

State of North Dakota

In District Court

County Of _____

_____ Judicial District

Petitioner,

vs

Respondent.

)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)
)

Case No. _____

1.

Dated _____.

Signature

Printed Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Telephone Number

Email Address

Instructions for Caption and Signature (Petition) Form

North Dakota Legal Self Help Center Staff and Court employees can't help you fill out forms. If you're unsure how to proceed, [consult a lawyer](#).

Center forms aren't official court forms and courts aren't required to accept them. There's no guarantee that all judges and courts will accept forms available through the Center.

Don't include these instruction sheets when you serve or file the completed form.

The "District Court Civil" section of the [ND Legal Self Help Center webpage](#) has additional information and resources.

Documents that will be filed in civil actions in North Dakota state district courts must meet certain formatting and signature requirements. This form was designed using the caption and basic signature requirements of [Rule 10](#) and [Rule 11](#) of the North Dakota Rules of Civil Procedure; and [Rule 3.1 of the North Dakota Rules of Court](#).

This form isn't a fillable form. To create your legal document using this form, you have at least two options:

Option One: Print this form on 8 ½" x 11" paper and hand-write your legal document. Your hand-writing must be easily readable. Black ink is preferred.

Option Two: Copy and paste the Caption and Signature sections into a word processing program, for example, Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Google Docs, or OpenOffice. Use this form and these instructions as your guide to format your legal document.

Caption (Top of Form):

- If you copied and pasted the Caption section into a word processing program, format your caption as close as you can to the Caption section of the form.
- Fill in the name of the North Dakota county where the civil action is filed or will be filed.
- Fill in the name of the Judicial District in North Dakota where the civil action is filed or will be filed. (The County is within the Judicial District.) County and Judicial District information and maps are available at ndcourts.gov/court-locations.
- Fill in the full, legal name of the Petitioner on the Petitioner line. The person who starts a civil action with a petition is called the Petitioner. There may be more than one Petitioner.

- Fill in the Respondent's full, legal name on the Respondent line. The Respondent is the person against whom the petition is brought. There may be more than one Respondent.
- Fill in the case number, if known. If the action has not been filed, leave the case number blank. The case number is assigned by the clerk of court when the action is filed.
- If the action has already been filed in a North Dakota state district court, complete the caption exactly as it appears in the summons.**
- Fill in the title of the document. For example, Petition for Adoption, or Petition to Award Title to Motor Vehicle.

Write/Type Your Legal Document:

- Write or type your legal document in your own words.

You're not required to type your documents. If you hand-write your documents, use blue or black ink. Make sure your handwriting is readable.

Paragraph Numbering:

- Each paragraph of your written or typed legal document must be numbered.

Date and Signature:

- The date and signature are at the end of your legal document.
- If you copied and pasted the Signature section into a word processing program, format your signature section as close as you can to the Signature section of the form.
- The self-represented party dates and signs the document.

WARNING: By signing your name you're telling the Court that you're telling the truth and that you have a good faith reason for your requests. If you're not telling the truth or if you're misleading the Court, or if you are serving or filing this document for an improper purpose, the Court could find you in contempt or you may be prosecuted for perjury.

- Fill in the printed name, address, telephone number, and email address of the self-represented party who signed the document.

If you have a physical address **and** a mailing address, type or write both addresses using the lines provided, and the space next to the address lines.

Verification and Notarization:

In general, petitions filed in civil actions aren't required to be verified or notarized.

- Some legal documents may require verification or notarization. Review the laws and rules that apply to the subject matter of the civil action. Look for words like “verified” and “sworn”.

(A verification form is available at ndcourts.gov/legal-self-help/general-use-forms.)

Page Numbering:

The pages of documents prepared for a civil action must be numbered.

- Number each page of the document.
- The last page of the document is the date and signature page. (If your petition requires verification, the verification section is the last part or page of the document.)

Service:

In general, copies of documents filed, or intended to file, with the court must be provided to the other parties in the civil action. This is called service.

There are specific requirements for serving documents. [Rule 4](#) and [Rule 5](#) of the North Dakota Rules of Civil Procedure give the requirements for service in a civil action.

Proof of service is an important step in the legal process. The court won't act on papers filed with the court until proof of service is filed.

For information about service and proof of service in a civil action, go to ndcourts.gov/legal-self-help/service-in-a-civil-action.

Don't include these instruction sheets when you serve or file the completed form.

****The North Dakota Legal Self Help Center provides resources to people who represent themselves in civil matters in the North Dakota state courts. The information provided by the Center isn't intended for legal advice but only a general guide to the civil court process. The Center can't guarantee that all judges and courts will accept forms available through the Self Help Center. The Center isn't responsible for any consequences that may result from the information provided. The information can't replace the advice of a lawyer licensed to practice in North Dakota. **Use at your own risk.******