

SUPREME COURT OF FLORIDA

In re Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases—Report No. 2014-02

156 So. 3d 1047 (Fla. 2015) · No. SC14-1348 · Decided January 29, 2015

SUMMARY

The Florida Supreme Court authorizes amendments to civil jury instructions 201.2, concerning the introduction of participants and their roles, and 202.4, concerning juror questions. The amendments address juror communications with the court and courtroom personnel, juror use of electronic devices, independent research, and written questions for witnesses.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Florida
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Per Curiam; Labarga, C.J.; Pariente, J.; Lewis, J.; Quince, J.; Canady, J.; Polston, J.; Perry, J.
JURISDICTION	Florida
DECIDED	January 29, 2015
DOCKET	SC14-1348
DISPOSITION	approved
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Original proceeding on the petition of the Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases seeking authorization to amend standard civil jury instructions.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Florida Supreme Court opinion authorizing amended standard civil jury instructions.

TOPICS

[standard jury instructions](#)[jury instructions](#)[instructions objections](#)[civil procedure](#)[evidence](#)

PRACTICE AREAS

[civil procedure](#)[evidence](#)

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the Supreme Court should authorize the proposed amendments to Florida Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases 201.2 and 202.4.

2. Whether authorization of the amended instructions should foreclose requests for additional or alternative instructions or challenges to their legal correctness.

HOLDINGS

1. The Court authorized the amended standard jury instructions for publication and use.
2. Authorization for publication and use does not foreclose requests for additional or alternative instructions or challenges to the legal correctness of the instructions.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“We authorize the amended instructions, as set forth in the appendix to this opinion, for publication and use.”

“In authorizing the publication and use of these instructions, we express no opinion on their correctness and remind all interested parties that this authorization forecloses neither requesting additional or alternative instructions nor contesting the legal correctness of the instructions.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases proposed amendments to instructions concerning the introduction of trial participants and juror questions. The amendments addressed communications between judges or courtroom personnel and jurors, juror use of electronic devices and outside research, and written questions for the court and witnesses. The proposals were described as straightforward and noncontroversial, and no comments were submitted after publication.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

The Committee submitted proposed amendments to civil jury instructions 201.2 and 202.4. The proposals were published in The Florida Bar News, and no comments were received. The Supreme Court of Florida authorized the amended instructions for publication and use.

DISPOSITION

approved

CASES CITED

- In re Amendments to Florida Rules of Civil Procedure, 131 So. 3d 643 (Fla. 2013)
- Lamz v. Geico General Insurance Co., 803 So. 2d 593 (Fla. 2001)
- Medina v. Peralta, 724 So. 2d 1188 (Fla. 1999)