

Foreword

This Manual is published to provide U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) patent examiners, applicants, attorneys, agents, and representatives of applicants with a reference work on the practices and procedures relative to the prosecution of patent applications and other proceedings before the USPTO. For example, the Manual contains instructions to examiners, as well as other material in the nature of information and interpretation, and outlines the current procedures which the examiners are required or authorized to follow in appropriate cases in the normal examination of a patent application. The Manual does not have the force of law or the force of the rules in Title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A separate manual entitled “Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure,” available at <https://tmep.uspto.gov/RDMS/TMEP/current>, is published by the USPTO as a reference work for trademark cases.

Examiners will be governed by the applicable statutes, rules, decisions, and orders and instructions issued by the Director of the USPTO and other officials authorized by the Director of the USPTO.

Subsequent changes in practice and other revisions will be incorporated in the form of revisions to sections of chapters and/or to appendices of the Manual.

This Manual has been designated guidance document USPTO-P-1. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Suggestions for improving the form and content of the Manual are always welcome. They should be addressed to:

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