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Civil Jury Instructions Subcommittee

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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

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Committee Activities

Civil Instructions

In 2007 the Civil Jury Instructions Subcommittee continued its mission of updating the Suggested Standard Civil Jury Instructions included in the Third Edition (2005). In preparation for releasing a supplement to the Third Edition, the subcommittee incorporated revisions based upon case law developments, new Rules of Civil Procedure and new legislation as well as comments from lawyers and judges.

The subcommittee continues its plain-English objective to revise the instructions to make them more understandable to lay jurors. It is committed to updating the instructions every 18 to 24 months.

Criminal Instructions

In 2007 the subcommittee continued its mission of updating the Pennsylvania Suggested Standard Criminal Jury Instructions included in the Second Edition (2005). This reference contains hundreds of criminal instructions keyed numerically to the Crimes Code with many offering alternative language depending on the case facts.

Committee members continually monitor pertinent case law to update the subcommittee notes, which offer commentary explaining the appropriate instruction application, identifying relevant case law citations and offering practical guidance. The subcommittee's ongoing goal is to improve the language of the instructions to ensure that a proper statement of law is conveyed and that the instructions are accessible to the jurors applying them. The subcommittee is committed to updating the instructions every 18 to 24 months. **AOPC**