

The 401st District Court, Collin County
A MESSAGE TO PARTIES
REPRESENTING THEMSELVES

You have either filed a lawsuit representing yourself or some other pleading (like an answer, intervention, motion) representing yourself. People (not entities) have a legal right to do this, but because the applicable Rules and Law can be complex, we strongly suggest that you retain an attorney to at least help you and give you advice “behind the scenes.”

Neither the Judge nor the Bailiff nor the Court Coordinator nor the Court Reporter nor anyone in the District Clerk’s Office will help you figure out the complexities. We are neutral, we do not “represent” any party, and we therefore cannot help you figure out what to do. Your failure to follow the Rules (and deadlines set out in the Rules) can result in the loss of important rights, including but not limited to the right to present evidence or witnesses. Your failure to follow the Law may result in loss of your case because there was something which you failed to prove up through admissible evidence.

The Rules mean the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure. You are expected to read, understand, and follow these Rules. A copy of the Rules can be purchased online and can be reviewed without cost in the Collin County Law Library. There are many important Rules. Some of them are Rules 21, 21a, 47, 86, 99, 106, 165a, 166a, and 190-194. This list is not complete. At trial or at any hearing, you will be expected to follow the Texas Rules of Evidence.

The Law means the law contained in cases, statutes, regulations, and constitutions. It is often discussed and summarized in Law Review Articles, Treatises, and Encyclopedias. There are many books which can help you but it is your job to find the right ones and obtain and read them. The Law Librarian can show you some of these that lawyers often use.

Even though you are not a lawyer, you will be expected to follow the Rules. Even though you are not a lawyer, you will be expected to know the law pertaining to evidence and the substance of your case.

If you are involved in a Family Law matter (divorce, children) then you have special helps available to you at <http://www.texaslawhelp.org> where you will find detailed instructions and forms. Use It!