

caseId: (Identification) A unique identifier assigned by the SCDB to each distinct Supreme Court dispute or consolidated set of disputes. Used to link information across different SCDB files or to external data sources.

docketId: (Identification) A unique identifier for each docket number associated with a **caseId**. For consolidated cases, the same **caseId** will have multiple **docketIds**. Useful for analyzing cases based on their original lower court numbering.

caseIssuesId: (Identification) A unique identifier for each set of issues (**issueArea**, **issue**) and legal provisions (**legalProvision**) decided within a **docketId**. More granular than **docketId**.

voteId: (Identification) A unique identifier for each distinct vote instance within a **caseIssuesId**, particularly relevant in rare cases with split votes where justices vote differently on different aspects within the same issue/provision. This is the most granular identifier.

dateDecision: (Chronological) The date the Court announced its decision in the case. Crucial for calculating duration. (See Section III, V regarding potential inaccuracies 38).

decisionType: (Outcome) How the Court processed the case procedurally (e.g., argument, per curiam without argument).

usCite: (Identification/Background) The citation for the case in the United States Reports.

sctCite: (Identification/Background) The citation for the case in the Supreme Court Reporter.

ledCite: (Identification/Background) The citation for the case in the Lawyers' Edition.

lexisCite: (Identification/Background) The citation for the case in LexisNexis.

term: (Chronological) The Supreme Court term in which the decision was handed down. (See Section III, V regarding definition). Used as a temporal feature and for merging data like MQ scores.

naturalCourt: (Chronological) A unique identifier for each period during which the Court's membership remained unchanged. Indicates who was on the Court when the decision was made.

chief: (Chronological) A code identifying the Chief Justice presiding over the Court when the decision was made.

docket: (Identification/Background) The official Supreme Court docket number(s) for the case. Note that this is a string and can have inconsistent formatting (Section V).

caseName: (Identification/Background) The name of the case.

dateArgument: (Chronological) The date of oral argument for the case (first day if multiple). Crucial for Argument-to-Decision duration calculation. (See Section III, V regarding missing values for non-argued cases and inaccuracies 38).

dateRearg: (Chronological) The date of reargument, if any. Infrequently populated.

petitioner: (Background) A code identifying the type of party that petitioned the Court (e.g., U.S. Government, individual, corporation). (See Section III regarding hundreds of codes, needing simplification).

petitionerState: (Background) The state associated with the petitioner, if applicable.

respondent: (Background) A code identifying the type of party responding to the petitioner. (See Section III regarding codes).

respondentState: (Background) The state associated with the respondent, if applicable.

jurisdiction: (Background) A code indicating the legal basis for the Court's review (e.g., certiorari, appeal, original). (See Section III).

adminAction: (Background) Indicates if the case involved review of an administrative agency action.

adminActionState: (Background) The state associated with the administrative action, if applicable.

threeJudgeFdc: (Background) Binary flag indicating if a three-judge federal district court was involved (often for specific case types like voting rights).

caseOrigin: (Background) A code identifying the specific court or body from which the case originated. (See Section V regarding undocumented codes 38).

caseOriginState: (Background) The state associated with the originating court.

caseSource: (Background) A code identifying the level of court below the Supreme Court that reviewed the case (e.g., state high court, federal circuit court). (See Section III).

caseSourceState: (Background) The state associated with the source court.

lcDisagreement: (Background) Binary flag indicating whether lower courts disagreed on the issue. (See Section III, V regarding potential ambiguities 6).

certReason: (Background) A code indicating the reason the Supreme Court stated for granting certiorari, if applicable. (See Section III).

lcDisposition: (Background) A code indicating the disposition (outcome) of the case in the lower court being reviewed by the Supreme Court. (See Section III).

lcDispositionDirection: (Background/Outcome) The ideological direction (liberal/conservative/unspecifiable) of the lower court disposition. (See Section III).

declarationUncon: (Outcome) Binary flag indicating if a law or action was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court's decision.

caseDisposition: (Outcome) A code describing how the Supreme Court ultimately disposed of the case (e.g., affirmed, reversed, vacated). (See Section III, V regarding complexity and ambiguity, e.g., with DIGs 38).

caseDispositionUnusual: (Outcome) Flag for unusual case dispositions.

partyWinning: (Outcome) A code indicating which party (petitioner or respondent) won the case. (See Section III).

precedentAlteration: (Outcome) A code indicating whether the decision formally altered existing Supreme Court precedent. (See Section III).

voteUnclear: (Voting/Opinion) Flag for cases where the voting alignment was unclear.

issue: (Substantive) A more specific code detailing the precise legal issue within the broader **issueArea**. (See Section III regarding granularity 5).

issueArea: (Substantive) A broad subject matter category for the legal issue (e.g., Criminal Procedure, Civil Rights, Economic Activity). (See Section III regarding breadth 5).

decisionDirection: (Outcome) The ideological direction (liberal/conservative/unspecifiable) of the Supreme Court's final decision. Common target variable for outcome prediction. (See Section III).

decisionDirectionDissent: (Outcome) Ideological direction of the dissenting opinion(s).

authorityDecision1: (Outcome) Primary legal authority cited in the decision (e.g., statute, Constitution).

authorityDecision2: (Outcome) Secondary legal authority cited.

lawType: (Substantive) The type of law or action being reviewed (e.g., federal statute, state statute, state constitution).

lawSupp: (Substantive) Supplemental information about the law being reviewed.

lawMinor: (Substantive) Free text field for minor legal provisions. **Caution:** The guide highlights this variable has significant quality issues and is difficult to use reliably (Section V 38).

majOpinWriter: (Voting/Opinion) Code for the justice who authored the majority opinion.

majOpinAssigner: (Voting/Opinion) Code for the justice who assigned the majority opinion.

splitVote: (Voting/Opinion) Indicates if vote variables pertain to the 1st or 2nd issue in rare split-vote cases. Using this structure means multiple rows might exist for a single case/docket/issue set if there were different voting coalitions. (See Section III, V).

majVotes: (Voting/Opinion) Number of justices in the majority coalition.

minVotes: (Voting/Opinion) Number of justices in the main dissenting coalition.