



Home	Court Information	Judges' Information	Attorneys	Representing Yourself	Juror Information	Case Information	Programs & Services	Forms
------	-------------------	---------------------	-----------	-----------------------	-------------------	------------------	---------------------	-------

Pro Se Information

Home » Representing Yourself

[Federal Rules of Civil Procedure](#)

[Local Rules](#)

[Pro Se Handbook](#)

[Free Legal Resources](#)

[Pro Se Forms](#)

[Glossary of Legal Terms](#)

[Overview of the Federal Courts](#)

Filing Without an Attorney

Welcome to the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana. The court has provided these resources for people who file a civil case on their own behalf, without an attorney. This type of person is often referred to as a **pro se** litigant (pronounced pro say). "Pro se" is a Latin phrase meaning "for oneself." If you are a pro se litigant, please review these materials carefully before proceeding with your case.

The rules, procedures and law that affect your case are very often hard to understand. With that in mind, you should seriously consider trying to obtain professional legal assistance from an attorney instead of representing yourself as a pro se party.

The staff of the Clerk's Office may help you by answering questions about procedures, but they are **prohibited** from giving you legal advice. This means, for example, that the Clerk's staff cannot do any of the following:

- recommend a legal course of action or suggest ways to help you win your case;
- predict how a district or magistrate judge may decide any issue;
- interpret the meaning of any judicial order; or
- interpret the local rules of this Court, federal procedural rules, federal statutes, or case law.

Guides and Forms for Filing Complaints for Pro Se Litigants:

Below are two separate Guides that are intended to help *pro se* litigants write and file a complaint. The first Guide provides information and samples for non-prisoner *pro se* litigants; and the second Guide provides information and samples for prisoner *pro se* litigants. Under each section are two forms 1) a blank Complaint; and 2) a blank Request to Proceed in District Court Without PrePaying the Filing Fee (the 2nd form is optional). *Pro Se* litigants are encouraged to use these forms, but are not required to do so.

Guide and Forms for Pro Se Litigants (non-prisoners):

- [Guide to Filing Non-Prisoner Complaints Without a Lawyer in Federal District Court](#)
- [Complaint](#)
- [Request to Proceed in District Court Without PrePaying the Filing Fee](#)

Guide and Forms for Pro Se Litigants (prisoners):

- [Guide to Filing Prisoner Complaints Without a Lawyer in Federal District Court](#)
- [Complaint](#)
- [Request to Proceed in District Court Without Prepaying the Filing Fee](#)

The [Federal Rules of Civil Procedure](#) apply to cases in all federal courts.

The Southern District of Indiana's [Local Rules](#) apply to cases in this court.

A number of [Free Legal Services](#) may be helpful.

For a list of forms often used in federal civil cases, check the court's [Pro Se Forms](#) page.

Learn more about [Federal Courts](#), or the [Indiana State Courts](#).