

Legal Terms

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Answer The response from the respondent to the petition. Must be filed with the court and sent to the petitioner's attorney within a set time, usually 20 days of receiving the summons and petition.

Civil Court Courts dealing with issues of private rights. Includes personal injury, car wrecks, medical malpractice, ownership of property, contract rights, etc.

Discovery When two parties exchange information to try and agree on facts avoiding surprises at trial.

Domestic Court or Family Law Court Courts dealing with divorce, custody, and paternity issues.

Garnishment A court order letting the petitioner get up to 25% of the monthly pay of whoever owes them money.

Hearing An in-court presentation to the judge, where the people involved in a case tell the facts and the law so the judge can make a decision.

Types:

Evidentiary hearing The state in which a judgment on a suit is made after hearing evidence.

Hearing on motion Involves statements of facts and legal argument by attorneys or the parties, if unrepresented, followed by a decision by the judge.

Interrogatories Questions sent to other parties. Must be answered and returned, usually within 30 days.

Journal Entry/Order Any paper the judge signs.

Types: 1) Setting a date or time for a hearing to happen.
2) An opinion by a judge or final ruling in a case.

Judgment A finding the courts that orders one party to pay another an amount of money or take some other action.

Jurisdiction Rules of law that say when the court has right to take action on a matter or make a decision on an issue.