

## ■ PLEASE REMEMBER

Court Staff are here to help you **BUT** can only help you in certain ways and must be fair to everyone involved in the case.

Staff are not allowed to give legal advice or perform legal research for you.

They can provide you with basic information or directions.

## ? DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

The FCMC Self Help Resource Center is a free walk-in service to help you represent yourself in court without a lawyer. We cannot offer legal advice, but can point you to helpful resources. The Center is open on a walk-in basis – no appointment necessary.

### About the Franklin County Municipal Court Self Help Resource Center

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## WALK IN

375 S. High St., 6th Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Monday – Friday, 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
(last visitors accepted at 2:30 PM)

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.fcmcselfhelpcenter.org](http://www.fcmcselfhelpcenter.org)

Includes helpful legal and research resources and materials on various legal issues.



Franklin County Municipal Court (FCMC)  
Self Help Resource Center



## Before You Get to the Courtroom

- **Be organized and prepared.** Have any papers, documents, or photos you bring neat and organized. It should be easy and quick for you to find things as you present your case. Bring at least 3 copies of each item.
- **Know the result** you are hoping for or what you are asking the court to do.
- Leave all food, drink, and chewing gum **outside of the courtroom.**
- If you are bringing witness, be sure that **they are prepared** for the case and know the topic they will be asked about.
- Witnesses may be asked to leave the courtroom when not testifying.
- Children are allowed in the courtroom, but try to not let them disrupt the courtroom. If at all possible You may bring people to the courtroom, however be sure that they do not disrupt the courtroom.

## Courtroom Behavior

- Be on time.
  - Try to arrive 15 minutes early to the courtroom—but remember to leave extra time to get to the courthouse, park, and get through security.
  - Check in with the bailiff when you get to the courtroom. Do not leave unless it is an emergency once court begins. You will not know the order of cases so you will not know when your case will be called.
- When you enter the courtroom, **turn off anything that will make a noise**—like a cellphone or a watch, or put it on silent.
- **Be polite**, no matter what is said in the courtroom.
- **Speak clearly** and loud enough to be heard—avoid mumbling.
- **Make your point—but do not argue** with the other party, an attorney, or the judge or magistrate.
  - Treat everyone with respect.
  - Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking—especially the judge or magistrate. Don't worry, you will get your chance to speak.
- Tell the judge or magistrate if you do not understand a question.
- When you speak to the judge or magistrate, try to **begin or end what you say with "Your Honor," "Sir," or "Ma'am."**

## After the Courtroom

Before you leave the courthouse, **be sure of what will happen next.**

## What to Wear

It is important to dress appropriately when you go to court. You do not need to buy new clothing—chances are you already own clothing that is court ready.

### Keep these tips in mind:

1. Wear something that will make you look neat, modest, and simple. Think clothing you would wear to church.
2. Do not wear anything with profanity, or written messages.
3. It is okay to wear jeans if they are clean and fit appropriately.
4. If possible, try not to wear flip flops.
5. If not worn for religious reasons, remove any hats or similar items when in the courtroom.

Dressing appropriately for court shows that you respect the Court and are taking the matter seriously.