



Family Court of
Western Australia

PAPERS FOR THE JUDICIAL OFFICER (SELF REPRESENTED LITIGANT)

Introduction:

Prior to your case proceeding to trial, you are required to file “Papers for the Judicial Officer”.

This note is intended to answer some frequently asked questions about that document, to help you ensure that your matter is properly prepared for trial.

What is the purpose of Papers for the Judicial Officer?

Your Papers for the Judicial Officer are important in ensuring that your matter is ready to proceed to trial, and that the Judge or Magistrate hearing your case clearly understands your position, and knows what evidence you intend to rely upon.

In all cases, the Papers for the Judicial Officer should clearly show:

- What applications are before the Court;
- What orders you seek at trial;
- What evidence you rely on at trial; and
- What matters are agreed with the other party, and what remains in dispute.

Your Papers for the Judicial Officer should also include a chronology of events which you say are important to a proper understanding of your case. You must only include in that chronology dates and events about which evidence has been given.

In a financial case, your Papers for the Judicial Officer must also include a table of assets and liabilities showing clearly which values are agreed between the parties for the purposes of trial, and which are in dispute.

If you intend at trial to rely on any arguments based on previously decided cases in the Family Court of Western Australia or any other Court, you will need to list the names and citations of those cases in your Papers for the Judicial Officer.

In parenting cases, the legislation sets out a list of matters which the Court must take into account in deciding what is in the children’s best interests. Your Papers for the Judicial Officer need to summarise your position in relation to each of those factors which are relevant in your case.

Similarly, in a financial case the legislation sets out various matters the Court has to take into account. Your Papers for the Judicial Officer need to summarise your position in relation to each of those matters to the extent they are relevant to your case.

If you follow these guidelines and make use of the template documents provided, your Papers for the Judicial Officer will set out your case clearly, and ensure that the Judge or Magistrate has a clear understanding of your position.

When do I have to file my Papers for the Judicial Officer?

Unless there is a specific Court order setting a different timetable, your Papers for the Judicial Officer must be filed no later than 14 days before the date listed for your trial.

Do I have to send a copy of my Papers for the Judicial Officer to the other parties?

Yes. A copy of your Papers for the Judicial Officer must be sent to all other parties in the proceedings on the same day as your Papers are filed at the Court.

Is there a fee payable to the Court for filing my Papers for the Judicial Officer?

No. There is no filing fee for Papers for the Judicial Officer.

What resources are available to help me prepare my Papers for the Judicial Officer?

While nothing on this website or the materials produced by the Court is intended to be a substitute for legal advice, there are resources available to help you.

If you have not already done so, you should read the relevant “Guide to Representing Yourself in the Family Court of Western Australia”.

- [Download/view the Guide for parenting cases](#)
- [Download/view the Guide for property cases](#)

You should also read Case Management Guidelines 59 and 60.

- [Download/view the Case Management Guidelines](#)

For the assistance of parties representing themselves, the Court has also produced templates of Papers for the Judicial Officer which you can download and modify to use in your case. Each template also has a helpful guide attached.

For a guide and template of Papers for the Judicial Officer in a case involving parenting orders only:-

- [Download/view guide and template for Parenting Orders](#)

For a guide and template of Papers for the Judicial Officer in a case involving financial orders only:-

- [Download/view guide and template for Financial Orders](#)

If your case involves both parenting and financial matters, you should download and read both guides.

For a combined template:-

- [Download/view combined template](#)