

CHARACTER EVIDENCE ¹

(A witness *or* Witnesses) testified about the defendant's reputation in the community for (*specify e.g., nonviolence*).

Such evidence was offered to establish that the defendant is of such character as to make it unlikely that he/she committed the crime(s) charged.

Under our law, evidence of good character, even if believed, does not excuse criminal conduct if that conduct is proven beyond a reasonable doubt. When considered with all the other evidence in the case, however, evidence of good character may give rise to a reasonable doubt where, without it, none would exist.

If evidence of good character, when considered with all of the other evidence in the case, raises a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt, then you must find the defendant not guilty.

On the other hand, if you are satisfied that the defendant's guilt has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt, notwithstanding the evidence of his/her good character, then you must find the defendant guilty.

¹*People v. Aharonowicz*, 71 N.Y.2d 678 (1988).