

# Foreword

This Manual is published to provide U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) patent examiners, inventors, applicants, attorneys, and agents 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, and 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 and during other Office proceedings.

This Manual has been designated guidance document USPTO-P-1. The guidance in the manual does not have the force and effect of law or the force of the rules in Title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulation, and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This guidance document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Examiners are 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.

Changes in patent practice and policies in effect after the revision or edition date may be incorporated in the form of revisions to sections of chapters and/or to appendices of the Manual in a future revision or edition.

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.

Suggestions for improving the form and content of the Manual are always welcome. Any suggestions can be made using the feedback tool on the Manual’s webpage ([www.uspto.gov/MPEP](http://www.uspto.gov/MPEP)) or be addressed to:

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