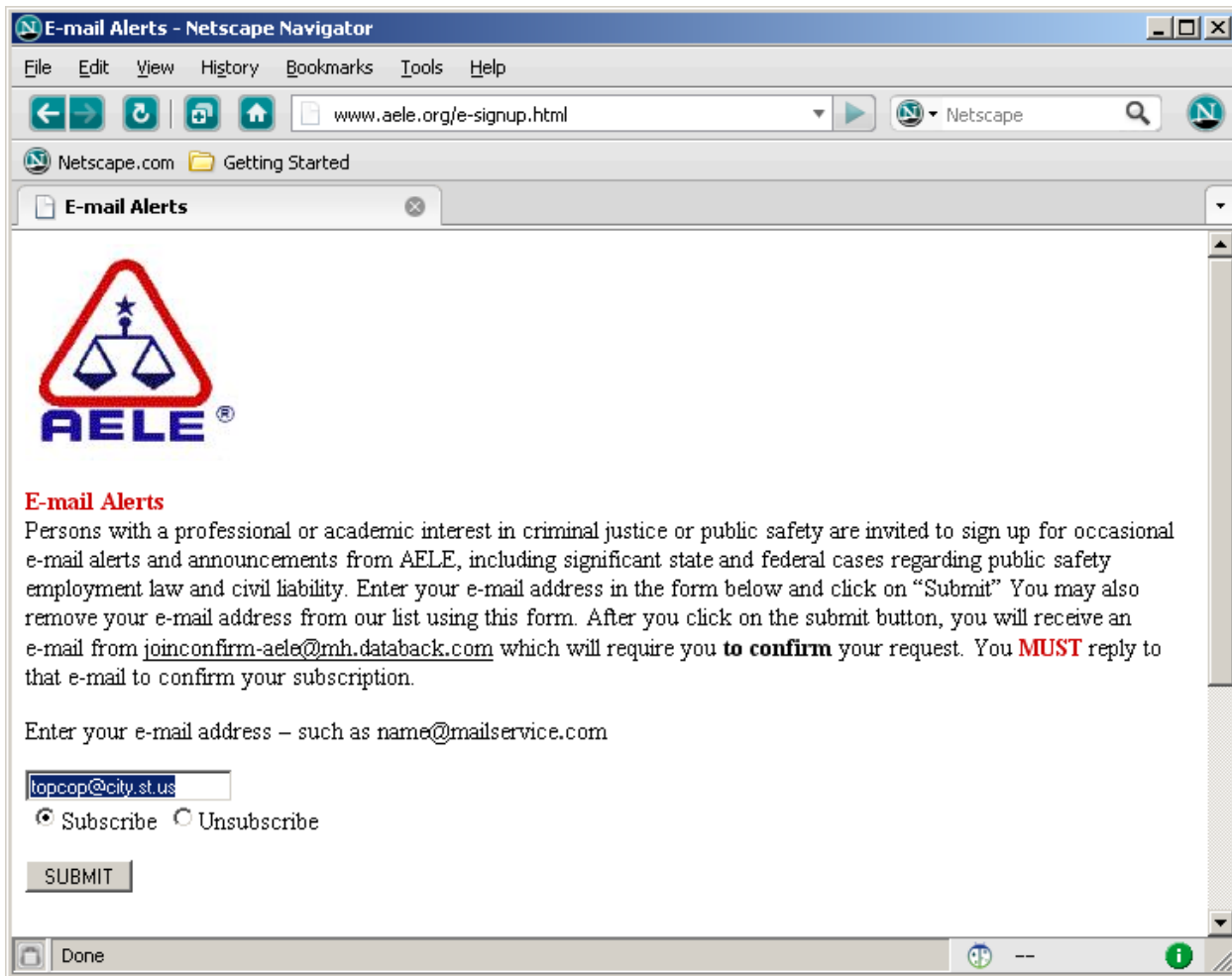
## Monthly E-mails

AELE sends an e-mail once a month, announcing when the latest publications have been uploaded. It also highlights several of the more significant cases. You can sign up for this free service by clicking a signup link at the bottom of our home page; it looks like this:

### **E-mail Alerts**

- [Sign up for free e-mail alerts](#)

That will open a new menu:



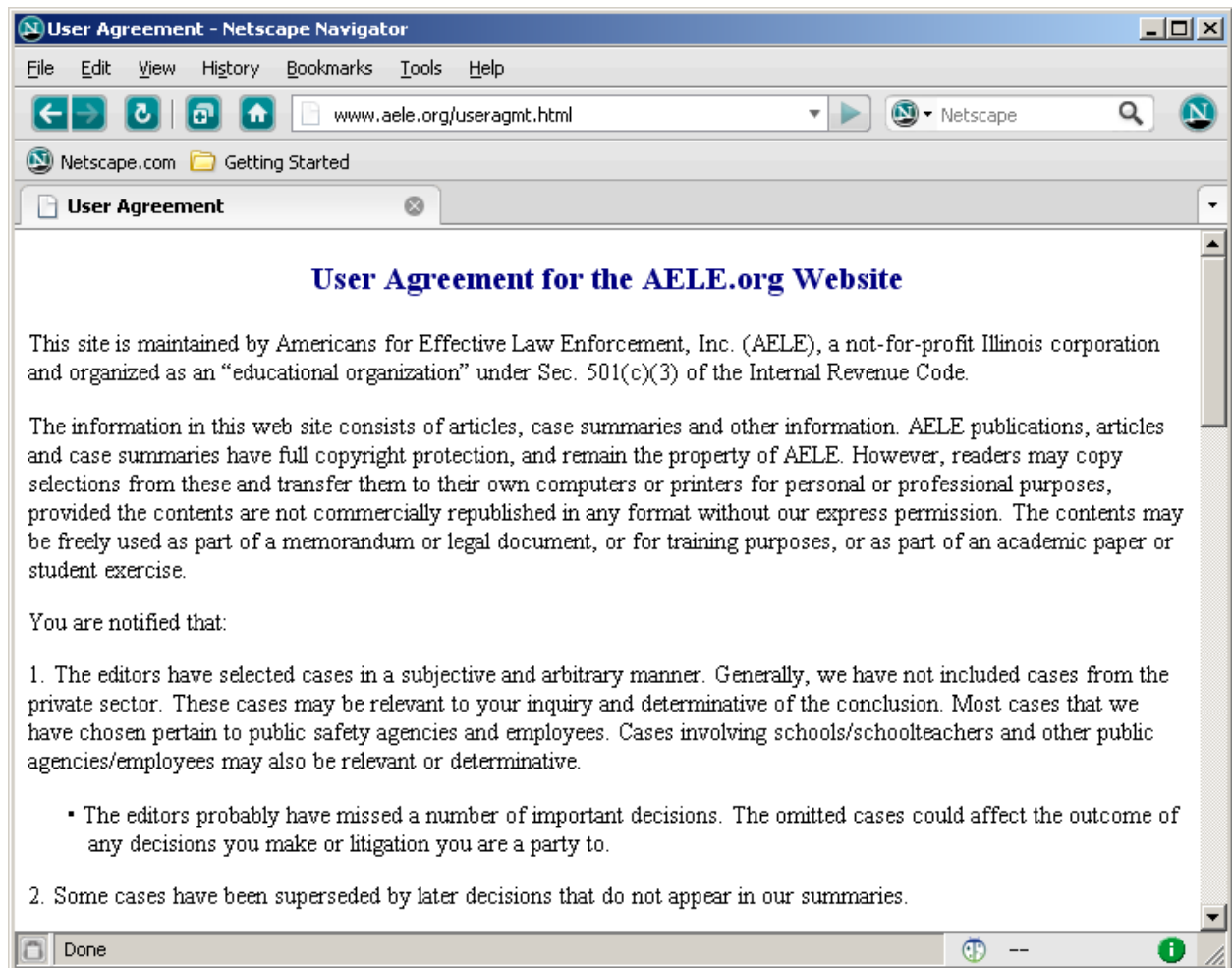
- You will receive a welcome e-mail; you **MUST** respond to it and confirm your subscription. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you change your e-mail address, "*Unsubscribe*" your old address and "*Subscribe*" the new one.
- We respect your privacy! You will not be spammed; your e-mail address will not be sold or rented to outsiders. Our monthly e-mail *Alerts* do not contain commercial advertising. They are sent in plain text, and can be read on handheld displays, such as BlackBerry® devices.
- While most of our readers are employed in criminal justice or public safety positions, others are students, journalists, public officials, lawyers, community activists and ordinary citizens. Everyone is welcome to benefit from this library, including readers from outside of the United States.



## User Agreement

AELE has a “User Agreement” which describes some of the limitations of our libraries. It also reminds readers that they use our libraries at their own risk, as we cannot guarantee the accuracy or continued validity of the entries. AELE is a nonprofit educational organization, not a private law firm.

- Readers should obtain legal advice from other sources.



You can view the entire agreement at [www.aele.org/law/useragmt.html](http://www.aele.org/law/useragmt.html)

Finally, there are a few important articles and documents that are not in the publications libraries. They can be accessed directly from our Home Page. Under the *Library* heading, click on [IACP Legal Officers conference materials](#) and/or [Miscellaneous articles and information](#).

## **Ten Points to Remember**

- 1. Each month AELE publishes three law reporters containing unbiased summaries of recently decided cases that impact on police civil liability, discipline and employment law, and corrections. More than 1,200 new cases are summarized each year. In many instances, there is a link to the full text of the decision. More than 300 back issues are online, since 2000.**
- 2. The *Monthly Law Journal* also is gratis. Each issue contains at least three articles on selected topics. Longer articles are split over two or more months. Articles may contain links to specimen policies and other resources. Back issues are on line. New articles are invited from contributors.**
- 3. 25,000+ *Case Summaries* have been categorized into 700 topics, and date back to 1975. Each month, they are supplemented with new case entries.**
- 4. There is a *KEYWORD* search engine that scans the *Case Summaries*, for all 700 topics, and retrieves the results. You, the reader, type the *KEYWORD/S*.**
- 5. There are three different lists of reader *Resources*, updated monthly.**
- 6. Unlike commercial websites, AELE publications do not contain commercial advertising. AELE does not endorse branded products or services.**
- 7. Readers can sign up for a monthly e-mail *Alert*, notifying them when the latest publications have been uploaded. Those e-mails can be forwarded to others, without restriction. They are in plain text, and have no advertising.**
- 8. AELE publications and *Case Summaries* can be downloaded to a personal computer or duplicated for noncommercial use, including interoffice memos, training documents, academic papers and legal documents.**
- 9. Instructors are invited to assign research questions or projects to their students, which require access to AELE's online libraries.**
- 10. Our staff can be contacted at [info@aele.org](mailto:info@aele.org)**

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