

# “TRIAL ASSIGNMENT” IN FAMILY LAW CASES



## 1. What is “Trial Assignment”?

“Trial Assignment” is a court proceeding in which a Judge decides which family law cases scheduled for hearing the next court day are ready to proceed, how much time is needed for each hearing, and which Judges have time available to hear those cases. The Trial Assignment Judge then assigns the cases and tells the parties what courtroom the case will be heard the next day.



## 2. Where does Trial Assignment” happen?

The bulletin board in Room 211 of the courthouse always lists the name and courtroom # of the Judge handling Trial Assignment for that particular day.



## 3. When does Trial Assignment happen?

Every court day starting at **9:00 a.m.** Trial Assignment is usually finished by 9:20 or 9:30. It is very important to be there on time so you are present when your case is called. Arrive early and allow plenty of time to get through security in the lobby.



## 4. What happens at Trial Assignment?

All the attorneys and self-represented parties who have a case on the Trial Assignment docket take a seat in the courtroom. The Judge comes out to the bench at 9:00 a.m. and announces each case on the docket, one at a time. When your case is called, you will need to:

- **Stand up** whenever speaking to the Judge.
- Tell the Judge whether you are ready for your hearing the next court day.
  - *If you are not ready*, tell the Judge why. Also tell the Judge when you *will* be ready. The other side might disagree with your request to set-over the case. In this situation, the Judge will decide what to do. It is always best to let the other side know as soon as possible if you think you will not be ready for a scheduled court hearing. Forms for requesting a postponement of the Trial Assignment date are available in Room 211. Judges prefer early requests to postpone instead of requests made the day of Trial Assignment.
- *If you are ready*, tell the Judge how much time you think you will need to present your case. Consider whether you will have any witnesses coming to court with you for the hearing. Think about how long it will take for you to tell your side to the Judge and have your witnesses provide their information to the Judge.
- Listen to the Judge make the assignments once all the cases have been called. You may need to write down the information, although many Judges try to provide this to you in writing before you leave.



## 5. What if I haven’t completed Parent Education or Mediation?

*If you have children with the other parent* and have not (1) completed the Parent Education class or (2) participated in Mediation or obtained a waiver of Mediation, the Trial Assignment **Judge could set-over your case**. Not all cases require mediation. If you have questions about the Parent Education class or Mediation, you can contact the staff in Room 211 or in Family Court Services in Room 350 (503/988-3189). Information is also available on the court website, below.



## 6. What if I don’t attend the Trial Assignment proceeding?

You could lose your chance to participate in the hearing the next day and therefore lose your case. You must attend Trial Assignment in person if you do not have an attorney.



## 7. What should I bring with me to court for trial or hearing the next day?

- Any witnesses you think have information helpful to the Judge
- Any documents you think show information helpful to the Judge. (Please bring 3 copies – one for you, one for the other side, and one for the Judge).

If child or spousal support is an issue, you must complete a Uniform Support Declaration and attach copies of paystubs and tax returns. You can get a copy of this form in Room 211 or from the court website, below. Go to the “Forms” page.