



# DCLRC Docket

September 2004

A Publication of the Dane County Legal Resource Center

## Going Solo? Locating Local Court Rules or Forms May Help Your Case!

### Local Court Rules

<http://www.countyofdane.com/clrk cort/ccrules.htm>

All participants in local court proceedings are expected to follow local court rules, even non-lawyers. The rules outline specific local procedures and policies to make the court be consistent for all participants. The local court rules are on the Clerk of Courts website (listed above) or may be purchased as a print booklet at DCLRC for \$2.00. To find out how Circuit Court Rules are created or changed, attend this month's Legal Information Session (details below).



### Sidebar:

#### **Back to School Tip**

Has your emergency contact or health insurance information changed over the summer? How about who is authorized to pick up your child from school? Be sure to update your records with the school district. For school legal information, check out this Safe School Legal Resource Manual published by the WI Dept. of Justice: [http://www.doj.state.wi.us/ss\\_manual/ssmanual.pdf](http://www.doj.state.wi.us/ss_manual/ssmanual.pdf)



### Local Court Forms

Follow these steps to ensure that you are using court-approved forms:

1. Some court forms are mandatory, meaning that you must use these forms as drafted by the state without modification. You can locate mandatory forms here: <http://www.wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit.htm>. If there is a mandatory form for your purposes and you do not use it, your court proceedings may be delayed until the correct form is filed.
2. Didn't see the form you need on the mandatory state forms list? Check with your local Clerk of Courts office or other court office to see if there are county-specific forms available. For example, there are currently no mandatory state-wide divorce forms, but in Dane County, there are county-specific forms available for a small fee from DCLRC or online at: <http://www.countyofdane.com/clrk cort/clrkhome.htm>.
3. No county-specific or mandatory forms for your purpose? Contact a law library, such as DCLRC, to see if there is a sample form available in a book or online that you can use as a guide to draft your own form.
4. Not even a sample form available? Believe it or not, there are not forms available for every specific court procedure. Contact your local court office, Clerk of Court, or law library for more information. Sometimes courts accept a hand-drafted form or letter, provided it includes all pertinent case information, including the party names and case number.

\* With all forms, from mandatory down to hand-drafted letters, the court may need several copies to place in the court file or distribute to the other parties.

Contact DCLRC about court rules or forms, or attend this month's Legal Info Session for more information (details below). The information above pertains to Dane County Circuit Court only and may not apply to other counties.





## Budget Time is Drawing Near!

As we approach budget time starting **October 1**, please consider offering support on DCLRC's behalf by contacting your county board supervisor or the county executive's office. Have you received beneficial service or do you approve of the programs offered by DCLRC? Express your support through a brief call or email. Don't know what to say? We can help. Your continued support of DCLRC is needed and appreciated! You can find your Supervisor by calling 266-5758 or accessing: <http://www.co.dane.wi.us/coboard/default.asp>.

## Upcoming Events

**Free Legal Information Sessions** will be held monthly through November on various topics related to legal research or court procedures. Presented by DCLRC staff in Room 315 of the Courthouse, no legal advice will be given at these sessions. The public is welcome to attend. Contact us for more information, 266-6316 or [dclrc.ref@wicourts.gov](mailto:dclrc.ref@wicourts.gov).

**September 9, 12:15-1 p.m.: Initiating a Court Action: Locating Court Rules and Forms**

- Explores the circuit court rule-making process, location of local and state court rules, and methods of searching for a court or legal form

### Upcoming Sessions:

*October:* Dane County Court Offices Tour

*November:* Who ya' gonna call? Finding legal services/resources in Dane Co.

## September Used Book Sale

In September, **all nonfiction books** are 50 cents off in our ongoing used book sale held in the library. New titles arrive each week. Be sure to stop in regularly to view our selection! Cleaning out your home library? Donate your books to DCLRC! We'll accept all books for our monthly book sale: Hardcover, novels, nonfiction, paperbacks. Drop off your donations in room 315 any time we're open.

## DCLRC Discussion

*A new column in which DCLRC staff describe and explain specific goals or missions of ensuring public access to legal information at DCLRC. This month's column is written by Paula Seeger, librarian.*

One of the key things I learned at the "Community Based Access to Justice" conference I attended earlier this year was that there are at least two levels of service that can be provided to pro se litigants (those going to court without the assistance of a lawyer). The first level is **ACCESS**. It is the ongoing mission of DCLRC to provide as much access to legal resources and information as possible. This includes access to court forms and procedures (see feature article above). In addition to ensuring access, DCLRC has incorporated the goal of providing a second level of service: **ASSISTANCE**. This level can be in the form of helping to locate a court form or rule, or finding the law on a specific topic. Assistance is a tricky area in that DCLRC staff must be careful not to venture into the area of legal advice. One of the things DCLRC does to ensure this is to refer people to courthouse or local assistance centers staffed by volunteer attorneys. While the attorneys cannot give advice either, they offer a different type of assistance that non-attorneys cannot: the kind that comes from years of legal training and practice. DCLRC strives toward goals of **ACCESS** and **ASSISTANCE** through providing resources, knowledgeable staff assistance, and referrals to other forms of legal services.

## End Notes

\* If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter via email, reply to this message with "no thanks" in the message. Call the Legal Resource Center if you no longer want this newsletter via postal mail.

\* Comments about this newsletter are welcome. Please contact the library at (608) 266-6316 or [paula.seeger@wicourts.gov](mailto:paula.seeger@wicourts.gov). If you think others would enjoy this newsletter, feel free to forward it.

\*If you enjoyed this newsletter, you may also like to sample our other newsletters available via email only. *Legal Research Tips* is a monthly newsletter filled with valuable information about performing your own legal research. *Internet Tips* offers helpful shortcuts and information for both beginners and advanced Internet users and includes a useful web link with each month's issue. Please contact us for a sample issue or subscription.

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We're on the Web!  
<http://wsll.state.wi.us/dcll.html>

