

APPEARING IN COURT (In-Person)

Recording, photographing, posting on social media, and televising court proceedings is prohibited unless approved by a judge.

To speak with a judge or hearing officer, you must file a Motion and Request for Hearing. Please see our *Motions, Hearings and Enforcement of Orders* checklist for more information.

- Make sure you have provided a copy of all documents you have filed with the court to the opposing party. If you do not provide copies of everything you file to the opposing party, your hearing may be delayed.
- Tips for appearing in court:
 - ✓ Make an outline of your key points that you can refer to – this will help keep you on track and remind you of what you want to cover.
 - ✓ Have your witnesses ready and present at court when needed. If you have a witness who will not attend voluntarily, you may need to get the court to issue a subpoena and have this witness served.
 - ✓ Have questions prepared for your witnesses as well as for the opposing party’s witnesses.
 - ✓ Organize any exhibits you want to provide to the judge. Be sure to have the original and two copies. The original for the court, a copy for you, and a copy for the opposing party.
 - ✓ Arrange for childcare. Unless the judge has required you to bring your children to court, children are not permitted in the courtroom.
 - ✓ Practice your arguments in front of a mirror or friends.
 - ✓ Bring copies of all pleadings you and the other side have filed with the court.
 - ✓ Bring a notepad and pen to take notes during the hearing or trial.
 - ✓ Be on time. Be sure to allow extra time for traffic or other possible delays.
- Dress appropriately and conservatively. No hats or sunglasses are permitted to be worn in the courtroom.
- Stand when the judge enters or leaves the courtroom.
- Listen carefully and talk directly to the judge, whom you should address as “Judge” or “Your Honor.”
- The judge will give everyone an opportunity to speak and present their side. If you disagree with what the other party is saying, you should not interrupt them. They need to finish what they have to say and the judge will give you an opportunity to respond.
- Do not interrupt the judge. Answer the judge's questions and stop talking if the judge interrupts you.
- Once the judge has made a ruling, it is okay to ask the judge to clarify if you do not understand what he or she has just ordered but do not argue with the judge.
- If you have a disability and need assistance, notify the court as soon as possible before any hearing or trial. If you are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the Court will provide you with assistive hearing devices. For assistance, call (505) 841-7425 or email ada.2nddistrictcourt@nmcourts.gov at least 48 hours before your scheduled hearing.
- If you need an interpreter, the court will provide one. You are responsible for notifying the court that you need an interpreter before each and every hearing. For assistance, call (505) 841-7471 or email sjdcinterpreterrequest@nmcourts.gov.