

**Rule 405.****METHODS OF PROVING CHARACTER**

**(a) Reputation or Opinion.** In all cases in which evidence of character or a trait of character of a person is admissible, proof may be made by testimony as to reputation, or by testimony in the form of an opinion.

**(b) Specific Instances of Conduct.**

(1) In cases in which character or a trait of character of a person is an essential element of a charge, claim, or defense, proof may also be made of specific instances of that person's conduct; and

(2) In criminal homicide or battery cases when the accused raises the theory of self-defense and there is conflicting evidence as to whether the alleged victim was the aggressor, proof may also be made of specific instances of the alleged victim's prior violent conduct.

[Adopted September 27, 2010, eff. January 1, 2011.](#)

**Comment**

Specific instances of a person's conduct as proof of a person's character or trait of character are not generally admissible as proof that the person acted in conformity therewith. Specific instances of a person's conduct are admissible, however, under Rule 405(b)(1), as proof of a person's character or a trait of character only in those limited cases (such as negligent entrustment, negligent hiring, and certain defamation actions), when a person's character or a trait of character is an essential element of a charge, claim, or defense. Specific instances of conduct are also admissible under Rule 405(b)(2) in criminal homicide or battery cases when the accused raises the theory of self-defense and there is conflicting evidence as to whether the alleged victim was the aggressor.