

What to Know: Before Court

Getting to Court

- Allow extra travel time in case of delays. You can lose your case if it is called and you are not at court.
- If you cannot go to court at the assigned time, you should send someone in your place to ask for a new court date.
- Write down your case number and courtroom number before you go to court.

Courthouse Security

- Enter through the main entrance (east entrance) of the courthouse.
- No cellular devices, food or drink are allowed in the courtroom.

Interpreters and Reasonable Accommodations

- If you do not speak English, the court is required to give you a free interpreter.
- If you need an interpreter or assistance because of a disability, call the clerk's office at (217)849-3601 before court to prevent delays.

Court Costs

- You will probably have to pay a fee to file or answer a court case. If you do not have money to pay the fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver application.

Illinois Supreme Court Standardized Forms

Fee waiver applications and other forms are available online:

www.illinoiscourts.gov/forms/approved

These forms come with instructions on how to fill them in and how to deliver a copy to the other side in your case.

Paperwork

- If you do not know what forms to fill out, the clerk may be able to help you find the right form. The clerk **cannot** help you fill out the form or tell you what to write.
- If you give ("file") paperwork with the court, you also have to deliver ("serve") it to the other side in your case.
- Check your paperwork carefully before you file it. This is the only way you can communicate with the judge between court dates.

What to Know: During Court

Courtroom Rules

- Do not wear a hat or a coat inside.

Talking to the Judge

- Do not interrupt when someone else is talking. The judge will give everyone a chance to talk, but you may have to wait for your turn.
- When talking, address the judge directly, not the other side.

Preparing Your Case

- The judge may ask you to share your papers, photos, and other evidence with the other side in your case. This is called "discovery."
- Always come prepared to court. Bring all of your paperwork and anything else you may need.

What to Know: After Court

Deadlines

- Make sure you have a copy of the judge's "order" when you leave court.
- Write down any deadlines or scheduled court dates from the judge or clerk. You may not get another reminder.

Should I Represent Myself?

You have the right to represent yourself in court. This is called appearing "pro se" or acting as a "self-represented litigant."

You also have the right to bring an attorney. However, in most civil cases, the court will not appoint an attorney for you. You have to pay for your own attorney. To find an attorney in your area, contact your local bar association or visit IllinoisLawyerFinder.com

You are expected to follow the same rules as a lawyer. If you choose to represent yourself you will need to spend time learning court procedure and local rules. Judges and court clerks cannot tell you what to do or what to say.

You can get in trouble for not following the rules. Not following the rules may hurt your chances at winning your case. It can also cost you money.

There are free self-help resources available. For free legal information and referrals to legal aid providers in your area, visit www.illinoislegalaid.org. Your local law library or public library are may also have additional information and self-help resources.

The information in this brochure is not intended as legal advice and is subject to change without notice.

Courthouse Contact Information

***1 Courthouse Square
Toledo, IL 62468
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. M-F***

***Circuit Clerk: 217-849-3601
State's Atty: 217-849-2311
cumberlandco.org***

Local Public Libraries Contact Information

Sumpter Township Library

148 Court House Sq
Toledo, IL 62468
217-849-2072

HOURS

Monday- Closed
Tuesday- 11 am-6pm
Wednesday- 9am-5pm
Thursday- 11am-6pm
Friday 12pm-5pm
Saturday- 9am-12pm
Sunday- Closed

Greenup Twsp. Public Library

101 North Franklin St.
Greenup, Illinois 62428-0275
217-923-3616

HOURS

Monday: 12 pm-8pm
Tuesday: 9 am-5pm
Wed: 9 am-1pm
Thurs: 12 pm-8pm
Friday: 9 am-5pm
Saturday: 9 am-1 pm
Sunday - Closed

Tips for Self-Represented Litigants



Information for Residents of
CUMBERLAND COUNTY