

PREFACE TO THE 2025 EDITION

This handbook is designed to provide ready, reliable answers to evidentiary issues that may arise during trials and hearings in Illinois courts, with supporting background in the form of extensive interpretive citations to statutes and decisional law.

The publication is organized under “Principles,” most of which generally follow the organization of the Illinois Rules of Evidence. Additional Principles include references to aspects of Illinois evidence law that are set forth in Illinois Supreme Court Rules, statutes, and court decisions, rather than in the Illinois Rules of Evidence.

Each Principle begins with a statement of Illinois law in the form of an Illinois Rule of Evidence, an Illinois statute, or a summary of Illinois law (in italics) by the author. In the few instances where the law is unclear or unsettled, brackets are used to set out doubtful or alternative formulations.

The statement of the primary sources of law governing each Principle is followed by Author’s Comments that address the major issues relevant to each Principle, including citations to appellate decisions and other authorities. Some Principles include a section covering “Relevant Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions” that contains citations to current civil and/ or criminal pattern instructions implicated by the corresponding evidentiary principle and a discussion of the applicable caselaw. Where appropriate, Principles may also contain sections with discussions categorized as “Summary of Issues Affecting Admissibility” and a list of “Other Considerations.”

This 2025 Edition replaces the 2024 Edition and has been updated to reflect the current state of the Illinois law of evidence, including the Illinois Rules of Evidence, Illinois Supreme Court Rules, statutory material, and citations to scores of appellate decisions issued since the previous edition that are relevant to various aspects of evidence law. In addition, the text of the Illinois Rules of Evidence and the Federal Rules of Evidence are set forth in an appendix at the end of this treatise.

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