



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE ILLINOIS COURTS CIVIL APPEALS - FAQ

This document provides information for self-represented litigants in filing an appeal from a circuit court order or judgment in a civil case to the Illinois Appellate Court. It does not discuss how to file an appeal in a criminal case or in federal court.

The civil appeals process is difficult. The process involves many strict deadlines and adherence to [Illinois Supreme Court Rules](#) ("Rules"). You are strongly encouraged to speak to a lawyer about your appeal. Should you decide to appeal your case without a lawyer, you will need to follow the Rules just like those parties who have an attorney. You will also need to do a significant amount of legal research and write lengthy briefs in order to convince the appellate court that your position is correct. You can search for a lawyer with experience in appeals to represent you at [Illinois Lawyer Finder](#) (outside Cook) or [Chicago Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service](#) (in Cook).

The material presented herein is legal information and aims to provide general resources for you. This FAQ is not a substitute for legal counsel and does not constitute legal advice. You must speak with a lawyer to receive legal advice. This resource is neither legal authority nor a substitute for the requirements found in the Rules.

SECTION ELEVEN: OTHER RESOURCES

Where can I find other resources to help me with my appeal?

Below are general resources that may assist you in conducting research and completing your brief(s). Please note that only a lawyer can give you legal advice and tell you what you should do about the specifics of your case. Librarians, clerks, self-help desks, and other court personnel **CANNOT**:

- ⊗ offer you legal advice;
- ⊗ research or explain the law to you;
- ⊗ tell you what decisions you should make regarding your case;
- ⊗ help write or make suggestions about the argument for your brief;
- ⊗ complete court forms for you; or
- ⊗ refer you to a specific lawyer

Forms

- The Illinois Supreme Court has published many standardized forms for you to use in your appeal. You can find the appellate forms and instructions at - <https://www.illinoiscourts.gov/documents-and-forms/approved-forms/>



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- The Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Civil Appeals Division's website has an FAQ section and forms available for use (for appeals within the First Appellate District only), which you can find [here](#).

Help with E-Filing

- Illinois Court Help is a free personalized information service that connects courthouse patrons, lawyers, and the public with the resources and information they need to go to court in Illinois. Trained court guides can provide information, but not legal advice. You can also get one-on-one assistance with e-filing. Visit www.ilcourthelp.gov or call 833-411-1121 (open Monday-Friday from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm).

Resources

- You can find many resources the AOIC publishes on the self-help [website](#) for Civil Appeals.
 - This includes [videos](#) explaining the appellate process.
 - All of the [FAQs](#) in this series.
 - [Resources](#) for appeals to the Illinois Supreme Court
- If you are representing yourself and have a question about your civil appeal, you can now submit your question to the Illinois Free Legal Answers for Civil Appeals [website](#) and have it answered by a pro bono lawyer. You must meet income qualifications to use the program. More information about how to use the program can be found in this [postcard](#) or [flyer](#).

Guides

- The Illinois Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission has published a "Guide for Appeals to the Illinois Appellate Court for Self-Represented Litigants." The Guide includes a timeline, checklist and commonly asked questions section. You can find the ATJ Guide [here](#).
- The AOIC publishes a [one-page overview](#) of a civil appeal from a final order or judgment.
- The AOIC publishes an [overview of filing motions](#) with the Appellate Court to request more time for an appeal.



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- The Illinois Fourth District Appellate Court publishes a [Guide to Bringing an Appeal](#), which highlights the steps necessary to file an appeal.
- The Appellate Lawyers Association publishes [A Guide to Illinois Civil Appellate Procedure](#), which provides a comprehensive overview of civil appeals. The guide includes timelines, tips on conducting research to write briefs, and sample forms, which includes a sample appellant's brief, appellee's brief, and appellant's reply brief (all with citations) for your review.
- The Chicago Association of Law Libraries publishes [Finding Illinois Law: A Librarian's Guide for Non-Lawyers](#), which is a guide aimed at assisting non-lawyers with understanding the legal system and conducting legal research, and locating resources.

Research

You will need to do a lot of legal research for your appeal in order to write a convincing brief. You may consider visiting a law library to use legal resources that are available to research and find legal authority. Legal research is difficult to conduct - some libraries have guides on how to conduct legal research, which may be beneficial to self-represented litigants.

The Illinois Supreme Court Library publishes [research guides](#) that provide a starting point for conducting research in certain areas of law for civil appeals. The guides provide general definitions of terms you may encounter and references specific books and websites that a self-represented litigant may wish to consult when writing an appellate brief.

In Illinois, many counties have law libraries located in courthouses that are open to the public – for example, in Chicago the Cook County Law Library is in the Daley Center. In addition, some law schools have libraries that are open to the public during certain hours (you should call in advance to confirm access to the public, which is very limited). Below is a list of law libraries in Illinois:

Champaign

- Champaign County Law Library: 101 East Main Street, Room 243, Urbana, IL 61801; Tel. 217-384-3707; Website: <http://www.co.champaign.il.us/CircuitCourt/LawLibrary.php>



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- University of Illinois Law: 504 E. Pennsylvania Ave., Champaign, IL 61820; Tel. (217) 244-0614; Website: <https://law.illinois.edu/academics/library/>; their guide for self-represented litigants is available here - <http://law-illinois.libguides.com/Self-Representation>

Cook (Chicago)

The main library for self-represented litigants to use in Chicago is the Cook County Law Library. The libraries at law schools in Chicago have very limited access for the general public, mostly for accessing their library's government depository documents.

- Cook County Law Library: 50 W. Washington St., 2900 Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602; Tel. 312-603-5423; Website: <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/agency/law-library/>
- Chicago-Kent College of Law Library: 565 W. Adams Street, 9th Floor, Chicago, IL 60661; Tel. 312-906-5600; Website: <https://www.kentlaw.iit.edu/library>
- DePaul University Rinn Law Library: 25 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604; Tel. 312-362-8701; Website: <https://law.depaul.edu/library/Pages/default.aspx>
- John Marshall Law School Louis L Biro Law Library: 315 S. Plymouth Court, 6th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604; Tel. 312.427.2737; Website: <https://www.jmls.edu/library/>
- Loyola University Chicago Law Library: 25 E. Pearson St., Chicago, IL 60611; Tel. 312-915-6986; Website: <https://luc.edu/law/library/index.html>
- Northwestern University School of Law Pritzker Legal Research Center: 375 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; Tel. 312-503-8451; Website: <https://library.law.northwestern.edu/home>
- University of Chicago D'Angelo Law Library: 1121 E. 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637; Tel. 773-702-9615 Website: <https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/law/>

DeKalb

- Northern Illinois University David C. Shapiro Memorial Law Library: 1425 W. Lincoln Hwy., DeKalb, IL 60115; Tel. 815-753-0507; Website: <https://law.niu.edu/law/library/>

DuPage

- DuPage County Law Library: 505 N. County Farm Road, Wheaton, IL 60187; Tel. 630-407-8811; Website: <https://www.dupageco.org/lawlibrary/>



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Jackson

- Southern Illinois University School of Law Library: 1150 Douglas Dr., Carbondale, IL 62901; Tel. (618) 453-8796; Website: <http://www.law.siu.edu/lawlib/>

Kane

- Kane County Law Library: Kane County Judicial Center, 37W777 IL-38 Street, St. Charles, IL 60175; Tel. 630-406-7126; Website: <http://www.kclawlibrary.org/>

Madison

- Madison County Law Library: 155 N. Main Street, Edwardsville, IL 62025; Tel. 618-296-5921; Website: http://www.co.madison.il.us/departments/circuit_court/law_library/index.php

Sangamon

- Illinois State Library: Gwendolyn Brooks Building, 300 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701; Tel. 217-782-7596; Website: <https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/public/home.html>
- Illinois Supreme Court Library: 200 E. Capitol, Springfield, IL 62701; Tel. 217-782-2424; Website: <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/SupremeCourt/library.asp>

Winnebago

- Winnebago County Law Library: 400 West State Street, Rockford, IL 61101-1221; Tel. 815-319-4965; Website: <http://www.illinois17th.com>

Public Websites

- **Illinois case law** -- The Illinois Courts' website has opinions from the Illinois Supreme Court and appellate courts from 1996-present, as well as Workers' Compensation opinions from 2005-present. <http://www.illinoiscourts.gov/Opinions/archive.asp>.
- **Illinois codes and statutes** – The Illinois General Assembly publishes Illinois statutes, current bills, and other legislative reports. State laws are organized by subject area into Chapters and Acts. <http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs.asp>.