Instructions for Petition for Civil Contempt for Disobedience of a Custody Order

Use these instructions if you have a custody order and believe the other party has willfully disobeyed it. A contempt petition asks the Court to enforce its order; it does not ask the Court to change the custody schedule.

1 Getting started

Attach the current custody order you believe was violated. Describe each alleged violation with specific dates, times, and facts. Identify the provision involved. Contempt addresses disobedience of an order. Not using available custody time does not, by itself, identify a provision that was violated.

Court staff can explain procedures and provide forms but cannot give legal advice or decide what you should file. These instructions are not legal advice and do not guarantee a result.

2 Complete the required forms

- Petition for Civil Contempt for Disobedience of a Custody Order.
- Criminal Record/Abuse History Verification. Complete this for yourself and the members of your household.
- Entry of Appearance as a Self-Represented Party, if you do not have an attorney.
- Copy of the current custody order you believe was violated.

Complete, sign, and date the required forms. Keep a copy of everything you submit.

Provide a complete, accurate address for yourself and each respondent, as well as any known telephone number and email address. This is very important to receive notifications from the Court on your case.

3 Protect confidential information

Follow the Case Records Public Access Policy. Use a Confidential Information Form or Confidential Document Form when required, and complete the Certificate of Compliance included on your filed forms. Do not put protected information in a public filing.

The filed Criminal Record/Abuse History Verification is confidential under Rule 1915.3-2. Follow its filing instructions.

4 File with the Department of Court Records



File here
Pittsburgh City-County Building
Department of Court Records (DCR)
414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

For current filing requirements, fees, and hours, visit dcr.alleghenycounty.us.

File your completed pleading and required filing documents with DCR.

5 Initial Intake Conference

After filing, The Court will issue a scheduling order for an Initial Intake Conference with a Domestic Relations Officer (DRO) and will serve you and the Respondent by regular mail, using the addresses provided in your petition.

6 Attend your Initial Intake Conference

Read your scheduling order for the date and time.

At Initial Intake, the DRO will determine if service has been completed and will explain the next step. If service is incomplete, the DRO will explain any additional steps and may schedule a secondary intake conference, if needed. If you are the petitioner and fail to attend, your case may be dismissed.

Check your email, including spam and junk folders, voicemail, and regular mail. The Court may send scheduling orders, court documents or pleadings, and Microsoft Teams invitations by email in addition to regular mail or as permitted by applicable rules or court orders. Calls from the Court may appear as a call from an unknown, private, or blocked number.

7 Send your information and keep it current

Email remoteinfo@alleghenycourts.us at least five (5) days prior to the Initial Intake with your FD case number and name in the subject line. Provide your email address and phone number for the conference. A TEAMS invite will be sent to you by email prior to the scheduled date. If you do not have access to email, contact the Custody Department by phone or in person to provide a telephone number prior to the scheduled date.

Promptly notify the Custody Department of changes to your address, telephone number, email address, or attorney information.

Contact Information for the Custody Department

custodydepartment@alleghenycourts.us

412-350-4311
Family Law Center, 440 Ross Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

For an interpreter or disability accommodation, please visit the Court's website at ADA and Interpreter Services - Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania or call 412-350-5419.