

PART 2

SECTION K

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR REPORT K CASES WITH SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS (SRLs), DEFAULT JUDGMENTS, OR LIMITED SCOPE APPEARANCES

Report a quarterly count by case category for each of the following:

1. Number of closed cases with at least one Self-Represented Litigant (SRL) at any time during the life of the case.
2. Number of closed cases with a default judgment entered against any of the parties at any time during the life of the case.
3. Number of closed cases with a limited scope appearance filed at any time during the life of the case.

Only report for the following case categories: AR, CH, ED, EV, FC, GR, L, LA, LM, MH, MR, P, PR, SC, TX, AD, D, DC, DN, F, FA, MX, and OP.

Note: The same closed case may be included in the count of closed cases once for each of the three counts listed above.

Definitions:

Self-represented litigant (SRL): A self-represented litigant or SRL is a litigant who advocates on their own behalf in the case (i.e., plaintiff/ petitioner, defendant/respondent, cross/counter/third party litigants, or other person who is making or defending a claim in court - such as in a guardianship case). A litigant who attends court without an attorney (even without filing a written appearance or any other documents) OR files a document in the case without an attorney is counted as a self-represented litigant. A litigant who does not attend court AND does not file a document in the case is not counted as a self-represented litigant. Self-represented litigants may also be referred to as *pro se* litigants.

Default judgment: A default judgment is a final judgment entered against any party who fails to appear in court or respond to a case, whether or not it closes the case.

Limited scope appearance: A limited scope appearance is a specific type of attorney appearance allowed in civil cases under [Supreme Court Rule 13](#), that allows the attorney to represent a party for only a portion of the case. A limited scope appearance is different from a *pro hac vice* appearance (an appearance of an out of state attorney licensed to practice in Illinois for limited purposes), a local counsel appearance, or any other “special and limited” appearance, including an objection to jurisdiction over the person filed pursuant to 2-301 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

Effective January 1, 2023, attorneys entering a limited scope appearance must do so using [the approved statewide standardized “Notice of Limited Scope Appearance” form](#).

Counting rules:

Unit of count: The unit of count is the case.

1. Count a case with SRLs once, whether the case has one, two, or more SRLs.
2. Count a case with default judgments once, whether the case has one, two, or more default judgments entered.
3. Count a case with limited scope appearances once, whether the case has one, two, or more limited scope appearances filed.

Point of count: A case should be counted at the point of case closure (*i.e.*, entry of the last judgment resolving all issues and all parties), but the count should reflect the entire life of a case. Do NOT include cases which have been reinstated and subsequently closed in the report.

For plaintiffs/petitioners, the life of the case is from *case initiation* to case closure. For defendants/respondents, the life of the case is from *answer/appearance* to case closure.

1. A case should be counted as a case with SRLs if one or more parties was self-represented at any time during the life of the case, not just at the time it was closed.
2. A case should be counted as a case with a default judgment entered if a default judgment was entered at any time during the life of the case against any party, even if the final judgment closing the case is not a default judgment.
3. A case should be counted as a case with a limited scope appearance if a limited scope appearance was filed on behalf of one or more parties at any time during the life of the case, even if the limited scope appearance is withdrawn prior to case closure.

EXAMPLES OF SELF-REPRESENTED LITIGANTS**These are examples of litigants who count as SRLs:**

- A party who is assisted by a non-attorney advocate (e.g., domestic violence advocate) and is not represented by an attorney
- A party who has an attorney for a portion of a case (either on a limited scope appearance or because the attorney withdrew), but not the entire case
- A party who appears in court unrepresented by an attorney but never files an appearance or other document (e.g., orders of protection or small claims cases)
- A party who uses an interpreter, but is not represented by an attorney
- A party who files/initiates a case without an attorney but never appears in court
- Note: A *guardian ad litem* (GAL) is an attorney who is appointed to investigate and represent the best interests of a case participant, but a GAL does not represent a party in the case. A party who is assigned a GAL is not represented by the GAL. If the party does not have their own separate attorney, count the party as an SRL.

These are examples of litigants who do NOT count as SRLs:

- Case participants who are not a party to the case (e.g., intervener or witness)
- A party who never appeared in court or filed documents in the case (e.g., non-appearing defendant, deceased litigant)
- Corporations
- Unnamed minors
- Unknown occupants or unknown owners in eviction or foreclosure cases who do NOT appear in court or who do not file any documents