

Wis. Supreme Court: Wisconsin jury instructions now available via State Law Library website

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Madison, Wisconsin (Jan. 25, 2021) – In cooperation with the University of Wisconsin Law School, Director of State Courts Hon. Randy R. Koschnick announced today that the Office of Judicial Education, in partnership with the Wisconsin State Law Library, is now providing free online access to updated criminal, civil, and juvenile jury instructions.

[Wisconsin Jury Instructions](#) serve as models, checklists or minimum standards to assist judges and lawyers in providing instructions to jurors who must reach verdicts during trials.

The law school, which has formally published the jury instructions for more than six decades, has determined that transitioning the jury instructions to a public digital platform is in the best interest of the legal community and the state.

“For over six decades, the UW Law School has been privileged to publish and provide a home for the Wisconsin Jury Instructions. This has been a labor of love, grounded in our deep commitment to the Wisconsin Idea. We are delighted that the jury instructions will be digitized and made free to the public from this point forward, thanks to the diligent efforts of the state courts and many people working with them,” said UW Law School Dean Dan Tokaji.

The transition will make it easier for judges and lawyers to access this vital information as soon as it is updated and available, said Morgan Young, director of the Office of Judicial Education.

“The legal community has benefitted tremendously from the law school’s work over the years, and with the help of the State Law Library, this transition will build on that foundation,” Young said.

While the transition will alter the method of publication and distribution of jury instructions, it will have very little impact on the traditional model of content creation. All three Jury Instructions Committees of the Wisconsin Judicial Conference will carry on with their standard schedules and work in developing the instructions, Koschnick said.

Supplements to the instructions will still be compiled in the conventional annual release format and made available for upload via the State Law Library website.

For more information, contact Bryce Pierson, Legal Advisor – Jury Instruction, in the Office of Judicial Education, bryce.pierson@wicourts.gov.