

2005 Membership:

Civil Jury Instructions Subcommittee

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Criminal Jury Instructions Subcommittee

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Staff:

Roger B. Meilton, Esq., *Assistant Reporter and Secretary*
Lydia L. Hack, Esq., *Pennsylvania Bar Institute Contact*

Legal Authorization:

Pa. Constitution Article V, § 10(c)

About the Committee:

The committee's mission is to assist the administration of justice in court proceedings by developing pattern jury instructions for use by both the bench and the bar.

Committee for Proposed Standard Jury Instructions

c/o Pa. Bar Institute
5080 Ritter Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717) 796-0804
(800) 932-4637

Committee Activities

Civil Instructions

In 2005 the Civil Jury Instructions Subcommittee completed a third edition, which incorporates revisions based upon case law developments, new Rules of Civil Procedure and new legislation as well as comments from lawyers and judges. The edition includes a searchable CD-ROM and the following new instructions: factual cause, non-economic loss, jury note-taking and 10/12 jury issue. A new chapter is dedicated to medical malpractice cases under the MCARE Act (claims subsequent to March 20, 2002).

Presently, the subcommittee, with the assistance of a plain English consultant, is modifying the sequence and language of the instructions. The goal is to revise the instructions to make them more understandable to lay jurors.

The subcommittee plans to publish a new supplement every 18 to 24 months.

Criminal Instructions

In 2005 the Criminal Jury Instructions Subcommittee completed the second edition, containing hundreds of criminal instructions keyed numerically to the Crimes Code, with many offering alternative language, depending on the case facts. The edition, including a searchable CD-ROM, is the first new edition released in approximately 25 years.

The subcommittee's goal is to continue to improve the language of the instructions to ensure both a proper statement of law is conveyed and the instructions are accessible to the jurors applying them. The subcommittee is committed to updating the instructions every 18 to 24 months.

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