



## Magistrates Court of Western Australia

### Fact Sheet 22 – Preparing yourself for Court

*This fact sheet sets out information on rules and etiquette of the Court.*

#### Attending Court

Be punctual if you are a party or witness. The Court has a very busy schedule, so you must be on time for your case. If you are **late**, your case might be **heard in your absence** or a **warrant may be issued for your arrest**.

#### What should I bring to Court?

Bring all documents that you might need for your case.

#### Can the Magistrate or Court staff help me with my case?

The Magistrate cannot speak to you about your case, except when your case is being heard and when the other party is there.

The Court staff will help you in any way they can, **but staff cannot give you legal advice or make recommendations about what you should do**.

Please assist Court staff by providing any information that they request, as this will ensure that the Court runs effectively and efficiently.

## **How Should I dress for Court?**

The Court does not require any style or standard of dress, but it is expected that you dress in a way that is appropriate for the occasion i.e. No thongs, singlets or ripped attire.

## **How should I address people in the Court?**

Address the Magistrate as "Your Honour", or "Sir" or "Madam".

Address the Court Registrar as "Registrar".

Address others only by their titles and surnames, including lawyers, witnesses and Court staff.

Stand when the Magistrate speaks to you and when you speak to the Magistrate. Speak only to the Magistrate except when questioning witnesses.

## **How do I present my exhibits (documents) to court?**

All documents or items being tendered to the Court must be handed to the court orderly.

## **Do I need to stand when the Magistrate enters the Courtroom?**

Yes, you must stand when the Magistrate enters or leaves the Courtroom. Everyone who enters or leaves the Courtroom while the Court is in session is expected to bow to the Magistrate.

## **Conducting the case**

The Magistrate is impartial and therefore cannot advise you how to conduct your case. If you are in doubt as to the correct procedure, you may seek the Magistrate's directions.

Avoid unfavourable remarks and resentment towards anyone before the Court.

## **Court witnesses**

Question witnesses while standing in your place. You must ask permission to approach a witness who is giving evidence.

Witnesses may be directed to wait outside the Courtroom while the evidence of other witnesses in the case is being heard.

The Court will always attempt to reduce inconvenience to parties and witnesses, but some delays are unavoidable.

## **Can I do a demonstration?**

Do not conduct an experiment or demonstration without permission.

## **Weapons**

You may not bring any firearm, knife, or offensive weapon into a Court building without permission.

## **Equipment**

If you need special equipment for your case, for example, audio or video facilities, you must advise the Court staff in advance.

Otherwise a submitting party can use their own laptop or notebook computer to present the evidence to the court. The laptop will need a HDMI output and the submitting party will also need to supply a copy the evidence onto a USB, CD or DVD disc.

See "*Technical Equipment*" on the Magistrates Court website for further information: [www.magistratescourt.wa.gov.au](http://www.magistratescourt.wa.gov.au).

## **Smoking, eating and drinking**

Eating and drinking (other than the water provided) is not permitted in Courtrooms. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in Court buildings.

## **Mobile telephones**

Mobile telephones must be switched off before entering a Courtroom. Taking photographs & the recording by audio or video is also prohibited in a Court building.

## **Cameras, videos or sound equipment**

No photography, video or sound recording equipment may be brought into Court buildings unless you have permission.

## **Laptop computers**

There is no policy that prevents the use of laptop computers in Courtrooms. However, the presiding Magistrate's permission should be obtained before such equipment is used.

**This is a guide only. The content is subject to change.**

If you are unsure about any of the information in this fact sheet, contact your nearest registry or seek legal advice.