

Manual of PATENT EXAMINING PROCEDURE

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AVAILABILITY

The paperbound format of the Manual was discontinued by the government printing office effective December 13, 2012. The Manual is available electronically in html and PDF renderings on the USPTO Web site at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/mpep/index/htm>. The Office also provides a search engine for searching the full text of the Manual at <http://mpep.uspto.gov/RDMS>.

Most hyperlinks from the Manual to internal and external Web sites are active. For particularly long Web site addresses (URLs), an extra space has been added to the rendered text for readability (especially in the PDF rendering). Clicking on a hyperlink will direct the user to the referenced Web site because the reference link data in the source document includes the URL without the extra space; however, copying text that includes the extra space and thereafter pasting it in a browser will result in an error.

Previous editions and revisions of the Manual are available from the MPEP Archives page on the USPTO Web site at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/mpep/old/index.htm>.

EXPLANATION OF NOTATIONS

Revision Date Indicator. Each section within an MPEP Chapter includes a revision date indicator, e.g., [R-11.2013]. The numbers within the bracket indicate the date the revision cycle for that section was completed, which would be November 2013 in the example above. Note that the publication date of the Manual as indicated on the title page and on the bottom of the PDF renderings may be later than the date the revision cycle was completed because of the time required for clearance processes.

Express Mail. Effective July 28, 2013, the United States Postal Service (USPS) changed the name of “Express Mail” to “Priority Mail Express.” All characteristics of the “Priority Mail Express” service are the same as those of the former “Express Mail” service (although the mailing labels differ). References to “Express Mail” or “Express Mail from the USPS in accordance with [37 CFR 1.10](#) throughout this Manual should be construed as applicable to the “Priority Mail Express” service of the USPS on or after July 28, 2013.

"Pre-AIA." Where the phrase "pre-AIA" is associated with a law or rule, it means that version which was in force before the date of the change necessitated by the AIA.

Five Asterisks. The use of five asterisks in the body of the laws, rules, treaties, and administrative instructions indicates a portion of the law, rule, treaty, or administrative instruction which was not reproduced.

First Edition, November 1949

Second Edition, November 1953

Third Edition, November 1961

Fourth Edition, June 1979

Fifth Edition, August 1983

Sixth Edition, January 1995

Seventh Edition, July 1998

Eighth Edition, August 2001

Ninth Edition, March 2014[R-11.2013]