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Staff:

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Legal Authorization:

Pa. Constitution Article V, § 10(c)

Committee

for

Proposed

Standard

Jury

Instructions

c/o Pa. Bar Institute
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History/Background

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court Committee for Proposed Standard Jury Instructions was first appointed in 1968 by Chief Justice John C. Bell for the express purpose of developing pattern jury charges for the assistance of both the bench and the bar. The committee's mission from the outset has been to assist the administration of justice in both civil and criminal court proceedings through the availability of model jury instructions.

As a result, the committee has published comprehensive volumes of suggested civil and criminal jury instructions. The suggested instructions guide judges and lawyers in the preparation and consideration of instructions during the trial process. The ongoing purpose of the committee is to monitor developments in civil and criminal law, recommending and publishing revised and new instructions as required.

Since 1979 the Pennsylvania Bar Institute (PBI) has provided both administrative and publishing support for the committee, as well as funding for this important work. Project costs are underwritten through the sale and distribution of the published suggested standard instructions to the legal community.

The third supplement to the Civil Jury Instructions was published in 1997. With this

supplement, the instructions became available on computer diskette. The process of recruiting a working advisory panel is underway, with the goal of publishing a fourth supplement in the year 2000.

The seventh supplement to the Criminal Jury Instructions was published in 1995. With it, the instructions also became available on computer diskette. During 1998 and 1999, the advisory panel has continued researching and drafting revised and new jury instructions for an eighth supplement targeted to be published in late 1999.

Contact Person

Members of the bench and bar are urged to provide their comments and suggestions to the committee. Such comments are of great assistance to the reporters and subcommittee members in their ongoing efforts to ensure that the instructions reflect the current state of the law in Pennsylvania.

Those interested may contact David Hominik, PBI Publications Attorney. He can be reached at the Pennsylvania Bar Institute; 5080 Ritter Road; Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6903; (800) 932-4637 or (717) 796-0804, ext. 2258; or dhominik@pbi.org. 