

## **Self Representation**

- **Pro Per:** A person who represents himself/herself rather than hiring an attorney is a “Pro Per” litigant
- **Standards of conduct:** Persons acting on their own behalf are held to the same standards and duties as an attorney admitted to the practice of law in the State of Michigan. Such persons are expected to know what the law requires and how to accomplish his or her objectives in accordance with the applicable statutes and court rules.
- Judges and their staff cannot provide legal advice. Most court employees are not lawyers and should not be asked to provide legal advice. Employees of the court are only allowed to provide procedural information. Litigants may refer to the [Michigan Court Rules](#) and [Michigan Laws](#) when seeking legal guidance.
- **Seeking Advice:** If you need legal advice, please contact an attorney. If you do not have a lawyer and do not know a specific lawyer to contact, you can be referred to a lawyer through the [State Bar of Michigan](#) or the Mecosta/Osceola Bar Association.
- **Self-Help Information Available:** The court has free self-help packets available for some types of proceedings. Contact the individual court for assistance.

### **Other resources for self-help:**

1. The [State Bar of Michigan](#) has an online legal self-help center that provides resources to the public.
  2. The [Michigan Legal Aid](#) website provides help with legal problems to low income Michigan residents.
  3. The [Michigan Legal Help](#) website provides help to persons representing themselves.
  4. The [Michigan Courts Reference Guide](#) provides information on our courts.
  5. The [Handbook of Legal Terms](#) provides information on legal terms.
- **Attendance at Court Proceedings:** Arrive at the assigned judge’s courtroom or referee’s hearing room on the scheduled day and time of your court proceeding. Arrive early to allow time for courthouse security measures. Be prepared to spend most of the morning or afternoon in court. Your case may be heard immediately or you may have to wait for other cases to be heard.
  - When you arrive, check in at the hallway window of whichever Court you are appearing in.
  - **What to Bring to the Court Proceeding:**
    1. All copies of your documents pertaining to the scheduled court proceeding.
    2. Paper for your notes.

3. Pen or Pencil.
4. If you are presenting a motion, bring the corresponding proposed order to present to the judge if your motion is granted.

- **What to do at the Court Proceeding:** Refer to the [Courtroom Etiquette](#) procedures.
- **If your Motion is Granted:** If you have a proposed order prepared, pursuant to [MCR 2.602](#) tell the judge you have a proposed order to be signed then ask permission to hand the order to the judge. If the judge signs the order, take it to the [County clerk's office](#) and ask for a true copy of the order. If you care is in Osceola County, [click here for Osceola County Clerk information](#). Then serve a copy of the order on each attorney/party of record.
- If you do not have an order prepared, you will need to prepare a proposed order, pursuant to [MCR 2.602](#), based on the judge's ruling. Provide an extra copy of the proposed order and a self-addressed envelope so the clerk can return a true copy to you after the judge signs the order. After you receive the true copy, make a copy of the order and serve it on the attorneys/parties of record.
- **If your Motion is Taken Under Advisement:** The judge states the need to review the motion on record and will either adjourn the motion to another date or advise the parties in writing once s/he has considered the motion.
- **If your Motion is Denied:** The judge will state the reasons for denial on the record. The judge will probably direct the opposing attorney/party to prepare a proposed order. If you want the reasons for denial in writing, you will need to order a transcript of the hearing, and you will have to pay for the transcript.
- **This page was adapted from [http://washtenawtrialcourt.org/self\\_help](http://washtenawtrialcourt.org/self_help)**