



Getting Evidence Ready for Your Restraining Order

Hearing

This handout may be helpful to a self-represented party preparing for a restraining order hearing.

WHAT IS EVIDENCE?

Evidence includes witnesses who will testify under oath, including parties to a case. Evidence also includes “things” like documents (bank statements, appraisals), photographs, videos, audio recordings, text messages, etc. Those items are often referred to as “Exhibits.”

WHAT MUST I DO WITH THE EVIDENCE BEFORE TRIAL?

If your case is ready for a trial or a hearing where evidence/exhibits can be submitted, there are certain rules that must be followed.

- You will need to inform the other side of any witnesses in your case. You can do this by filing a Witness List ([FL-321](#)). File the list on or before the date ordered by the court.
- You must provide the other party with copies of all exhibits before your trial or hearing.
- If you want to present an audio or video recording as an Exhibit and that audio or video recording includes people speaking, you must also have the recording transcribed and you must present a transcript with the recording at the time of your trial or hearing.
- If you have an exhibit that is an audio/video recording, you will need to download the recording to a CD in a playable format.
- If your exhibit includes a text message, social media post, or some other form of electronic evidence, you will have to bring it in a form (For example: printed out) that can be marked as an exhibit and left with the court. The court will not be able to look at the item on your phone or computer.

DO NOT file the exhibits with the court before your hearing.

WHAT SHOULD I DO ON THE DAY OF THE TRIAL OR HEARING?

Be sure your witnesses are ready to testify on the day of your hearing. On the day of your hearing, bring **four copies** of any exhibits you want to present to the judge. You will also need to **bring your own equipment** such as a laptop to play the evidence in the courtroom. The device to play your evidence can have any of the following outputs (HDMI, Display Port, 3.5 mm Audio Out or VGA). For more information, you can watch a video about displaying your evidence in the courtroom on the Self-Help Center webpage at <http://www.placer.courts.ca.gov/self-help-lhc.shtml>. *Remember:* Any audio/video recording, photograph or other exhibit will be left with the court and kept in evidence if it is admitted. Please do not pre-mark your exhibits.

The Self-Help Center can assist you with procedural questions about your trial or hearing. You can make an appointment with the Self-Help Center at www.placer.courts.ca.gov.

The following links provide helpful information:

- **California Judicial Council Self-Help Center:** www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp
- **California Judicial Council Center for Families and Children:** www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-family
- **Placer County Superior Court Local Forms:** www.placer.courts.ca.gov/forms-filing-forms
- **Placer County Superior Court Interpreter Info.:** www.placer.courts.ca.gov/general-interpreter