

NOTICE TO THE BAR

AUTOMATED MODEL CIVIL JURY CHARGE SYSTEM

In *State v. O'Brien*, 200 N.J. 520 (2009), the New Jersey Supreme Court asked the Civil Practice Committee and Criminal Practice Committee both to consider developing standards to guide judges in exercising their discretion to provide written instructions to the jury. The Conference of Civil Presiding Judges through the Civil Practice Committee recommended amending *Rule* 1:8-8 to give the court discretion as to whether to submit a printed copy of its instructions to the jury for consideration in the jury room. In 2012, the Supreme Court adopted the Civil Practice Committee's rule recommendation.

To streamline the process of creating written civil jury charges, the Judiciary has developed the Model Civil Jury Charges System (MCJCS) to generate jury charges automatically. MCJCS permits the user to select civil jury charge components, sequence those components in the order in which they should appear in the charge, save the selected and sequenced charges in a Microsoft Word document, and then download that document to the user's computer, where it can be saved and edited as necessary.

External users can access MCJCS on the Judiciary's Internet website at <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/civil/civindx.htm>.

In addition, written step-by-step instructions on how to use the MCJCS are included on the Model Civil Jury Charges web page.

Questions and comments may be directed to Kevin M. Wolfe, Assistant Director for Civil Practice, Administrative Office of the Courts, Hughes Justice Complex, P.O. Box 981, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0981; phone 609-292-8470.

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