

RULES FOR LITIGANTS

The judges, hearing officer and commissioners expect that all litigants, whether or not represented by attorneys, will conduct themselves in an appropriate fashion so that all parties are given an opportunity to present their case and be heard. You should also understand that the Supreme Court rules hold self-represented litigants to the same standards as attorneys as far as knowledge of rules of evidence and courtroom procedure.

The following guidelines are meant to assist litigants in meeting appropriate standards of conduct in the Courts of this district:

1. Be timely. If you do not appear at the scheduled time, your case may be decided without you or a bench warrant may be issued for your arrest.
2. Matters before the Court are often scheduled on a trailing docket which means that a number of cases are set for hearing at the same time and the Court deals with them one at a time. You will often have to be in Court for several hours or the entire day. Please be sure to make arrangements to do so.
3. Telephonic appearances may be acceptable only if requested in writing and approved by the Court prior to the hearing date. It is generally best to be present in person if at all possible.
4. Do not call or write to the judge, hearing officer or commissioner except for filing pleadings. As a general rule, documents and testimony can be read or heard by the judge only in the presence of both parties.
5. Be truthful in all statements that you make to the Court. False statements under oath constitute perjury which is a criminal offense.
6. Be courteous. Other than to make appropriate objections, do not interrupt anyone who is speaking during the hearing. If you are representing yourself and you have an objection to something a witness says, merely say "Objection" and the Court will allow you to state the nature of your objection.
7. Treat all court personnel with respect, including bailiffs, judicial assistants, clerks, judges and hearing officers.
8. Do not make faces or gestures at the opposing party, his or her attorney, witnesses or the judge while in the courtroom. Speak directly to the judge or your attorney, not the opposing party or a witness. You will be given an opportunity to be heard.
9. Show your respect for the Court by dressing appropriately and wearing clean, neat clothing.

10. Do not bring any food or beverage into the courtroom and do not chew gum or eat candy in the courtroom.

11. Do not bring children to the courthouse (except in adoption cases or when specifically ordered to do so), unless the Court has so ordered. If you must bring children, be sure to also bring someone who can wait in the hall with them while you are in the courtroom.

12. Bring at least four (4) copies of any documents that you intend to offer into evidence.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.