



## **Rule 804. Hearsay Exceptions - Declarant Unavailable.**

(a) Definition of Unavailability. "Unavailability as a witness" includes situations in which the declarant:

- (1) Is exempted by ruling of the court on the ground of privilege from testifying concerning the subject matter of his statement;
- (2) Persists in refusing to testify concerning the subject matter of his statement despite an order of the court to do so;
- (3) Testifies to a lack of memory of the subject matter of his statement;
- (4) Is unable to be present or to testify at the hearing because of death or then existing physical or mental illness or infirmity; or
- (5) Is absent from the hearing and the proponent of his statement has been unable to procure his attendance (or in the case of a hearsay exception under subdivision (b) (2), (3), or (4), his attendance or testimony) by process or other reasonable means.

A declarant is not unavailable as a witness if his exemption, refusal, claim of lack of memory, inability, or absence is due to the procurement or wrongdoing of the proponent of his statement for the purpose of preventing the witness from attending or testifying.

(b) Hearsay Exceptions. The following are not excluded by the hearsay rule if the declarant is unavailable as a witness:

- (1) Former testimony. Testimony given as a witness at another hearing of the same or a different proceeding, or in a deposition taken in compliance with law in the course of the same or another proceeding, if the party against whom the testimony is now offered, or, in a civil action or proceeding a predecessor in interest, had an opportunity and similar motive to develop the testimony by direct, cross, or redirect examination.
- (2) Statement under belief of impending death. A statement made by a declarant while believing that his death was imminent, concerning the cause or circumstances of what he believed to be his impending death.
- (3) Statement against interest. A statement which was at the time of its making so far contrary to the declarant's pecuniary or proprietary interest, or so far tended to subject him to civil or criminal liability or to render invalid a claim by him against another or to make him an object of hatred, ridicule, or disgrace, that a reasonable man in his position would not have made the statement unless he believed it to be true. A statement tending to expose the declarant to criminal liability and offering to exculpate the accused is not admissible unless corroborating circumstances clearly indicate the trustworthiness of the statement. A statement or confession offered against the accused in a criminal case, made by a codefendant or other person implicating both himself and the accused, is not within this exception.
- (4) Statement of personal or family history.
  - (i) A statement concerning the declarant's own birth, adoption, marriage, divorce, legitimacy, relationship by blood, adoption, marriage, ancestry [ancestry], or other similar fact of personal or family history, even though declarant had no means of acquiring personal

knowledge of the matter stated; or (ii) a statement concerning the foregoing matters and death also, of another person, if the declarant was related to the other by blood, adoption, or marriage or was so intimately associated with the other's family as to be likely to have accurate information concerning the matter declared.

(5) Other exceptions. A statement not specifically covered by any of the foregoing exceptions but having equivalent circumstantial guarantees of trustworthiness, if the court determines that (i) the statement is offered as evidence of a material fact; (ii) the statement is more probative on the point for which it is offered than any other evidence which the proponent can procure through reasonable efforts; and (iii) the general purposes of these rules and the interests of justice will best be served by admission of the statements into evidence. However, a statement may not be admitted under this exception unless the proponent of it makes known to the adverse party sufficiently in advance to provide the adverse party with a fair opportunity to prepare to meet it, his intention to offer the statement and the particulars of it, including the name and address of the declarant.

(6) Child hearsay in civil cases in which the Confrontation Clause of the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States is not applicable. A statement made by a child under the age of ten (10) years concerning any type of sexual offense, or attempted sexual offense, with, on, or against the child, provided:

(A) The trial court conducts a hearing outside the presence of the jury and finds that the statement offered possesses a reasonable guarantee of trustworthiness. The trial court may employ any factor it deems appropriate including, but not limited to those listed below, in deciding whether the statement is sufficiently trustworthy.

1. The spontaneity of the statement.
2. The lack of time to fabricate.
3. The consistency and repetition of the statement and whether the child has recanted the statement.
4. The mental state of the child.
5. The competency of the child to testify.
6. The child's use of terminology unexpected of a child of similar age.
7. The lack of a motive by the child to fabricate the statement.
8. The lack of bias by the child.
9. Whether it is an embarrassing event the child would not normally relate.
10. The credibility of the person testifying to the statement.
11. Suggestiveness created by leading questions.
12. Whether an adult with custody or control of the child may bear a grudge against the accused offender, and may attempt to coach the child into making false charges.
13. Corroboration of the statement by other evidence.
14. Corroboration of the alleged offense by other evidence.

(B) The proponent of the statement gives the adverse party reasonable notice of his intention to offer the statement and the particulars of the statement.

(C) This section shall not be construed to limit the admission of an offered statement under any other hearsay exception or applicable rule of evidence.

(7) Child hearsay in criminal cases. A statement made by a child under the age of ten (10) years concerning any type of sexual offense against that child, where the Confrontation Clause of the Sixth Amendment of the United States is applicable, provided:

(A) The trial court conducts a hearing outside the presence of the jury, and, with the evidentiary presumption that the statement is unreliable and inadmissible, finds that the statement offered possesses sufficient guarantees of trustworthiness that the truthfulness of the child's statement is so clear from the surrounding circumstances that the test of cross-examination would be of marginal utility. The trial court may employ any factor it deems

appropriate including, but not limited to those listed below, in deciding whether the statement is sufficiently trustworthy.

1. The spontaneity of the statement.
  2. The lack of time to fabricate.
  3. The consistency and repetition of the statement and whether the child has recanted the statement.
  4. The mental state of the child.
  5. The competency of the child to testify.
  6. The child's use of terminology unexpected of a child of similar age.
  7. The lack of a motive by the child to fabricate the statement.
  8. The lack of bias by the child.
  9. Whether it is an embarrassing event the child would not normally relate.
  10. The credibility of the person testifying to the statement.
  11. Suggestiveness created by leading questions.
  12. Whether an adult with custody or control of the child may bear a grudge against the accused offender, and may attempt to coach the child into making false charges.
- (B) The proponent of the statement gives the adverse party reasonable notice of his intention to offer the statement and the particulars of the statement.
- (C) This section shall not be construed to limit the admission of an offered statement under any other hearsay exception or applicable rule of evidence.

History

**History Text:**

History. Amended by Per Curiam dated May 11, 1992

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Article VIII. Hearsay

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