

Step-by-Step Form Instructions

A Plain-Language Guide to Completing Court Forms

Court forms can be intimidating, but they are simply standardized documents that require specific information. Following a clear, step-by-step process will help you complete them accurately and avoid delays in your case.

General Tips Before You Start

Tip	Why It Matters
Read the Entire Form First	Before writing anything, read the form from beginning to end. This helps you understand the flow of information and ensures you don't miss any required attachments.
Use the Right Tools	If filling out by hand, use black or blue ink only. If filling out electronically, save a blank copy first.
Keep Copies of Everything	Make at least two copies of the completed, signed form: one for your records and one to serve on the opposing party.
Check the Court's Website	Always use the most recent version of the form from the court's official website. Old forms may be rejected.

Step-by-Step Guide to Completion

Step 1: Identify and Fill in the Case Caption

- **Case Name and Number:** This is the identifying information at the top of the form. Write the full case name (e.g., *Plaintiff v. Defendant*) and the **Case Number** (or Docket Number) exactly as it appears on your other court documents.
- **Court Location:** Write the full name of the court (e.g., Superior Court of County, State) and the address.

Step 2: Provide Your Personal Information

- **Name and Contact:** Write your full legal name, current address, phone number, and email address. Ensure this information is up-to-date, as the court will use it to contact you.
- **Party Status:** Clearly indicate whether you are the Plaintiff, Defendant, Petitioner, or Respondent.

Step 3: Complete the Body of the Form

- **Follow Instructions:** Fill in each section carefully. If a section does not apply to your case, write “N/A” (Not Applicable) or draw a line through the blank space, depending on the form’s instructions.
- **Be Truthful:** All information must be accurate and truthful. Remember that you are often signing the form under penalty of perjury.
- **Attach Exhibits:** If the form requires you to attach documents (called Exhibits), make sure they are clearly labeled (e.g., “Exhibit A,” “Exhibit B”) and referenced correctly in the form.

Step 4: Sign and Date

- **Signature:** You must sign the form yourself. Do not use a stamp or have someone else sign for you unless you have a legally recognized power of attorney.
- **Date:** Write the date you signed the form.

Step 5: File with the Court Clerk

- **Filing:** Take the original and your copies to the court clerk’s office. The clerk will **date-stamp** the original and your copies. The date stamp is proof that you filed the document on time.
 - **Service:** After filing, you must ensure a copy of the filed, date-stamped form is **served** on the opposing party.
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Important Notice:

The information provided in this guide is for educational purposes only. We do not provide legal advice, legal interpretation, or attorney services, and we cannot represent anyone in court. Our goal is to help you learn, understand, and feel confident when navigating legal topics.
