

SECTION I GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Family Division Offices and Hours of Operation

Allegheny County Family Division is located at the Family Law Facility, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. If only the room number is provided in this Court Manual, the office can be found in the Family Law Facility. If an identified office is in another building, the address of that building is also provided for ease in locating the office.

The Court is typically open for business from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Several key offices, however, which are of particular importance to the public, operate on slightly different schedules, as noted below.

Family Division Intake, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 is open to the public from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Claims for child support and spousal support must be processed through this office.

Parties and counsel check in for scheduled conferences and hearings at the main **Family Division Reception Area, Room 4020, unless otherwise directed by the court papers.**

Parties and attorneys also have the option of appearing without an appointment to obtain case information, have questions answered, or seek other assistance with Family Division cases. These **walk-in services are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Client Services Center in the Central Office.**

The **South Hills Regional Office (SHO)** is open from **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** and is located in **Suite 200, 250 Mt. Lebanon Blvd.**, with free parking available in the rear of the facility. Clients may appear in the office without an appointment **Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** to file a complaint for support, obtain information on their support case, or file a modification or enforcement petition. Purge payments are also accepted when made by cashier's check or money order (no cash payments are accepted).

The **Penn Hills Regional Office (PHO)** is open from **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** and is located at **12000 Frankstown Road, 3rd Floor**, with free parking available in the rear of the facility. Clients may appear in the office without an appointment **Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** to file a complaint for support, obtain information on their support case, or file a modification or enforcement petition. Purge payments are also accepted when made by cashier's check or money order (no cash payments are accepted).

Parties may also check in at the Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility without an appointment on **Wednesday evenings from 4:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. for "night court"**. During night court hours, parties may file a support complaint ONLY if both parties live in Allegheny County. Parties may also obtain case information, have questions answered, or file a modification petition.

The **Intergovernmental Department** is located on the **Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue** and is open to the public from **8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday**. **"Screening services"** (assisting clients without appointments who need information on their cases or wish to file modification or enforcement petitions) are available **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** and **Inter-governmental intake** (to file a new support complaint) is available from **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

B. Obtaining Information from Family Division

1. **Information relating to the status of payments and amount of arrears** may be obtained from the Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility between the hours of **8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday**. Copies of payment histories are available upon request.
2. **Family Division Files:**
 - a) **Attorneys**, or their paralegal/law clerk, may request hard copy support files from the File Room, Basement, Family Law Facility, provided they have filed a Praecipe for Appearance on the case. If a completed Praecipe for Appearance is not already in the file, the attorney requesting the file must provide one before being permitted to review the file. The attorney shall request the file by docket number and must review the file in the file room. **No photocopies can be made, since there is not a public photocopier available in the File Room.** Copies of pleadings are available in the Docketing Office, Fifth Floor, Manor Building. Imaged support files (all cases or pleadings filed after July 1, 2013) may be reviewed by the attorney of record once the file room staff accesses the file in the imaging system. This is a 'view only' system and printing is not available.
 - b) An **unrepresented party** wishing to review his or her support file must do so with the assistance of a DRO by checking in at the Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility or in the Intergovernmental Department, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Parties who have cases in the regional offices may review their files at the regional offices, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Imaged support files (all cases or pleadings filed after July 1, 2013) may be reviewed by a client once the Domestic Relations Officer accesses the file in the imaging system. This is a 'view only' system, and printing is not available.

3. **General information** about domestic relations cases and about Family Division, as well as payment information in a specific case, can be obtained by calling the **Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system at (412) 350-5600**. The automated system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Telephone specialists are available to answer questions and provide information **Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.** To obtain information about a specific case, the caller must have his/her Social Security number. Additionally, during the first call, the caller must create a Personal Identification Number (PIN), and then must have that number available for all subsequent calls. **Information about payments and checks** can also be obtained by calling the **Statewide Collection & Disbursement Unit (SCDU)** at (877) 727-7238 or viewing the PACSES website at www.pachildsupport.com.
4. Print-outs of the following **PACSES screens** can be provided, depending on the nature of the information requested: CSUM (displays case and member summaries), SORD (gives details of support order), OBLE (identifies financial obligations and arrears payments by debt type), FSUM (displays payments, disbursements and adjustments), GINX (shows income calculations), GIDE (shows calculations for defendant's obligation), GIDS (displays guideline amount by frequency for child/spouse), GINI (displays the net income summary for each member), GANI (displays total financial needs of the plaintiff and defendant), GCCI (child care expenses history), GOFI (calculation of additional family obligations for parties), GHII (displays health insurance percentage of parties' income), GEQI (income equalization, GCCI (child care expense summary), GMDI (medical expense summary), GCBI (child's SS benefits summary) GMGI (mortgage expense summary), GSSI (spousal support results), GSMI (support summary screen). In addition, other specialized "income" screens are available if applicable to a particular case (e.g., RPTM (archived financial information), GTMI (shared custody summary), RSUM (recovery summary screen for overpayments).

C. One Judge/One Family

1. When a family law complaint or petition (including, but not limited to, divorce, annulment, enforcement of a marriage settlement agreement, custody,

partial custody, visitation, spousal support or child support) is filed, the Department of Court Records, Civil Division shall determine the judicial assignment and add the appropriate suffix to the Family Division docket number on the first pleading filed for that family unit. Thereafter, every pleading which involves the same family unit will have the same docket number and suffix, and will be assigned to the same judge. All court papers shall contain the full docket number, including the suffix. Once a judge is assigned responsibility for a case, that judge will usually decide matters in the case.

2. Family Division judges have the following suffixes:

Judge Eleanor Bush	001
Judge Susan Evashavik DiLucente	002
Judge Paul E. Cozza	003
Judge Kathryn M. Hens-Greco	004
Judge Hugh F. McGough	005
Judge Kim D. Eaton	006
Judge Cathleen C. Bubash	008
Judge Daniel D. Regan	009
Judge Kim Berkeley Clark	010
Judge Guido A. DeAngelis	014
Judge Dwayne D. Woodruff	015
Judge Jennifer Satler	017
Judge Jennifer S. McCrady	018
Judge David L. Spurgeon	019

3. All motions, exceptions, conciliations and hearings shall be listed only before the judge whose suffix is assigned to the case, absent a compelling emergency.
4. The same philosophy of "one judge/one family" shall apply to the extent practical in the assignment of this Court's hearing officers and masters in equitable distribution. Accordingly, counsel or a party, when requesting action before a hearing officer, shall request that the matter be assigned to the hearing officer most familiar with the case, if any.
5. For any case to which a suffix has not been assigned, a judge may, on his or her own motion, amend the caption of a case to add the appropriate suffix designation and take responsibility for such case; or counsel or a party may obtain judicial assignment from the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033. If a suffix is changed or assigned for the first time, notice generally will be given to the parties, counsel, and the judge, as appropriate.

6. A judge suffix will be assigned by the Court to a Family Division case initiated by a PFA petition in those cases in which there may be other related family law matters that may need to be resolved.

D. Use of Docket Numbers in the Adult Section of Family Division

All pleadings, regardless of the caption or nature of the case, filed with the Adult Section of the Family Division **MUST** be filed under the originally assigned docket number for the family unit. The caption should reflect that the party initiating each action is the plaintiff or petitioner, regardless of previous filings, and the caption should remain the same during the pendency of that particular action.

Before filing any pleading, counsel or an unrepresented party is responsible for checking at the Reception Desk, the Docketing Office, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA, or on the Department of Court Records website (<https://dcr.alleghenycounty.us>), to determine whether a docket number has already been assigned to the family unit. If no judge is assigned or the assigned judge no longer sits in the Family Division, a judicial assignment should be obtained from the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033. Each docket number must have a suffix indicating the judge to whom the case is assigned.

NOTE: If a PFA is filed at a number different from the docket number already assigned to the family unit, all other docket numbers **MUST** be consolidated under the number assigned to the PFA action. However, cross PFA filings (where each party files a petition against the other party) **MUST** have separate docket numbers.

Consolidation of Docket Numbers: If it is discovered that multiple docket numbers have been assigned in error, the situation should be brought to the attention of personnel at the Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility, so that cases can be consolidated as appropriate.

PACSES Case ID Numbers: In addition to the docket number, if the case has been assigned a PACSES Case ID number (cases where child and/or spousal support has been addressed), that number must appear on all pleadings regarding support actions, pursuant to Administrative Order No. 290 of 2004. You may obtain the PACSES Case ID number from the Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility, or the Docketing Office, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA.

E. Family Division Motions (for persons represented by attorneys)

1. Motions in Family Division matters must be presented to the judge assigned to the case (see Section I. C.), barring exigent circumstances.
2. **Family Division motions are generally heard at 2:00 p.m. every Monday through Thursday and 10:30 a.m. on Fridays. Motions will not be heard at any other time. The Court will not consider letter requests from the parties or counsel to resolve issues that should be presented at motions court.**

The Pittsburgh Legal Journal publishes a monthly schedule of the dates, times and courtrooms in which each judge assigned to the Adult Section of the Family Division will hear motions.

The monthly schedule can also be found on the court website: http://www.alleghecourts.us/docupost/adult_motions.asp. Counsel should refer to the monthly schedule to determine when the assigned judge on a case is hearing motions and schedule presentation of the motion accordingly. Counsel may also obtain a copy of the motions calendar(s) from the Judicial Docket Clerk in Room 2033 of the Family Law Center. Unless there are unusual circumstances, counsel must present a motion to the judge to whom the case is assigned. If no judge is assigned, or the assigned judge no longer sits in the Family Division, a judicial assignment should be obtained from the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033 of the Family Law Facility, prior to scheduling the motion.

3. Every motion must contain a notice of presentation and a certificate of service OR include the written consent of opposing counsel or the opposing party if unrepresented, that the notice of service requirement was waived. The notice of presentation shall indicate the motion will be presented at the Family Law Center, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. The notice of presentation and certificate of service shall appear on a separate page, immediately following the cover sheet. In addition, each motion shall include a proposed order of court, which should be affixed as the last page of the motion or petition. **Seven (7) days' notice of presentation of any motion is required absent an emergency or consent by the opposing party to a shorter notice period. Motions which have not been properly served on the other party or attorney will not be heard.**
4. If counsel wishes to prepare and present an answer to a motion, with the exception of emergency motions, the answer must be provided to opposing counsel, or the opposing party if unrepresented, at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled motions argument. The Judge of record may require a copy of the answer in advance of the scheduled motions argument as well. Counsel should consult the standard operating procedures of the Judge of record to learn of this requirement.

5. Except as stated in paragraphs 6 and 7, below, **if the order allows for a conference/hearing or a judicial conciliation**, counsel who presented the motion shall obtain the date for a conference/hearing in a support matter from the Support Docket Clerk, Room 3024.2, or for a judicial conciliation from the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033, **the same day the order is signed** by the judge, barring exigent circumstances. Counsel presenting the motion for a date should be prepared to advise the docket clerk of inconvenient dates for both parties/counsel to avoid the need for a subsequent continuance. Counsel who presented the motion will then file the original motion and the signed order with the Department of Court Records, 1st floor, City-County Building, Pittsburgh, PA (for pleadings in custody, divorce, or PFA actions) or the Docketing Office, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA (for pleadings in support matters). If counsel fails to present the motion to the docket clerk on the same day the order is signed, the docket clerk may refuse to give a hearing or conciliation date. If the signed order requires that a date be scheduled, a copy of the pleading and order must be left with the docket clerk at the time the date is obtained. Counsel is responsible for serving a copy of the order on the opposing party or his/her counsel.
6. Court dates in Intergovernmental cases must be obtained by counsel or the unrepresented party from the Intergovernmental Department, Fifth Floor, Manor Building, 564 Forbes Avenue.
7. If the order relates to a PACSES support case, the moving party must process the **original order** through the Client Services Center, Room 1002, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA. A complete copy of the underlying pleading/motion must also be provided for Family Division imaging purposes. Attorneys/parties may elect to file the original support pleading at the Client Services Center once entered on PACSES, instead of filing at the Docketing Office, Fifth Floor, Manor Building.

F. Pro Se Motions (for persons not represented by an attorney)

1. People who represent themselves are said to be “pro se”, or for themselves. If you do not have a lawyer and you are not financially eligible for the assistance (see Section G below), you can prepare a motion to present to the court yourself. The Court has set aside a special time each day to hear such motions so that there is adequate time.
2. If you are unable to locate the appropriate form in this manual and intend to prepare one yourself, it must be properly prepared and meet all applicable

legal requirements. Each motion must be typed or legibly written and contain the following:

- a. A cover sheet.
 - b. A separate page containing a Notice of Presentation and Certificate of Service (These are obtained from the Pro Se Clerk on the 1st floor of the Family Law Facility.)
 - c. The body of the motion set forth in numbered paragraphs.
 - d. A copy of the current order (if any).
 - e. The last page should be a proposed order.
3. After you have prepared your motion you must:
- a. Take it to the Pro Se Clerk, 1st Floor, Family Law Facility, 440 Ross Street, to obtain a Notice of Presentation/Certificate of Service and a date and time for the presentation of the motion. Petitions dropped off before 12:00 p.m. will be available for pick-up from 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. that same day, or after 8:30 a.m. the next morning the Court is open. Petitions dropped off after 12:00 p.m. will be available for pickup at 8:30 a.m. the next morning the Court is open.
 - b. This must be done **a minimum of 10 days before you would like to present the motion**, to allow time for mailing and to give the opposing party a minimum of seven days' notice. A shorter notice is permitted only in a true emergency (as determined by the Pro Se office) or with the consent of the opposing party.
 - c. Cases previously assigned to a judge must be scheduled before that judge, which can result in a longer wait before the motion can be presented.
 - d. You are responsible for serving a copy of any Pro Se motion you prepare on the opposing party.
 - e. **Under no circumstances will the Judge consider any motion unless you have obtained from the Pro Se Clerk the required Notice of Presentation/Certificate of Service and been assigned the date, time and Judge to whom the motion will be presented.**
4. If a respondent to a pro se motion is represented by counsel, counsel may appear at pro se motions court to contest the motion. If the person presenting the motion obtains counsel after having given notice of presentation of the motion, counsel may appear at pro se motions to present the motion or, if all parties agree, may reschedule the motion to regular motions court.
5. **The Court shall retain the original of all denied motions**, and shall file the original motion and order with the Department of Court Records, Civil

Division/Family Division. Copies of the order will be provided to the parties after the motion/petition is denied, if requested by the parties.

6. If the order allows for a conference/hearing or a judicial conciliation date, the party who presented the motion must obtain the date for the conference/hearing in a support matter from the Support Docket Clerk, Room 3024.2, or the date for a judicial conciliation from the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033, the same day the order is signed.
7. Litigants may be required to file the original documents with the Generations Office, deliver it to the Pro Se clerk or file with the Department of Court Records, Civil/Family Division, 1st floor, City-County Building, depending on the nature of the pleading. Instructions will be provided to the party.
8. Department of Court Records, Civil/Family Division and Generations fees must be paid at the time documents are filed, unless a fee waiver has been granted by the Court. To ask the court to waive your fees you must prepare a Petition for Leave to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (Form IV-2), which can be found in Section IV of this Court Manual. A schedule of court costs and fees is available from the Pro Se motions office or by accessing the Department of Court Records webpage at:

www.alleghenycounty.us/civil/profess1.aspx

G. Assistance with Preparing Pro Se Motions and Petitions

1. The Client Services Center at the Central Office, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA provides procedural information to self-represented litigants. The Client Services Center can be accessed Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. When a client accesses the Client Services Center, he/she will have the ability to do the following:
 - a.) Ask procedural questions regarding his/her case;
 - b.) Meet with a Domestic Relations Officer (DRO) who will explain the options available to the litigant through the court process; and
 - c.) Determine whether or not he/she is financially eligible to obtain legal advice through the Legal Advice Clinic, which is staffed by volunteer attorneys from the Family Law Section of the Allegheny County Bar Association, as well as certified legal interns from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and Duquesne School of Law; and
2. **Family Division staff cannot provide legal advice** to any self-

represented litigants. Family Division staff may provide procedural information only.

3. To be eligible for the host of services available to a client at the Client Services Center, clients should be prepared to provide the following:
 - a.) Proof of income (pay stub, bank statement, statement of public assistance benefits, tax return, W-2, or any other income documentation available);
 - b.) All relevant court documents and court orders regarding their case;
 - c.) The address of the other party or parties; and
 - d.) Any information and documentation regarding involvement, if any, with Allegheny County's Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF).

H. Motions for Judgment on the Pleadings or Summary Judgment

Motions for Judgment on the Pleadings or Summary Judgment shall be scheduled on the next available exceptions argument list occurring more than 41 days after the motion is filed, before the judge assigned to the case. The person presenting the motion shall serve notice on all parties of the time and place of argument. Respondent's answer, if any, together with any opposing affidavits, shall be filed at least 21 days prior to the argument date. The movant shall file a brief at least 14 days prior to argument. Respondent's brief, if any, shall be filed at least 7 days prior to argument.

I. Continuances

Pursuant to Administrative Order 444 of 1999, the following is the continuance policy for Family Division cases:

1. **Continuances more than 30 days** before the scheduled date:
 - a) Where the parties agree ("consent continuance"): For all conferences, conciliations, or hearings before domestic relations officers, hearing officers or judges, less than two hours in duration, a consent order may be submitted directly to the Support Docket Clerk, Room 3024.2, or the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033, Family Law Facility, for rescheduling. **Such requests do not need to be presented in motions court.**

Consent continuances shall be in the form of a consent order signed by both counsel and/or parties, or shall contain a verification by the attorney requesting the continuance that both parties consent to the continuance. Pro se consent continuances must contain the signatures of both parties. If a case is continued for any reason, settled or discontinued, and the hearing becomes unnecessary,

the party(ies) and/or attorneys must indicate the date of the hearing in the order or settlement agreement, and provide a copy to the Support Docket Clerk, Room 3024.2, or the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033.

The individual requesting the consent continuance must be prepared to advise the docket clerk of dates inconvenient for the other party, to avoid further continuances. The docket clerk will reschedule the case to the next available date. The consent order may only contain language regarding the continuance of the court date. No additional issues may be addressed in the consent continuance order. If the parties and/or counsel wish to include issues other than the continuance, they must present a petition in motions court or enter into a separate consent order regarding those issues and present it to the judge assigned to the case.

b) Where the parties do not agree: A request for a continuance where both parties do not agree must be presented through motions court to the judge assigned to the case using the Motion for Continuance (Form I-1). The party opposing the continuance must establish good cause for refusing to agree to the continuance.

2. **Continuances less than 30 days** before the scheduled date: A request for a continuance made less than 30 days before the scheduled date, whether consented or not, must be made pursuant to a motion presented to the judge assigned to the case using the Motion for Continuance (Form I-1). Even if the parties agree, continuances will not be granted by the Court without good cause.

J. Cancellations/Withdrawals

1. A request to cancel a judicial docket hearing or conciliation must be in the form of a motion, presented to the judge assigned to the case. A copy of the executed order must be delivered to both the judge and the Judicial Docket Clerk, Room 2033.

2. A request to cancel a modification of support conference/hearing, whether child, spousal or alimony pendente lite must be in the form of a motion, presented to the judge assigned to the case. A copy of the executed order must be presented through the Client Services Center at the Central Office or in any regional office, to ensure that there are no issues that need to be addressed on the case. If the parties agree, they may enter into a consent order to withdraw the modification and cancel the conference/hearing. The consent order must be signed by both parties and presented to screening for processing.

3. A request to withdrawal a pending complaint to establish or reinstate support may be made by the filing party as follows: appearing in person at a Family Division office during screening hours; faxing or mailing a completed Withdrawal of Complaint form (Form I-2); or by submitting a withdrawal request online via the Child Support Website at www.childsupport.state.pa.us . If a support complaint is withdrawn, any scheduled conference/hearing will be canceled. A plaintiff receiving cash assistance from the Department of Human Services may not request withdrawal of a complaint for support.

K. Service of Original Process in Domestic Relations Matters

Pennsylvania Rule of Civil Procedure 1930.4 sets forth the procedure for serving original process (informing the opposing party in an action that the case has been filed) in a Family Division matter.

The rule provides that original process in all domestic relations matters may be served by the sheriff or a **competent adult** (defined as an individual 18 years or older, who is neither a party to the action, nor an employee or relative of a party):

- (1) By handing a copy to the defendant; or
- (2) By handing a copy:
 - (i) at the residence of the defendant to an adult member of the family with whom the defendant resides or to an adult person in charge of such residence; or
 - (ii) at the residence of the defendant to the clerk or manager of the hotel, inn, apartment house, boarding house or other place of lodging at which the defendant resides; or
 - (iii) at any place or usual place of business of the defendant to the defendant's agent or to the person for the time being in charge of such place.
- (3) Or pursuant to special order of court.

Except in Protection from Abuse matters, original process may also be served by mailing the complaint and order to appear, if required, to the defendant's last known address by both regular and certified mail. Delivery of the certified mail must be restricted to addressee only and a return receipt must be requested. See Rule 1930.4 regarding certified mail refused or unclaimed and for Acceptance of Service form.

Note: Rule 1930.4 should always be consulted for any questions regarding appropriate service and to verify that no recent changes have been made to the rule.

L. Entry of Appearance in Family Division Cases

1. Attorney Appearances in Family Division Cases

- a. Any attorney who files and/or serves a legal paper or appears on behalf of a client in any cause of action in Family Division must complete, file and serve a Praecipe for Appearance (Form I-3), identifying the cause or causes of action in which s/he will be acting as counsel and identifying by name the party whom the attorney is representing.
- b. Praecipe for Appearance forms shall be available from domestic relations officers, hearing officers, judges' staff, Client Services Center, Room 1002, Family Court Facility, receptionists at the Intergovernmental Department, Penn Hills and South Hills regional offices, and the Department of Court Records, Civil Division, 1st Floor, City-County Building, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA. A Praecipe for Appearance in a support action can also be submitted online via the Child Support Website at www.childsupport.state.pa.us .
- c. The attorney must appear at all Family Division proceedings and receive service on behalf of his/her client with respect to all causes of action in which the attorney has indicated on the Praecipe for Appearance s/he is representing his/her client. If the attorney fails to appear, the Court may impose sanctions including, but not limited to, fines and counsel fees.
- d. Entering an Appearance or filing any legal paper in a divorce obligates the attorney to represent the client in any and all claims or counterclaims which are raised pursuant to the divorce action.
- e. No pro se motions will be accepted involving a cause of action in which a litigant is represented by counsel. Representation in a particular cause of action will be determined on the basis of the Praecipe for Appearance filed by the attorney.

2. Attorney Appearances in Pro Bono Cases

- a. Attorneys shall be permitted to enter a limited appearance in cases referred to them through the pro bono referral program operated by Neighborhood Legal Services Association, and known as "NLSA's Custody Conference and Protection from Abuse Pro Bono Referral Program", by filing with the Department of Court Records, Civil Division a Praecipe for Entry of Pro Bono Limited Appearance.

- b. In these cases, the attorney shall be permitted to file a Praecipe to Enter a Limited Appearance for the purpose of: 1) filing and presenting an Application for Special Relief; OR 2) for participating in a custody conference or conciliation upon filing; OR 3) representing a petitioner in a final PFA hearing.
 - c. Upon completion of the representation, the attorney will be obligated to file promptly a Praecipe for Withdrawal of Limited Appearance directing the Department of Court Records, Civil Division to send all future notices to the client and providing the Department of Court Records, Civil Division with the client's last known address.
3. Appearance as a Self-Represented Party
- a. In accordance with Rule of Civil Procedure 1930.8, all self-represented individuals are now required to file a written appearance (Form I-4) stating an address and telephone number where pleadings and paperwork may be served and where the person may be contacted. There is a continuing obligation for the individual to keep this information current.
 - b. The form also provides that, when a party has an attorney of record, that party may assert self-representation by filing the form and directing the Department of Court Records to remove the name of the attorney as counsel of record and providing a copy to the attorney, or having the form signed by the attorney.

M. Court Manual

Except as otherwise provided by the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure, or by local rule of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, practice in the Adult Section of the Family Division shall be governed by the Court Manual for the Adult Section of Family Division of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

Hard copies of the Court Manual are available from the Administrative Office, 5th Floor, Family Law Facility. The cost for a copy of the Court Manual is \$15. Payment will be accepted in cash (exact change), money order, or business check only. Additionally, the Court Manual, with all of the forms referenced, is available in electronic form on the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania, Court of Common Pleas website: www.alleghencourts.us

N. Incarcerated Parties

Incarcerated parties who require information and/or action on any aspect of their Family Division, Adult Section, case (e.g. support, custody, paternity), may contact the Court by writing to the Incarcerated Litigant Coordinator, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

O. Signing Pleadings/Motions

All original pleadings and/or motions submitted to the Court must be signed in blue ink.

P. Frequently Used Family Division Telephone Numbers

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System	(412) 350-5600
Information about family law, Family Division hours, services, procedures, and payment and arrears information	
SCDU (Statewide Collection & Disbursement Unit)	(877) 727-7238
Office that collects and distributes support monies	
Family Division Administrative Office	(412) 350-6930
Generations Center	(412) 350-4311
Information about custody cases	
Divorce Law Project	(412) 402-6714
Program for low income persons needing a no-fault divorce which does not involve custody issues or the division of marital property	
Lawyer Referral Services	(412) 261-5555
PFA Office	(412) 350-4441

Q. Relevant Websites:

Department of Court Records, Civil Division (to check filings in non-support cases):

<http://prothonotary.county.allegheny.pa.us>

Child Support Cases (to check filings/information on support cases):

https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/cs/ws/home_controller.aspx

Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure (referenced within Court Manual):

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/231/parttoc.html>

Allegheny County Bar Association

<http://www.acba.org>

Court Manual:
www.allegheycourts.us