

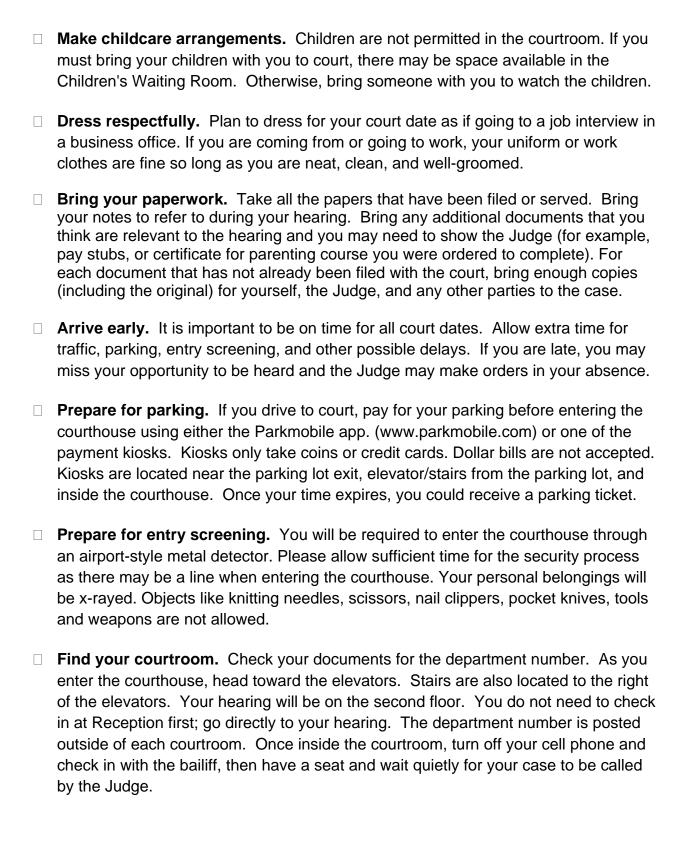
## **Preparing for Your Hearing: General Tips**

The purpose of this handout is to give you some general information on how to prepare for your hearing. If you have additional questions or would like information on how to present your case, you should consult with a private attorney. For a referral to a private attorney you may visit the Attorney Referral Service of the Sacramento County Bar Association at <a href="https://sacbar.community.lawyer/">https://sacbar.community.lawyer/</a>.

<b>Schedule an interpreter, if needed.</b> If you did not schedule an interpreter at the time that you filed your documents, contact the court at (916) 875-2620 for Family Law hearings or (916) 875-2529 for Probate hearings. Request a court interpreter as early as possible. If an interpreter is not requested in advance, one may not be available and your hearing may be continued to a later date. You may be able to use your own interpreter if they are 18 years or older and not a party to the case.
<b>Schedule a court reporter, if needed.</b> The Family Court does not automatically provide a court reporter at all hearings. If you would like to have a court reporter present to record the proceedings, you must make arrangements in advance. To schedule a court reporter through the court, send an email to <a href="mailylawprreporters@saccourt.ca.gov">familylawprreporters@saccourt.ca.gov</a> at least five days before the hearing. Unless you have an order waiving your court fees and costs, you will be required to pay for the court reporter's services.
<b>Review requests and responses.</b> Read through the court documents filed for the hearing. Be familiar with what is being requested and what responses have been made by the other party. Only the boxes checked on the forms will be discussed.
<b>Prepare to speak to the Judge in court.</b> Think about what you want to say. Make some notes to help you remember the main points. You will give a brief explanation in court of what you are asking for and why. No one else will be permitted to speak on your behalf unless you hire a private attorney. It is your responsibility to ensure the Judge addresses all issues and to clarify anything you do not understand.
<b>Try to negotiate an agreement.</b> Unless there is a Restraining Order between you and the other party, contact the other party prior to your hearing to try to resolve the issues and come to an agreement. Even if you come to an agreement, you should appear at your hearing so that the Judge can make your agreement a court order.

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