



## **Basic Information for Unrepresented (Pro Se) Litigants in Civil (non-Family) Cases**

1. Judges, judicial assistants and court staff are prohibited from giving legal advice to anyone. If you are representing yourself, you are encouraged to obtain legal counsel.
  - a. Some local resources to help you find an attorney are:
    - Bar Associations:
      - Clearwater Bar Association: (727) 461-4880; [www.clearwaterbar.org](http://www.clearwaterbar.org)
      - St. Petersburg Bar Association: (727) 821-5450; [www.stpetebar.org](http://www.stpetebar.org)
      - West Pasco Bar Association: 800.342.8011; [www.wpba.wildapricot.org](http://www.wpba.wildapricot.org)
    - Bay Area Legal Services (Pasco & Pinellas): 800.625.2257; [www.bals.org](http://www.bals.org)
    - Community Law Program: 727.582.7402; [www.lawprogram.org](http://www.lawprogram.org)
    - Gulfcoast Legal Services; [www.gulfcoastlegal.org](http://www.gulfcoastlegal.org)
      - Clearwater: 727.443.0657
      - St. Petersburg: 727.821.0726
    - Pinellas Clerk Self Help Center:
      - Clearwater Courthouse: 727.464.5150
      - St. Petersburg Judicial Building: 727.582.7941
  - b. The Pasco and Pinellas County Clerks offices have information online for pro se parties and include additional links you may find helpful:
    - Pasco County Clerk [www.pascoclerk.com](http://www.pascoclerk.com), click “Court Services”
    - Pinellas County Clerk [www.mypinellasclerk.org](http://www.mypinellasclerk.org), click “Self Help”
2. The Code of Judicial Conduct governing behavior by judges forbids a judge to discuss pending cases with the public. This means that Judges and judicial assistants are prohibited from talking to any party or lawyer about the merits of a case outside a properly noticed hearing. Please do not call or email the Court expecting to speak with a judge about any case. The Court is only allowed to consider arguments made in the courtroom and in documents properly filed by actual parties in the case as authorized by law and the Rules of Court. The Court cannot read or consider any other opinions or arguments about the case. Communications that do not meet these legal requirements cannot be forwarded to the Judges. Your opportunity to speak to the judge happens in Court only. A judicial assistant may only provide hearing dates upon request or provide basic information about the judge’s practice preferences.
3. If you need basic information about your case (copies of motions or other records filed in the court file, information about the date and time of a hearing), you will need to contact the Clerk of the Circuit Court:

Pasco: 352.521.4542, Option 3 (Dade City); 727.847.8031, Option 3 (NPR)  
Pinellas: 727.464.7000

Some case records may also be found online:

Pasco County Clerk [www.pascoclerk.com](http://www.pascoclerk.com), click “Records”

Pinellas County Clerk [www.mypinellasclerk.org](http://www.mypinellasclerk.org), click either “View Records” or “Court Records”

4. The Court does not issue orders based on email messages or phone calls. If you are asking the Court to take action, it is necessary for you to file an appropriate motion with the Pasco or Pinellas County Clerk of Court and send a copy to all interested parties, including the assigned judge’s office. Additionally, it is not enough to simply file a motion; you must take the steps set out in paragraph 4 below in order to have your motion considered by the Court.

5. If you have filed a Motion or other pleading in your case:

- a. Please be aware that when you file a Motion with the Clerk’s office, your motion will **not** typically be automatically scheduled for a hearing. In the event that it is scheduled by another party or the assigned judge’s office, you will receive notice of the hearing date and time.
- b. If your motion is not scheduled for hearing by another party or the assigned judge’s office, in order to have your motion heard, you must contact the judge’s office to request proposed hearing dates. You must then contact the opposing counsel or opposing unrepresented litigant(s) in your case to coordinate a mutually agreeable hearing date and time.
- c. Once coordinated, you will need to contact the judge’s office again to let them know which date was mutually agreed upon, and then prepare a Notice of Hearing, file the original with the Clerk, and send copies to all interested parties, including the assigned judge’s office.

6. The Court does not provide court reporters in civil cases. It is the responsibility of the parties to hire and pay for a private official court reporter if one is desired for a particular hearing or trial. An unrepresented litigant should contact opposing counsel or opposing unrepresented litigant to discuss and coordinate the use of a private court reporter as the court will generally only allow the use of one court reporter during a hearing.

7. Court rules do not permit electronic recording of hearings by parties. Unauthorized electronic recordings are not allowed as a substitute for court reporter transcripts.