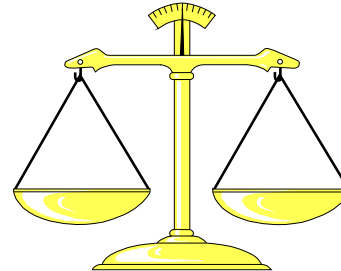


LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF EVANSVILLE, INC. *City of Evansville*
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TIPS FOR LEGAL AID CLIENTS ABOUT APPEARING IN COURT

1. Tell the truth. Do not make up answers or guess at answers. "I do not know" or "I do not remember" are acceptable answers.
2. Tell your attorney all of the facts concerning your case and what you want before court and let the attorney decide what is important. Your attorney needs to know both the good and the bad about your case in order to prepare for court and not be surprised. Make written notes. In court, your attorney will not ask you a question if the attorney does not already know the answer. Listen to your attorney. The attorney cannot change the facts, and the attorney is not passing judgment on you, but the attorney may be able to tell you what to do to improve your chances of winning your case. Ask questions and take advice from your attorney and not from the other side or friends.
3. Make sure you have heard and understand a question before answering. If you did not hear the question or did not understand the question, ask that it be repeated or rephrased. Take your time and use good judgment before answering questions. Stop and give the question some thought before you answer it. Take a deep breath before answering.
4. Speak slowly and loudly enough for everyone to hear. Matters in court are tape recorded. Do not chew gum or put your hands in front of your mouth. Answer out loud. Do not nod or shake your head or point. Stand up when the judge comes in and goes out of the room.
5. Dress appropriately for court. Dress as if you were going to a job

interview, funeral, or some other important event. Do not wear a sleeveless top, shorts, torn or worn out clothes, tee shirts with sayings, or other casual or revealing clothing. Always wear shoes, and make sure that you have taken a bath, combed your hair, brushed your teeth, and put on neat and clean clothing. You will have to pass through a metal detector to get to court. No weapons are allowed. Get to court early and wait in the courtroom. If you wait in the hall or outside your attorney will not find you. If the court or other side calls you, tell them you are waiting for your attorney.

6. Be calm no matter what the parties, witnesses, or attorneys do in court. Do not let anyone make you lose your temper. Do not argue with witnesses, the attorneys, or the Judge. Call the Judge "Your Honor" and call other parties, witnesses, and attorneys "Sir" or "Ma'am". Be courteous, honest, straightforward, and mannerly. Do not interrupt anyone.

7. If you are asked a question and hear an attorney object to the question, stop answering immediately and say nothing until the Judge or your attorney says that you can answer. Do not worry about the legal terms being used. The Judge or your attorney will tell you what to do. Listen carefully to the question that is asked to you and answer only that question. Answer as briefly as possible and say, " yes" or "no" if possible. Do not give more information than what you are asked for. Be positive and firm in your answers. Do not let the other people in the courtroom scare you or intimidate you. If you get upset and need to take a short break, politely ask the Judge and your attorney.

8. Remember that the Judge is watching you and the Judge is the person who will be making the decision and who will need to be convinced by what you say. You might want to look directly at the Judge now and then when you are speaking. You and the people with you should be quiet in the courtroom while waiting. Take your children to the Ark Crisis Nursery so they are not in court with you. No one but the parties can go in the Juvenile courtroom.

9. Do not sigh, shake your head, talk out loud, argue, or otherwise react when you do not like something that another person says in court. If you have to speak to your attorney during a hearing, speak quietly enough that the other parties and the Judge will not hear you. If you have something to say, tell your attorney first, not the judge. Remember that your attorney is listening to what is going on in the court room and that your attorney cannot listen to two things at one time.

10. Do not argue with or confront the other side or witnesses before or after court. Doing so could lead to your arrest.

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