

WHAT TO EXPECT

When you get to the courthouse, go to your designated courtroom, check in with the clerk in the front of the room. Sit quietly until your case is called. You may have to wait a while, so be patient.

When your case is called, walk to the podium and stand facing the judge. The judge, your attorney or your advocate will tell you when to speak.

When the judge asks you to present your case, tell the judge what it is that you are requesting and why you are requesting it. After you are finished, the other side will have the chance to ask you questions.

Next, the opposition will present his or her case. Don't forget, if you disagree with something the other side says, do not interrupt. You will have an opportunity to ask the other side questions.

During the hearing, the judge may ask you questions. If you don't understand the question, say so. If you don't know the answer, say so. Do not be afraid to admit that you don't know something.

USEFUL NUMBERS

Crisis Line of Joliet

Referrals

(815) 722-3344

Groundwork

Shelter, Counseling

(815) 729-1228

Lamb's Fold Center for Women & Children

Transitional Housing

(815) 723-5262

Legal Aid, Will County

(815) 740-5350

Orders of Protection Office

(815) 740-8064

Will County Sheriff's Office

(815) 727-8895

Will County

State's Attorney's Office

(815) 727-8453

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Courtroom Etiquette



HELPFUL TIPS FOR
PROPER BEHAVIOR AND
WHAT TO EXPECT IN COURT

Court Etiquette

Court is a very traditional place. When you are representing yourself in court, you are trying to persuade a judge or jury that you are right. So you must act, dress and speak in a way that helps you with your case.

BE ON TIME

If you are late, your case will be dismissed. The judge may make a decision without hearing your side of the story.

Get to the courthouse 30 minutes early in order to get through security and into the courtroom on time. Camera phones are not allowed in the courthouse.

DRESS NEATLY

You do not need fancy clothes, just make sure you are modest, neat and clean.

Tank tops, low cut shirts, short skirts, shorts, ripped jeans, hats, flip-flops and sunglasses are not acceptable in court. If you are dressed inappropriately, you may be asked to wear a sweater.

BE RESPECTFUL

How you act is as important as how you look. Just like an attorney, you must be respectful to everyone in the court, including the judge, court staff, and the other party involved in your case.

Sit up straight and be attentive. Do not speak while others are talking. Do not get into an argument with the other side.

Speak to the judge only when you are told it's your turn. Address the judge as ~~%~~ Your Honor. Never interrupt the judge as he or she speaks.

Control your emotions as much as possible, especially your anger.

CELL PHONES

There are ***NO*** camera phones allowed in the courthouse.

If you do bring a non-camera phone or pager in, you must ***TURN IT OFF***, not on silent.

Ringling or vibrating phones in the courtroom are very distracting and will be taken away from you.

CHILDREN

Try your best to find child care while you are in court. But if you cannot find a sitter, do not let this stop you from coming. We want you in court!!!!

If you have to bring your children, bring quiet toys or another person to help you while you are in court.