

# Self-Help Resources for the Self-Represented Litigant

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## Self-Help Resources for the Self-Represented Litigant

The Latin terms, *pro se* (meaning ‘for self’) and *pro per* (meaning ‘for one’s own person’), are used in the legal profession to identify people who represent themselves in court proceedings. However, it is generally recommended that, other than in small claims courts, it is best to have a lawyer.

In a recent [AALL](#) panel presentation, the Honorable Chief Judge Edward Toussaint, Jr., Minnesota Court of Appeals, noted that there are two major elements important in litigation: first, knowledge about procedural issues and, second, persuasion techniques. Failure in these two areas will translate into poor results for the litigant. A misunderstanding of procedure may even make an appeal impossible to grant. (Toussaint, 2005)\*

That said, libraries are aware that a lawyer is not always an option for a litigant. For that reason the following sites are being provided to assist self-represented litigants.

### I. General Sites and Federal Law Resources

#### FEDERAL COURT SITES:

U.S. Supreme Court [Website](#)

U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri: click on [Self-Help Tools](#) in the top menu

[Pro Se Handbook](#): The Manual for the Litigant Filing Without Counsel, May 1997, Idaho U.S. District Court

Federal Rules of Court: [Federal Rulemaking](#); [Local Federal Rules of Court](#)

U.S. Courts Library Fifth Circuit [Internet Site](#)

U.S. Courts Northern District of California [Handbook](#)

[U.S. Bankruptcy Courts and Resources](#)

#### NON-COURT SITES:

AJS (American Judicature Society) [Pro Se Forum](#)

REDRESS [Pro Se Information](#)

Pine Tree Legal Assistance [Pro Se Links](#)

Pro Se Law Center [Link](#)

Legal Freedom.com [Pro Se Resource Center](#)

LSC Resource Library [Pro Se Page](#)

[National Federation of Paralegal Associations](#)

The Jailhouse Lawyer’s [Pro Se Self-Help and Legal Research Center](#)

Wizard Law Collection of [Pro Se Links](#)

[Selfhelpsupport.org](#) (Self-help Support)

[Name Change Center](#) (choose your state)

[Name Change Information](#)

[Findlaw.com](#)

ABA [FindLegalHelp.com](#)

ABA [Pro Se Law Center](#)

ABA [Public Information Website](#)

[American Pro se Association](#)

Legal Information Institute [LII](#)

LII Categories [List](#)

[Law Help](#)

DOCUMENT RESOURCES:

[U.S. Constitution](#)

[U.S. Code](#)

Congressional Legislative Information: [Thomas](#)

[Code of Federal Regulations](#)

[List of CFR Sections Affected](#)

[Federal Register](#)

[Library of Congress](#)

Federal Citizen Consumer [Information Center](#)

[Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

[Federal Bulletin Board](#)

## II. State Law Resources (Eighth Circuit States)

Minnesota [Judiciary](#)

LawMoose Legal Reference Library [Pro Bono and Pro Se](#)

[Minnesota Legal Research Resources](#)

Minnesota Fifth Judicial District County Law Library [Resources](#)

Minnesota [Statutes](#)

Minnesota [Court Rules](#)

Minnesota [Rules \(Administrative Code\)](#)

North Dakota [Judiciary](#)

N. Dakota [Constitution and Code](#)

N. Dakota [Court Rules](#)

N. Dakota [Administrative Code](#)

South Dakota [Judiciary](#)

S. Dakota [Codified Laws](#)

S. Dakota [Court Rules](#)

S. Dakota [Administrative Rules](#)

Nebraska [Judiciary](#)

Nebraska [Laws](#)

Nebraska [Trial Court Rules](#)

Nebraska [Supreme Court Rules](#)

Nebraska [Supreme Court Opinions](#)

Nebraska [Rules and Regulations](#)

Nebrasks [Self Help](#)

Iowa [Judiciary](#)

Iowa Judicial Branch [Website](#)

Iowa [Code](#)

Iowa [Court Rules](#)  
Iowa [Administrative Code](#)

Missouri [Judiciary](#)  
Missouri Revised [Statutes](#)  
Missouri [Court Rules](#)  
Missouri [Administrative Code](#)

Arkansas [Judiciary](#)  
[Arkansas Code](#)  
Arkansas [Court Rules](#)

### III. Materials: Publishers, Publications and Book Resources

[Nolo.com](#) (Self described provider of do-it-yourself legal solutions) Publishers of:

[\*Represent Yourself in Court: How to Prepare and Try a Winning Case\*](#) 2007

[\*Lawsuit Survival Guide\*](#) 2001

*Nolo Estate Planning Basics* 2007

*Nolo's Simple Will Book* 2007

*Nolo's Pocket Guide to Family Law* 4<sup>th</sup> 1996 available through [Amazon](#)

*Nolo's Bankruptcy page* (articles, glossary, directories)

*Nolo's The New Bankruptcy* 2007

*Nolo's Chapter 7* 14<sup>th</sup> 2007

*Nolo's Chapter 13* 8<sup>th</sup> 2006

*How to Research a Legal Problem: A Guide for Non-Lawyers* from [AALL](#)

*Oceana's Law for the Layperson: Self-Help Legal Almanac Series:* [listing](#)

*ABA's Guide to Wills and Estates* 2<sup>nd</sup>, ([ABA](#)) 2004 (search "Wills and Estates")

[Patents Guides](#) by [U.S. Dept. of Commerce](#)

*Patent Pro Se: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Provisional Patent Applications*

(Updated for 2006 – Audio & Data CD's included) by John Ferrell, Esq.

[Baywater Publishing](#)

*Family Lawyer* software from Parsons Technology, 2004 Review [here](#). Available from [Broderbund](#)

*Practical Divorce Solutions* by Ed Sherman, Esq. Review [here](#). [Nolo Press Occidental](#) 1994 available through [Amazon.com](#)

*Best Practices in Court-Based Self Help Programs for the Self Represented: Concepts, Attributes and Issues for Exploration* (National Center for State Courts, 2006); [http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/KIS\\_ProSeBestPracticesSRLN.pdf](http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/KIS_ProSeBestPracticesSRLN.pdf)

#### **IV. Miscellaneous**

Equal Access Project : a California state program to assist self-represented litigants.

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/equalaccess/>

\*May It Please the Court: Strategies for Discovering SRL Services Judges Crave,” Program A3, Sunday, July 17, 2005, 10a.m. - 11:30a.m., a panel with the Hon. Thomas T. C. Campbell; the Honorable Dan R. Price II; the Honorable Edward Toussaint, Jr.; D. Jason Raymond, Moderator. AALL Conference, San Antonio, Texas.