



# COURT OF APPEALS

## Media Release

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**COPIES:**

Copies of the slip opinions may be obtained from the Appellate Records Section, (503) 986-5555  
The full text of the opinions can be found at <http://www.courts.oregon.gov/publications>

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUDGE

In a step intended to provide access to the Court of Appeals on equal terms to all litigants, this week I signed Chief Judge Order 24-01. The order approves temporary amendments to the Oregon Rules of Appellate Procedure to allow self-represented litigants to orally argue appeals before our court. Although self-represented litigants long have been able to argue their own cases in Oregon's trial courts, Oregon's rules of appellate procedure have prohibited oral argument in appeals in which any party is self-represented, meaning that, in such appeals, parties with lawyers and parties without lawyers all are barred from arguing their cases. Because of concerns about the equity of that approach, the Court of Appeals, through the temporary rule amendments, is starting a pilot project that will permit oral argument in all appeals, regardless of any party's representation status. As of April of this year, self-represented litigants will be permitted to opt in to oral arguments, as will represented litigants in cases in which one or more parties to an appeal are self-represented. Under the temporary rules, where a self-represented litigant is incarcerated, oral arguments will be held remotely. Otherwise, whether oral argument is remote or in-person will be determined under the same rules that apply when all parties to an appeal are represented by counsel. As the Court moves toward this new-for-the-Court practice, the Court anticipates developing guidance, which will include advising litigants to view recorded oral arguments online in advance of argument, so that litigants without lawyers understand how and why appellate courts function differently from trial courts, as well as the different practices and procedures that result from those differences in function.

I am confident that this change is another step toward the Court of Appeals' goal of ensuring that all Oregonians receive equal access to justice in Oregon's appellate courts. As with any significant change in the administrative practices of an organization as large as ours, figuring out the logistics of the change has taken both creativity and work. I'm grateful to the members of the Court of Appeals community who have led us to this pilot program--Judge Ortega, Judge Tookey, Judge Powers, Judge Kamins, Judge Joyce, Judge Hellman, long-time Court of Appeals staff attorney Eleanor Wallace, and Jeralese Robles of the Appellate Court Services Division--and to Daniel Parr, Director of the Appellate Court Services Division and the ACSD staff, for their energetic assistance with the adjustments to our administrative practices that this pilot program requires.

CJO 24-01 and the temporary rules can be viewed here: [Oregon Judicial Department: Current Oregon Rules of Appellate Procedure: Rules and Resources: State of Oregon.](#)

Erin C. Lagesen  
Chief Judge

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The Court of Appeals did not issue any opinions or affirm any cases without opinion this week.

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