

INFORMATION AND RULES FOR SELF-REPRESENTED (*PRO SE*) PARTIES

- Although we want to be responsive to your needs, the court staff **cannot** give you **any** legal advice.
- You should attend the Court's Domestic Clinic. It is free and is held at 5:00 p.m. once a month. Court staff can give you the date, time and location of the next clinic.
- At the Court clinic, there is assistance available for calculating child support, serving papers, transferring real estate and motor vehicles, and assuring you have all of the required forms. There is also an attorney available to give some limited advice on completing forms.
- Your first choice should be to hire an attorney. There is good reason for anyone seeking legal remedies to do so, but especially those who have been married a long time; have children; have significant property (land or retirement plans) and/or significant debts.
- If you are unable to afford an attorney, there are several sources available where you may get help. Please ask the clerk for a *Pro Se* resource list. If there is domestic violence in your relationship, you may qualify for assistance at DNA Legal Services
- Remember that, when you are appearing *pro se*, you are held to the same standards as attorneys as far as knowledge of the rules of evidence and courtroom procedure. The judges and hearing officer cannot help you present your case.
- **You must provide a complete mailing address** in your court case file and you must update it whenever there are changes. If you do not do so, your case may be decided without your input.
- Be timely for Court hearings. If you do not appear on time, your case may be decided without you or a bench warrant may be issued for your arrest.
- There are now three District Court locations: 851 Andrea Drive, Farmington; 920 Municipal Drive, Farmington; and 103 South Oliver, Aztec. Be sure to check the notice carefully for the time and location of the hearing. Allow yourself adequate travel time to appear for your hearing on time.
- 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.

- Children are not allowed in the courtroom, and, at this time, there are no child care facilities at the Court. You should make other arrangements for children for the time you will be at Court.
- Telephonic appearances may be acceptable only if requested in writing with good cause and approved by the Court prior to the hearing date. It is best to be present in person if at all possible. If you must request to appear via telephone, you should do so well in advance of the hearing.
- Do not call or write to the judge or hearing officer except for filing pleadings. As a general rule, documents and testimony can be read or heard by the judge or hearing officer only in the presence of both parties.
- 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 stand and say “Objection” and the Court will allow you to state the nature of your objection.
- Treat all court personnel with respect, including bailiffs, judicial assistants, clerks, judges and hearing officers.
- 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 if you will just wait your turn.
- Show your respect for the Court by dressing appropriately and wearing clean, neat clothing.
- Do not bring any food or beverage into the courtroom and do not chew gum or eat candy in the courtroom.
- Bring at least four (4) copies of any documents that you intend to offer into evidence.

THANK YOU.

William C. Birdsall, Chief District Judge
John A. Dean, Jr. District Judge
Thomas J. Hynes, District Judge
Sandra A. Price, District Judge
Karen Townsend, District Judge
Cindy L. Gray, Hearing Officer and Commissioner

Revised 12/09