

If you plan to represent yourself in Court, here are some tips to help you prepare.

Representing Yourself in Tribal Court



COURT STAFF AND JUDGES CANNOT GIVE YOU LEGAL ADVICE

Tip: If it sounds like a question for a lawyer, they probably can't answer it.

Court Staff CANNOT perform legal research on your behalf.

Tip: the information you provide in your filings is what the Judge will go by. If you think it may be important, include it.

They CANNOT predict the outcome of a case, a paper filed, or some other action in a case.

Tip: Court staff is not legally trained to be able to navigate all possible remedies to a case. The Judge is the only one who will provide the directing Order to your filings.

Parties CANNOT speak to the Judge unless the other party is present

Tip: This is called "ex-parte" communication. To avoid this from happening, communication can be had during your court hearing or by filing it in writing into your case and a copy sent to the opposing party.

Court Staff will not send copies of your filings to the other party

Tip: If the other party files something into your case, you would want to know what is being said or asked. This applies to them as well. Please remember to send all your case filings to the other party.

Evidence ordinarily CANNOT be submitted after the hearing

Tip: File any and all evidence by the deadline (if one is provided) or bring it to the hearing with copies for the parties and the Judge.

Representing yourself can be tougher than it looks

Tip: Remember to keep track of hearing dates and times, follow and review court procedures, track deadlines for filings. These are only a few of the important pieces of your case that if not followed, can cause your case to be dismissed.