

## Where Can I Find Forms?

- To start a case, find a form for a Petition.** When you are ready to start a case with a Petition, look for a form for a petition in the kind of case you are starting. ***If your case involves domestic violence and you want to get a protective order, please go to the page titled Getting a Protective Order.***
- TexasLawHelp has free forms.** TexasLawHelp.org has free forms for many kinds of very simple cases. There are 2 ways to get forms from TexasLawHelp.
  - First, TexasLawHelp has forms that a computer program will fill out for you. The website will ask you questions and fill out the forms with your answers. At the end, you can print out the completed form.
  - Second, TexasLawHelp has blank forms that you can print off the website and fill in yourself.
  - **It is important for you to understand, though, that not all courts in Texas accept the online or fill-in-the-blank forms from TexasLawHelp.org. Call the clerk's office to find out whether the courts in your area will accept forms from TexasLawHelp.org.**
- Libraries may have forms.** If your county has a law library or a public library, you may find forms there. You can also check with the State Law Library, [www.sll.state.tx.us](http://www.sll.state.tx.us), (512) 463-1722. Be careful about forms you find in stores or on web sites – they may not be up-to-date or correct under Texas law so courts might not accept them.
- Help filling out forms.** If you need help filling out a form, there are a few free and easy options available to you.
  - You can use TexasLawHelp's Live Help chat service to talk to a lawyer who can provide assistance.
  - A few counties have self-help centers where you may be able to get help in filling out forms in family law cases.
  - Free legal advice clinics are another option where you may be able to get help filling out forms. These clinics are usually put on by local attorney groups.To find self-help centers and legal advice clinics in your area, go to the Resources section of this website.
- Fill out a Civil Case Information Sheet.** After you've filled out a Petition form, you will also need to fill out a Civil Case Information Sheet.
  - The Civil Case Information Sheet is a form that the Supreme Court of Texas requires be filed at the same time that a Petition is filed.
  - The person who files the Petition must file the Civil Case Information Sheet.
  - The form asks for information about the parties, the type of case that is being filed, the remedy or procedures that are being requested, and the amount of damages requested. To help you understand the legal terms on the Sheet and fill it out correctly, there is a paper that explains what the legal terms on the sheet mean. It is called Supplemental Instructions for Self-

Represented Litigants. You can get the Civil Case Information Sheet, Instructions for filling it out, and the Supplemental Instructions explaining the legal terms by clicking buttons on this website.

6. **An example of how to fill out the Civil Case Information Sheet.** This example is for a person who is filing a Petition for a divorce, and the spouses do not have any children or own a house or any land or have a retirement account. **This is only an example. It may not apply to your case.**

- Box 1 - Put your name and contact information in the spaces in box 1, which asks for contact information for the person filling out the case information sheet. Then, in the spaces for the names of the parties in the case, you would put your name in the space for the Petitioner and your spouse's name in the space for the Respondent. You would then indicate that you are filing pro se in the box that asks for information about who is completing the Sheet. Remember, "pro se" means you are representing yourself.
- Box 2 – This box asks for the type of case being filed, or the most important issue in the case. In our example, you would go to the Family Law section of the sheet and under Marriage Relationship, check divorce with no children.
- Box 3 - In our example of a divorce with no children and no house, land or retirement, you would not need to check anything in that box because the Petition for a divorce in a case like our example does not ask for any of the listed procedures or remedies.
- Box 4 – In our example of a divorce, you would not need to check any boxes because a divorce case is a family law case.

**This form is a small example of how hard it can be to handle your own case.**

7. **File the lawsuit.** When you have filled out your Petition and a Civil Case Information Sheet, the next step is to file the lawsuit.