

§ 8.5

Law Library Tools for Investigation

A Few Helpful Assets

Investigation is generally about finding facts. *Legal research* is generally about finding law. However, an investigating paralegal may want to use the following research tools found in the law library (or corresponding online research sites) during the preparation for an interview or when drafting deposition questions.

FORM BOOKS

Form books can help the paralegal create documents and checklists and provide other pretrial assistance. There are dozens of form books. Each library decides which ones it wants to carry, so you must be flexible.

For investigation, *Am. Jur. Proof of Facts* is an excellent research tool. The specifics of this book will be discussed in Volume 2, but for now let's concentrate on its basic functions, and why it is helpful to an investigator.

- *Am. Jur. Proof of Facts* is a multi-volume set of books that collects "articles" about interesting areas of law, and the facts pertinent to those areas.
- Its articles contain lists of the facts that will have to be proven to win a specific kind of case.
- Those facts become a great list where you can start or expand your investigation.
- For instance, if you find an "article" titled "Elements for Establishing a Vehicle's Speed by Use of Radar or Laser Device," you can find a list of facts that the prosecution will have to establish. Such as, "Was the terrain suitable?" "Was the weather a factor in the read out?" "Was the device calibrated in the presence of two or more officers upon completion?" Great stuff for an investigator.

If time permits, attempt to research your matter using form books in the law library. If you locate relevant examples of interrogatories, examination questions or other materials, you can modify them for use in developing interview questions. This publication may also be found on *Westlaw*.

MARTINDALE-HUBBELL LAW DIRECTORY

This set of books has three main functions.

1. *State-by-State Attorney Listings*

Attorneys who subscribe to *Martindale-Hubbell* are listed with phone, address, fax, email address (optional), areas of specialties, undergraduate and law school degrees, and foreign languages spoken at the firm.

2. *Digest of State Laws*

In a separate set of volumes, *Martindale-Hubbell* provides an abbreviated synopsis of the legal system and general laws of each state.

3. *Digest of Foreign Laws*

In a separate set of volumes, *Martindale-Hubbell* provides an abbreviated synopsis of the legal system and laws of most foreign countries.

The state and foreign law digests may be helpful to an investigator working outside his or her normal jurisdiction. *Martindale-Hubbell* may be found online at www.martindale.com.

