

## 1: Representing Yourself

*If you plan to represent yourself in court in a family law matter (divorce, modification of child custody or child support, or paternity), you are required to complete the following two step Litigant Awareness Program, and file your certificate with the court.*

A corporation or LLC must be represented by an attorney in District Court, which includes having an attorney sign court papers on behalf of the client corporation or LLC. Rule of Practice may allow a principal or agent of the corporation or LLC to sign court papers or appear in court on behalf of the business entity. You should get legal advice if you have questions about this issue in your case. A person who goes to court without being represented by a lawyer is called "self-represented" or "pro se. You do not fully understand papers you received from the other party side or from the court. Court administration may be able to answer some questions for you. You cannot afford to lose your case. You have a complicated case. You want to appeal a case. You are charged with a crime. You may not need a lawyer if: You are organized and keep accurate records. You can write neatly or type. You have time to prepare papers, make copies, learn the required steps, file papers with the court, do legal research and attend court hearings. You have time to respond right away to papers you receive from the other party. You are able to read, understand, and respond promptly to all papers you get from the Court. Your case is relatively simple and no one will come forward to argue against what you want. You are comfortable negotiating with the other side or their lawyer, if represented. You speak, read, and write English well. When you read state laws and court rules and cases, you understand what you have read. How is Conciliation Court different from District Court? Conciliation Court is also known as "small claims court," and it is designed for people who represent themselves without a lawyer. The Conciliation Court can hear certain types of claims for a limited amount of money. There is no limit on the amount of money for claims filed at the District Court level. Visit the Conciliation Court section of this website for more details on the types of claims and amount of money that can be handled in Conciliation Court. In District Court, formal rules apply and it is very helpful to have a lawyer. Many people get confused about papers they get during a court case, and they fail to respond and end up losing their case before the trial ever occurs. At the District Court level, there are many steps in the process and many ways the case can end before going to trial. For example, if a person is served with a motion or with "discovery" and fails to respond on time, there can be serious consequences, including dismissal ending of the case, judgment in favor of the other side, or money penalties. Where can I get help? You can use this website to learn more about court forms and procedures. The website is organized by legal topic, with links that connect you to other organizations that offer legal help and information. Some courts and county law libraries have staff who answer questions about court forms and processes. Law Librarians can direct you to appropriate legal materials. Also, many courthouses have free legal advice clinics. To see if your court has these services, go to Self Help Services in the Courts. You can also ask a lawyer to help you with certain parts of your case, but still represent yourself. A lawyer can coach you or do research for you, and can help you understand what is involved in representing yourself. Go to Find a Lawyer. We strongly encourage you to talk with an attorney if you are not sure what to do in your case. Court is not an appointment that can be missed or rescheduled. If you miss your court date including being late for a criminal case or contempt matter, a warrant may be issued for your arrest. If the hearing is not a criminal matter, you will likely lose the case by default. Usually you need to file papers requesting a change, or get the other side to agree to change the date. Not going can be dangerous because you might not fully understand everything that can or will be ordered in your absence. It is best to get legal advice before deciding not to go to the hearing. Allow Plenty of Time to Get to Court. You should arrive at the courtroom 30 minutes before your hearing time. Consider the traffic, weather, parking, frequency of the bus or light rail, and allow plenty of extra time. You may need to wait in lines for weapons screening, and finding the correct building and courtroom can take time. Being late can make you anxious and unable to do your best. The hearing might last longer than you think, so parking at a meter is not a good idea. You should have a file with copies of all papers you and the other side have filed with the court, or given to each other. Bring a notepad and pens for taking

notes during the hearing. Bring an outline of what you want to say. As you cover each point, check it off. Before you conclude, look back to see if you covered each point. The Judge will only want to hear information that is needed to evaluate the requests made in the court papers. Practice explaining your claim to a friend. Sometimes a court hearing is a trial where you bring all your witnesses and evidence. Other times the hearing has a different purpose. Read all notices and orders you received about the hearing carefully. If you are not sure what will happen at a hearing, or you are not sure what to bring to the hearing, get help right away. There are limits on how much they can help you, but you can start there. If you come to the hearing unprepared, you could lose your case or be fined. However, coming unprepared is better than not coming at all. If you are supposed to bring evidence and witnesses to the hearing, bring everything. If you have documents or pictures, bring the original item and 2 copies original for the court, one copy for you, one copy for the other side. Ask your witnesses to arrive early and dress nicely. There are many rules about evidence. See MN Rules of Evidence. You may want to talk to a lawyer about what evidence you need and how to make sure your evidence can be considered by the judge or jury. Shorts, T-shirts, plunging necklines, and torn clothing are not appropriate. Lawyers are required to wear suits. You do not have to buy new clothing for court, but remember it is a formal place and you want to be conservative and respectful in dress and behavior. Do not bring children. Unless the court has told you to bring your children to the hearing, make arrangements for someone to take care of your children. Proper conduct in the courtroom. Certain behaviors are not allowed because they are noisy, distracting or disrespectful. During the hearing you should listen carefully, ask permission of the Judge to speak, talk directly to the judge and not the other side, avoid arguing with or interrupting another person, and control your emotions. When you talk to the Judge, start by saying "Your Honor". Speak loudly and clearly and remember that only one person can speak at a time. A court reporter is taking down everything said in the courtroom, and can only record one speaker at a time. Before you leave court make sure you understand what happens next. Do you need to come back for another court hearing? Do you need to prepare a written legal argument or proposed court order? Do you need to take other steps or actions? Will the Judge make an order as a result of the hearing? Sometimes orders are written up right away - as you wait. Or, the judge may think about the case and write an order later and send it in the mail. Politely ask questions if you do not understand what will happen next. The Minnesota Judicial Branch makes no endorsement or warranty of services by linking to an organization from this website. First Step Try to find out where a person is by talking with family members, co-workers and friends of that person. Look in the phonebook, too. You might also be able to find them through one of the other options listed below. Keep a record of all the ways you tried to find a person involved in your case. If you cannot find them, you may still be able to "serve" your papers by mail or by publishing a legal notice in a newspaper. You also may need to get a court order or tell the court the steps you took to try to find that person. Personal data that may be useful in your search could include:

### 2: Office of Administrative Hearings Representing Yourself

*Tips for representing yourself. Here are some basic steps you can take to make sure you are prepared to represent yourself in court: Read about the law that applies to your case. Do research at the local public law library and ask for help at your court's self-help center, family law facilitator, or small claims legal advisor.*

**Glossary Representing Yourself** In general, persons who are appearing in court have the right to choose to represent themselves. However, an attorney must usually represent other entities, such as corporations, associations or partnerships, except in Small Claims actions. Courts will consider the same question only once. This refusal to relitigate a previously decided case is called the doctrine of *res judicata*. Persons who represent themselves, also called *pro se* litigants, are held to the same standards of preparation and compliance with court rules and procedures that attorneys must follow, so you should carefully consider whether your one chance to have a case resolved in your favor might be at risk if you proceed without the help of a lawyer. If you are unsure as to whether you should be represented by a lawyer you should seek an evaluation from a lawyer of your choice. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may be eligible for a lawyer from one or more legal services providers. There is a very comprehensive web site designed to serve as a central resource for persons seeking forms, instructions and other help for representing yourself. The small claims system was created to be used by persons without lawyers, as well as by those who are represented. **Family Cases** Most family law cases, including divorces, paternity cases, actions between unmarried parents, Protection from Abuse actions, Protections from Harassment actions and motions to enforce or amend earlier orders, or to hold the adverse party in contempt are heard in the District Court. You can also obtain a copy of our pamphlet, *A Guide to Protection Actions* from this site or those offices. The Family Division of the District Court handles many family law cases, If so, you will have an initial Case Management Conference held by a Case Management Officer, who will help you understand the process and to proceed to the next steps. **Criminal and Juvenile Cases** Many people hire their own attorney to help them if they are charged with a crime. However, if you are charged with a crime in which there is a risk that you may go to jail, and if you cannot afford to hire a lawyer, the court may appoint a lawyer for you, and the state will pay the lawyer. The Judge who handles your case at the first court appearance, called an arraignment, will go over this with you. If you think you are entitled to have a court appointed lawyer you will be required to fill out an application under oath, and to meet with a financial screener. You may be required to contribute to the cost of the lawyer, if the court finds that you are able to do so. Closed-captioned arraignment video explaining what happens at arraignment. **Appeals** In most civil and criminal cases each party has the right to appeal the decision to a different court. The issues heard on appeal, however, are limited to questions of law considered in the trial court. Small claims appeals and evictions forcible entry and detainer appeals are filed in the Superior Court. It has seven justices, presided over by the Chief Justice, the head of the Judicial Branch. Questions of law are presented to the Court when a case is appealed from a trial court. Parties or their lawyers present written briefs and oral arguments outlining their respective positions. The *Guide for Appeals to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court* is designed for those who are not familiar with procedures for appealing cases to the Law Court.

### 3: Wisconsin Court System - self-help law center - procedures

*Representing Yourself in Court* Lots of people represent themselves in court, and with the right tools it's possible to successfully file a lawsuit, conduct a useful investigation of the facts, and complete your case through settlement or trial, all without turning your case over to an attorney.

What happens in your hearing may be a little different from the description here. This will depend on the type of hearing, the unique circumstances of your case, and the agency that made the decision from which you are appealing. Those differences are explained in this webpage. Although it is generally desirable to be represented by attorneys, citizens who appear before the Office of Administrative Hearings OAH more often than not represent themselves. State agencies may be represented by an attorney; however, they may also be represented by agency representatives, who are not attorneys. Whether or not you or the agency has an attorney, Oregon law requires the administrative law judge to make a "full and fair inquiry" into the facts necessary to decide the case. An administrative hearing is an informal way of resolving disputes between agencies and citizens without the strict procedural rules of a court. An administrative law judge conducts the hearing and prepares an order. There are two kinds of orders: The difference is this: A final order is the final decision at the hearings level. Generally only you, and not the agency, can appeal from a final order depending on the kind of case, appeal is to the Employment Appeals Board, a county circuit court, or the Oregon Court of Appeals. Ninety-eight percent of all orders issued by the Office of Administrative Hearings are final orders. A proposed order is different. The agency can accept the decision or not. The agency will then issue a final order. The appeal rights section at the end of the OAH decision will tell you what kind of order it is and how to appeal. The administrative law judge who hears your case is an employee of the Office of Administrative Hearings. He or she is not an employee of the agency which issued the administrative decision. The Office of Administrative Hearings is an independent and impartial agency, which provides professional administrative law judges who are specially trained in administrative law to decide your kind of case. Before the Hearing The process begins with an administrative order issued by the agency. The losing party can request a hearing. It is necessary to read carefully the instructions and follow them exactly. Preparing for the Hearing Read the hearing notice very carefully. The notice should tell you the date, time, and place of the hearing. It may also include a short statement telling you the issues to be covered at the hearing. Whether your hearing is scheduled to be in-person or by telephone, you must show up at the specified date, time and place, and in the manner stated in the notice. This means that you lose, and you will not be able to explain your side of the story. If your mailing address or telephone number changes after you have requested a hearing or after you have received the Notice of Hearing, inform the Office of Administrative Hearings office identified on the Notice of Hearing of your new mailing address or telephone number. The administrative law judge or division manager will decide whether there is a good reason for the delay. Avoidable delay may result in a denial of your request. What if I need an interpreter? All hearings are conducted in English. If you are not comfortable with English, the Office of Administrative Hearings will provide an interpreter at no cost to you. Or, if you have a physical disability for example, a speech or hearing impairment, which will prevent you from actively participating in the hearing, the OAH will provide an interpreter. In either case, however, you must notify the OAH as soon as possible. You cannot bring a family member or friend with you to serve as your interpreter at the hearing. Identify the issues First, think about all possible issues in your case. Carefully plan your argument, outlining why you think the agency acted incorrectly and why your arguments should win. People sometimes emphasize the wrong issues, they bring up information having nothing to do with the issues in the case. Most often, you will have a prehearing packet from the agency that will include the evidence it intends to offer in your case, and a summary of the arguments the agency will make. Make a list of what the agency might say about the case and why the agency thinks it made the correct decision. Make a list about why you disagree and think you are right. Stick to the issues Once you have identified all the issues, stick to them. As you select and collect your evidence, interview witnesses, and write your arguments, you should always stick to the issues. The administrative law judge will not be interested in anything but evidence that relates to the issues. Once you

have identified the issues, the next step is to collect evidence that will help prove your case. Good evidence wins cases. Evidence includes your own testimony and supporting documents and witnesses that will help you prove that you are right. You can start collecting evidence by: Read each document and decide if it will help your case. If you need help getting documents from doctors, hospitals, etc. Persuasive evidence is not determined by the amount of testimony. Bring the witnesses with the most reliable first-hand knowledge. You should talk with your witnesses before going to the hearing. But you need to know what they will say if they testify for you. It is better to know that before the hearing, than suddenly to realize, while your witness is testifying, that the testimony is not helping you. Can I make my witnesses show up at the hearing? You can ask either the agency or the administrative law judge to issue a subpoena for a witness. For example, you must pay the witness a witness fee and mileage expense before the hearing itself. Therefore, you should ask for the subpoena well in advance of your hearing. For more information on subpoenas, you should contact the Office of Administrative Hearings.

**Nature of an administrative hearing.** An administrative hearing is similar to a court trial but is less formal. Like a trial, its purpose is to gather facts through testimony, documents, and other evidence. As soon as possible before hearing, you must send to the administrative law judge and opposing parties all documents which you want the administrative law judge to consider in deciding the case. If you wait until the day of hearing to submit these documents, they may be excluded. Things you will need for the hearing. On the day of the hearing, you should have the following items with you: The hearing procedure is as follows: Those exhibits will then be admitted into the hearing record, unless either you or the other party objects. To be "admitted" means that the administrative law judge will consider them in reaching a decision in the case. An opening statement is an explanation to the administrative law judge what the evidence will show and why the party should win. It is not the time to give actual evidence or to testify. You are not required to make an opening statement. Who goes first you or the opposing party depends on who has the principal responsibility "burden of proof" of persuading the administrative law judge. Most often, it is the party, which requested the hearing. Whoever it is, that party will call its first witness to testify. At the conclusion of that testimony, the other party can "cross-examine. Often the administrative law judge will ask several questions, perhaps right after the witness is sworn in or perhaps after you and the agency have asked all the questions you want. It is the same process as before: After each witness testifies, the other party can cross-examine. A closing argument is one in which both of you, in turn, point out the evidence testimony and exhibits and the law, which support your respective positions.

**Burden of presenting evidence.** In general, whoever is relying on a particular fact has the burden of proving it to the administrative law judge. Therefore, you should be ready to present evidence supporting your position.

**Examination of witnesses**

**Direct examination:** If you call a witness for your side, you must conduct a "direct examination" of that witness. Direct examination means that you must ask your witness questions in a non-leading manner. A leading question is one that can be answered only by "yes" or "no. If you ask your witness questions that require a "yes" or "no" answer, you are probably asking leading questions and the administrative law judge may stop you. On cross-examination, you are allowed to ask leading questions. Leading questions usually have a "yes" or "no" answer to them. Keeping the record open. As you go through the hearing, you may realize that the administrative law judge does not have all the available information for example, documents such as medical reports to make an accurate decision. If so, you must can ask permission of the administrative law judge to keep the record open, that is, to permit you the opportunity to submit more documents after the hearing ends. The administrative law judge may or may not grant the request. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that your exhibits are sent on time both to the administrative law judge and the opposing party. After the hearing has ended and the record closes that is, no more evidence will be considered , the administrative law judge will review all the evidence and testimony.

### 4: Representing Yourself - getting\_started\_selfhelp

*Representing Yourself in a Civil Case A resource of information if you are considering representing yourself in a civil case in a Massachusetts trial court. This information is intended to provide an overview of the court process in a civil case, to answer frequently asked questions, and to direct you to available resources.*

Initially, you may hear the term "pro se. Now that you know the lingo, the most important things you must remember are: Second, unless your injury or occupational disease occurred prior to July 1, , or is within some other limited exceptions, you must mediate your dispute before petitioning the Court. If you have questions regarding mediation, call Our staff can also provide you with information on mediation. Third, you must send the attorney who represents the insurer or other party involved in your dispute a copy of every document, including letters, you send to the Court. Fourth, you cannot talk to the Judge about your case unless the attorney for the other party is personally present or on the telephone. The attorney for the other party also may not talk to the Judge unless you are personally present or on the telephone. Now that you know the most basic rules, here are some more details about what will happen in your case and what you are required to do as your case progresses. The Rules of the Court are very specific regarding pleadings, motions, and other formal filings. The most important of those rules are: The paper should not be lined and there should be no line numbers. Your name, mailing address, and telephone number must be printed in the upper left hand corner of the first page of the document. Documents should be single spaced, with double spacing between paragraphs. Copies of the document must in fact be sent to the opposing parties or their attorneys. If the party has an attorney, the document must be sent to the attorney. There are other requirements for documents you file with the Court. Please read the rules and follow them to the extent possible. The petition must include the following information: You must provide the Court with an original and 3 copies of your petition. You must also provide the names and addresses of the insurer and other parties involved in your case. If you know the name of the attorney representing the insurer or other parties, you must provide their names and addresses to the Court. In extreme emergency, trials can be specially set. Upon the filing of your petition, the Court will issue a scheduling order. That order will set a date and place for the trial. It will set deadlines for all pre-trial matters. You must comply with the deadlines in the scheduling order. Failure to do so may result in postponement or even dismissal of your case. If you cannot comply with a deadline, then you may request an extension of time. Contact Court staff to find out how to request an extension. Between the time the petition is filed and the trial, every party in the case will be able to conduct discovery. Discovery is a legal term which refers to various ways you, and the other parties, can find out about the evidence which might be presented at trial. The basic ways are: These are written questions sent by one party to another party which must be answered in writing, under oath. These are written requests made by one party asking that another party provide copies of documents relating to the case. A deposition is much like testifying in Court, only the judge is not there. Any party may request a deposition of the other party or of any person who has information about the case. Depositions may be submitted to the Court for it to consider in making its final decision. The party requesting the deposition is responsible for the cost. Prior to the conference you will be required to prepare a proposed pretrial order and send it to the insurer and other parties. The proposed order must set out the following information: A final pretrial order will be finalized at the conference. The deadline for providing documents will be set in the scheduling order. If you fail to provide documents by the deadline you may not be able to introduce the documents at trial. At the pretrial conference, you and the insurer or other party must also provide the Court with an Exhibit Notebook containing the exhibits you wish it to consider. The exhibits must be accompanied by a written list of all exhibits and a list of any objections either of you may have to the exhibits. The list must be at the front of the notebook and all exhibits must be numbered and tabbed. If you do not understand the rules, please contact the Court. Our staff is friendly and helpful and will assist you in following the rules. Samples of a petition for hearing , response, exhibit list , pretrial order , and other documents typically filed in a case are available from the Court upon request.

### 5: Representing Yourself in a Civil Case | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*Risks And Tips There are risks to representing yourself! Learn how to evaluate whether representing yourself is a good idea. Also, get some tips on how to represent yourself effectively if you choose to go it alone and what you will be expected to do and know in order to handle your case.*

Keep track of all deadlines especially deadlines for filing papers and serving the other side. If you miss these deadlines, you may lose your case. Go to the courtroom where your hearing will be and watch some cases. Where the parties sit; How to explain your case to the judge; and How much time each side has to talk. Be prepared for your court hearing. If you have exhibits like photos or letters you want to show the court, you must mark each one with a label Exhibit 1, etc. Act professionally in court. Explain your side briefly and clearly. Do not talk about issues that do not support your case. Be realistic about what the judge can and cannot do. Make sure you understand what legal relief you can get in your case and focus on that. Show respect for the judge, the court clerks, and other people in the courtroom. Do not interrupt the judge or the other side. Do not make personal attacks against the other side. Click for more information about preparing for court.

**Risks of representing yourself** The biggest risk is that you lose your case because 1 you are unable to follow all the required procedures to bring your case to trial so your case is dismissed, or 2 once you get to trial, you cannot meet all the technical requirements to prove your case. Sometimes the costs of suing are more than the amount sued for. This means that instead of winning money or some form of relief, you now owe the other side money. A judgment is valid for 10 years and can be renewed for another 10 years as many times as is necessary until the judgment is paid. It can result in a garnishment of your wages, a levy of your bank accounts, property liens, and other collection methods. In order to assess whether or not to sue, you should consult with a lawyer.

**Types of cases where lawyers are necessary**

**Malpractice cases:** If you are suing for medical malpractice, or some other type of professional negligence, the law says you need to prove that 1 the doctor or other professional breached the duty of care owed to you and 2 you suffered damages as a direct and proximate cause of the breach. These legal requirements are very hard to prove, and you will need expert witnesses to do it. First, expert witness fees are very expensive. If you are representing yourself and do not have a lawyer to advance these costs, you may not be able to afford the experts you need to prove your case. But if you had several people working on your house like an architect, a structural engineer, and a general contractor who, in turn, hired subcontractors and purchased supplies from different suppliers, proving who is at fault when something goes wrong becomes very difficult, and you would probably need an expert witnesses to determine fault and explain it to the court. Also, while construction experts are usually not as expensive as medical experts, they can still cost a lot, especially if you need many experts in different specialties. Some lawyers will take construction defect cases on a contingency basis, but most charge by the hour. You may be able to hire a lawyer on a limited-scope basis to help you with certain parts of the case, while you handle other parts on your own.

**Cases involving competing title to real estate:** Real estate cases that allege someone committed fraud, like cases in which there is competing title to real property, are usually too complicated for a person without a lot of legal training and experience. Also, even if you win, if you make a mistake in writing up the final order in civil cases, the court generally does not prepare orders, it is up to the parties to do it, the title insurance company may not insure title, in effect preventing you, as the property owner, from selling or refinancing.

**Cases involving wrongful termination or employment discrimination claims:** If you are suing your employer for employment discrimination or wrongful termination, you most likely will need a lawyer. To win this type of case, you must have a lawyer skilled in direct and cross-examination of witnesses and the rules of evidence.

**Administrative writs and appeals:** Cases appealing a final decision by an administrative agency or hearing officer are extremely complicated and limited in the type of review the court can make. A lawyer can tell you if you have a sufficient basis in the record for an appeal and discuss other options with you.

**Other types of cases:** There are other types of cases that are difficult or impossible for non-lawyers to win because the law or procedure is extremely complex or because the cost of bringing the case to trial is high. It is always best to consult with a lawyer before filing a lawsuit to make sure

that the case is one you can bring with some chance of success. Most local bar associations have lawyer referral and information services that can provide you with a limited consultation with a lawyer for a small fee.

### 6: Representing Yourself - CT Judicial Branch Law Library Services

*Representing Yourself. Many people represent themselves in court for a variety of reasons. Some cannot afford to pay lawyers and others believe that they can handle their case on their own.*

Learn how to evaluate whether representing yourself is a good idea. Also, get some tips on how to represent yourself effectively if you choose to go it alone and what you will be expected to do and know in order to handle your case.

**Risks Of Representing Yourself** The biggest risk in representing yourself without a lawyer is that you will lose your case! Once you get to trial, you cannot meet all the technical requirements to prove your case or establish your defense. This is true whether you are suing or being sued. And this could be a lot of money! Sometimes the costs of suing are more than the amount sued for. A judgment is valid for six years and can be renewed for another six years as many times as is necessary until the judgment is paid. To collect the judgment, the other side can garnish your wages, levy your bank accounts, place liens on your property, and utilize other collection methods. So think carefully before you decide to sue someone or represent yourself in your case. If you lose, instead of winning money or some form of relief, you could actually owe the other side money! You can use the following checklist to help you evaluate whether it is a good idea for you to represent yourself. Check each of the boxes that apply to you and your case. The more boxes you check, the more risky it might be to represent yourself and the more you might want to think about hiring an attorney. Even if you decide to represent yourself in your case, it is always best to consult with a lawyer up front when you are sued or before you file a lawsuit to make sure that the case is one you can bring or defend with some chance of success. You can also ask a lawyer to help you with certain parts of your case, but still represent yourself. For example, a lawyer can coach you, do research for you, write documents for you, and can help you understand what is involved in representing yourself.

**Tips For Representing Yourself** If you choose to represent yourself, here are some basic tips and recommendations you should follow to strengthen your chances of succeeding: Learn the laws and rules that apply to your case. Even though you are not a lawyer, you are still required to know and follow nearly all of the same laws and court rules as an attorney. Understanding the law that applies to your case can help you understand what it is that you need to prove and can allow you to focus on the relevant issues at hand. Do not give up without understanding the consequences. If you are being sued and do not believe that you have any defense, you might think there is no point in going to court. This can be dangerous, however, because you might not completely understand everything that the court can or will order in your absence. It is best to get legal advice before deciding to give up. Make sure all your written submissions are complete, neat, and timely. During the course of your case, the main way you will convey your arguments, objections, requests, and any other facts and information in your case, both to the other side and to the court, is by preparing and filing written documents. If you are using preprinted forms, make sure you have provided all of the required information in the correct blanks and checked all the appropriate boxes. In either case, make sure you have provided accurate, truthful, and complete information, and make sure your documents are neat and legible! After all, if your written submissions do not convey your arguments and positions accurately and thoroughly or if the judge simply cannot read your writing you have missed your chance to get your story in front of the judge. Additionally, there will probably be deadlines for many of the documents you will need to file in your case. Make sure you know the deadlines you are facing and that you get your documents filed on time. Attend all hearings and get to the courthouse early. Your court hearing is not an appointment that you can simply reschedule if you miss it. If you need to change your court date for some reason, you will need to file legal documents requesting a different court date or get the other side to agree to the change. This must be done well in advance of your scheduled hearing. If you wait too long, it might be too late to change the hearing date. If you miss your court date or are late, it is possible that the court will rule against you. Allow yourself plenty of time to get to court. A good rule of thumb is to plan on arriving at the courtroom at least thirty to forty-five minutes before your hearing time. Running late tends to make people anxious and distracted. Bring your files to court. You should have a file with copies of all papers you and the other side have filed with the court or given to each other. Bring your file to all

hearings. You may need to refer to your file to ensure you are providing accurate information to the judge. Also bring a notepad and pens for taking notes during the hearing. Bring your evidence and witnesses. What you need to bring to court with you will depend on the nature of your hearing or trial. Witnesses may or may not be allowed to testify on your behalf depending on the type of hearing. It is worth checking with the Civil Law Self-Help Center to better understand the type of evidence that you need to bring with you. If you are supposed to bring evidence and witnesses to the hearing, bring everything. Ask your witnesses to arrive early and dress nicely. If an important witness will not come voluntarily, you can get the court to issue a "subpoena" a formal document that orders a named individual to appear before the court at a fixed time to give testimony, but this must be done well in advance of your trial or hearing. If you have documents or pictures, bring the original item and two copies original for the court, one copy for you, and one copy for the other side. Things that you may need to bring to court may include any contracts at issue, receipts, estimates, letters, bills, photographs, and the like. Some documents cannot be used as evidence unless the right person is in the courtroom to explain the document and answer questions about it. There are many rules about evidence, and you may want to talk to a lawyer about what evidence you need and how to make sure your evidence can be considered by the judge or jury. Make sure your documents are organized neatly and logically. It will be your job to walk the judge, jury, or witnesses through your documents, so you might want to arrange them in a tabbed binder for easy reference. The judge might also have rules or preferences regarding how documents are used in the courtroom. Take time in advance of your hearing or trial to find this out. Arrange for an interpreter. Do not show up at your hearing or trial expecting that the court will have an interpreter available. It is your responsibility to arrange for an interpreter in advance of your hearing to make sure that you or your witnesses are able to testify. Click to visit our Interpreters page to get more information. Dress conservatively, as if you were going to a job interview. You are not required to wear any particular type of outfit like a suit or a dress but you should refrain from wearing shorts, tank tops, halter-tops, or shirts that show your midriff. All hats and sunglasses must be taken off prior to entering the courtroom. Unless you are required to bring your children to court for some reason, make arrangements to have someone else watch them. Do not bring your children to court with you! Bring an outline of what you want to say. Representing yourself in court can be a nerve-wracking experience. You do not want to read a prepared statement, but an outline can be a useful tool to remind you of the main points that you want to cover. You should be prepared to briefly and clearly describe your claims and evidence to the judge. Try practicing in front of a mirror or friends without reading from a prepared statement. Conduct yourself properly in the courtroom. Do not chew gum, eat, read a newspaper, sleep, listen to earphones, or have your cell phone turned on. Avoid the temptation to speak directly to the other side. Do not argue with the other side or interrupt them, and keep your emotions in check. If the other side is making an argument that you disagree with, or you feel that they are just plain lying, be sure to write down the point that you wish to make. You will have the opportunity to address this point with the judge when it is your turn to speak. Never interrupt the other side or the judge! Understand what just happened. Representing yourself in court can be an emotional experience, and you may find it hard to stay focused in court when you are nervous or upset. But you do not want to leave the courtroom without understanding the outcome of the hearing or trial and what, if anything, you need to do next. For instance, will you need to attend another hearing? Do you need to prepare any written legal arguments or file any documents with the court? Do you need to prepare an order or will the judge do this?

### 7: Minnesota Judicial Branch - Representing Yourself in Court

*Representing Yourself Canada. The National Self-Represented Litigants Project (NSRLP) is committed to advancing understanding of the challenges and hard choices facing the very large numbers of Canadians who now come to court without counsel.*

This page will help you decide whether representing yourself is a good idea, and will give you some tips on how to represent yourself effectively if you choose to go it alone. **Risks Of Representing Yourself** The biggest risk in representing yourself without a lawyer is that you will lose your case! This might happen if: You cannot meet all the technical requirements to prove your case. You do not follow all the required court procedures. Use the following checklist to help you decide whether it is a good idea for you to represent yourself. Mark which ones apply to you and your case. The more sections you mark, the more risky it might be to represent yourself and the more you might want to think about hiring an attorney. Even if you decide to represent yourself in your family law case, it is always best to consult with a lawyer up front to find out your legal rights. A family law attorney can help you understand your rights, the law, and give you advice on how to proceed. **Tips For Representing Yourself** If you choose to represent yourself, here are some basic tips and recommendations you should follow to strengthen your chances of succeeding: Learn about family court from the family court judges. The family court judges have filmed a series of videos to help you understand how family court works. Visit this page to view the videos. Learn the laws and rules that apply to your case. Even though you are not a lawyer, you are still required to know and follow nearly all of the same laws and court rules as an attorney. Understanding the law that applies to your case can help you focus on what it is that you need to prove. You can attend free legal classes where you can learn about the laws and court procedures ahead of time. Make sure all your written submissions are complete, neat, and timely. If you are using Self Help Center forms, make sure you provide all of the required information in the correct blanks and check all the appropriate boxes. Always make sure your documents are complete, neat, and legible! If your filings do not convey your arguments accurately and thoroughly or if the judge simply cannot read your writing you have missed your chance to get your story in front of the judge. There will probably be deadlines for many of the documents you will need to file in your case. Make sure you know the deadlines and that you get your documents filed on time. Do not give up without understanding the consequences. If you are feeling helpless about your case, you might think there is no point in going to court. This can be dangerous, because the court can still make decisions if you are not there. It is best to get legal advice before deciding to give up. Attend all hearings and get to the courthouse early. Your court hearing is not an appointment that you can simply reschedule if you miss it. If you need to change your court date for some reason, you will need to file legal documents requesting a different court date or get the other side to agree to the change. If you wait too long, it might be too late to change the hearing date. Understand how to prepare for and act in court. There are a lot more tips on the Going to Court page that explain what to expect at court, how to prepare for your hearing, and what to do and not do while in the courtroom.

### 8: Risks And Tips - Civil Law Self-Help Center

*Many people at family court represent themselves, but there are risks to representing yourself. This page will help you decide whether representing yourself is a good idea, and will give you some tips on how to represent yourself effectively if you choose to go it alone.*

### 9: Representing Yourself in Court | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*You may want to contact an attorney before deciding to represent yourself. You should understand the impact and consequences of the court action. Before your court date, determine what things you need to prove or defend your case.*

*The telegram which began the Boer War The Splendor of Gods Word! The Romulus Accounts Epilogue : Two railroads  
The Fifth Rung on Jacobs Ladder Intermediate Statistics Fortunes of Dante in seventeenth century Italy Sermons on  
Biblical Characters Holy Spirit Empowered Small Groups En Garden! 7 Radical Weeds for Life Support Repair (The  
Garden Remedy Series (The Garden Remedy Series (T The Gift of the World 3. Geology, while it takes us back very far,  
Teaches us Nothing of the Origin of the Earth . 186 Film superlist, 20,000 motion pictures in the U.S. public domain  
Indian music in performance Genesis of Hamlet The contact work primer Navigating the organizational lifecycle Ibsen,  
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Jr. Foreign competition and U.S. trade policies Truemans objective biology for neet Where Have All the Leaders Gone?  
Arterial, intravenous (IV), and special collection procedures Quality management at the federal level Victory out of chaos  
The arrangement series Orthopedics Medicine Memoirs of William Smith, LL. D. author of the / Marc 21 for Everyone  
Psychology, Custom Publication Functions of real variables The Germantown story. The one in a million boy What is  
process management in operating system*