



Family Court of
Western Australia

PAPERS FOR THE JUDICIAL OFFICER (SELF REPRESENTED LITIGANT GUIDE)

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
- 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. 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.

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.

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. If you follow these guidelines and make use of the guides and template documents available on [the website](#), 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.

You should read [Case Management Guidelines](#) 59 and 60.

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 lodged via the eCourts Portal.

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”](#).

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. There are also helpful guides for the templates.

For the guides and templates, see the [Papers for the Judicial Officer](#) page on the Court’s website.

There are three separate guides:

- For parenting cases where the parents were or are married to each other (*Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)*)
- For parenting cases where the parents were not ever married to each other (*Family Court Act 1997 (WA)*)
- For financial cases.

There are five separate templates:

- For parenting only cases where the parents were or are married to each other
- For parenting only cases where the parents were not ever married to each other
- For financial only cases
- For financial and parenting cases where the parties/parents were or are married to each other
- For financial and parenting cases where the parties/parents were not ever married to each other.