

Basics of Case File Construction

Podcast transcript



This podcast, “Basics of Case File Construction”. is presented by, ProPIAcademy.com. It is intended to provide the listener with the very basic considerations for compiling a case file.

Before you continue listening to the podcast, it is recommended you have a pen and paper for taking notes. You can pause this podcast to gather the necessary materials. Then press play to continue.

Lets begin this podcast, “Basics of Case File Construction”.

Although there several programs available to assist the private investigator in assembling reports the final version often is a hard copy case file. The case file provides the client with information about the case investigated. It is important to understand that the case file is not written for the private investigator. It is written for a variety of audiences. Depending on the case, the case file may be reviewed by attorneys, judges, and other individuals. As a private investigator you must complete the final case file based on the assumption that several individuals from a variety of backgrounds will be reviewing the report.

First, every completed case file should have an Index sheet. The Index sheet serves as a table of contents for the case file.

Second, a written narrative that provides a chronological order of events, from beginning to end. This is considered the primary content. It is the document that most reviewers will read, study, and analyze.

Third, the remaining documents will consist of several items depending on the investigation. Every document referred to in the narrative must be included in the remaining case file. For example; the narrative states, “John Doe said during his interview on Friday, November 12 that he observed Mr. Downs leaving work around 1:00pm.” A transcript of the interview should be included in the case file.

Remaining documents, medical examiner reports, record checks, photographs, or CDs of evidence will also be included in the case file. Each item included will be entered on the index sheet in the order it is placed in the case file.

The final report may be placed in a three ring binder, or for shorter case files, in a file folder. It is important that each document and item included in the case file is numbered corresponding to the number on the case file Index sheet. Documents, not in a three ring binder, should be attached to prevent the loss of any of the information.

In review, the case file is often the final deliverable that will be presented to the client. It must be written and compiled with the understanding that it will be reviewed by a variety of individuals. All documents and items must be entered on the index page to ensure there is accountability for all pieces of information.

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Thank you for listening.