

## Procedural Fact Sheets (Civil) – Supreme and District Courts

### Directions hearings and reviews

A directions hearing, also known as a review, is a short hearing held by the court to assist the parties to decide what steps need to be taken to progress the proceeding to resolution by negotiation, mediation, or trial. The court may also conduct a review to determine a minor interlocutory dispute between the parties.

### Preparing for a directions hearing or review

Directions hearings may be regularly held during the claim by a supervising judge. A directions hearing may also be conducted by the trial judge shortly prior to commencement of trial, to decide on the steps to be carried out by the parties in preparation for trial.

- A directions hearing is conducted to determine what steps need to be taken to ensure the claim proceeds as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- At a directions hearing or review, the court may make an order. The order may include a timetable of steps the parties must carry out to prepare for mediation or trial.
- The parties should try to agree on appropriate orders before the hearing. A draft order can then be provided for the court's consideration at the hearing.
- Each party should ensure that, at the hearing, they are prepared to provide necessary information to the court about what steps need to be taken, by whom and when.
- Parties must appear at the hearing, in person if they are self-represented, or by their legal representative if they are represented.
- If a self-represented litigant, or a legal representative, is unable to appear in person, e.g. if they are located at some distance from the courthouse or are unable to travel, they may ask the court for leave to appear by telephone or video conference by emailing the Civil List Manager [CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au) (Supreme Court) or [dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au) (District Court) well before the hearing date. The request will be referred to the judge conducting the hearing.\*
- If a party fails to attend at the hearing, the court may make orders in their absence at the request of an opposing party.

### What to wear

A court hearing is a formal process, so wear a suit or formal business attire, if possible. Dress neatly and conservatively, and wear closed-in shoes.

### What to bring

You must bring every document that you intend to rely on in support of your proposed timetable for the carrying out of any future steps:

- Any documents should be organised; arranged neatly in a folder and clearly labelled.

- If you refer the judge to a document during the hearing, slowly and carefully say the name of the document and the page and paragraph number to which you refer.
- Have several copies of any documents you want to tender at the hearing: one for your own use, one for the court, and one for each of the opposing party or parties.
- You must supply your own writing materials.

## Using an interpreter

If a party, or any of the party's witnesses, has difficulty in speaking or understanding spoken English, the party should arrange for an interpreter to attend the hearing to assist:

- Find a suitable independent interpreter with NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) certification by accessing NAATI's [online directory](#).
- The court may permit use of the services of someone known to the party who is willing to assist, e.g., a family member or friend.
- Notify the opposing party and the Civil List Manager [CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au) (Supreme Court) or [dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au) (District Court) by email of your intention to use the services of an interpreter at the hearing—the opposing party has the right to object.\*
- The court will decide whether the interpreter is permitted to assist at the hearing.

## Access needs

If you have a disability and require special access to the court building or facilities, email the Civil List Manager [CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:CivilListManager@justice.qld.gov.au) (Supreme Court) or [dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:dc-civillistmanager@justice.qld.gov.au) (District Court) well before the hearing date. The Civil List Manager will assist with any concerns in this regard.\*

## Before the hearing

- Check the [daily law list](#) the evening before, or the morning of, the hearing to identify the courtroom where the hearing will take place.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the listed time for the hearing.
- If there is more than one hearing listed to take place in the courtroom that day, wait quietly until the bailiff calls the name of your matter.
- If you are unsure whether you are in the right place, approach the bailiff and request their assistance.
- Switch off your mobile phone.
- Do not eat or drink in the courtroom.
- Appearance slips will be available at the bar table. The bar table is the long table located towards the front of the courtroom and facing the bench, where the judge sits, and the associate's table, where the associate and the bailiff sit. If you can't find an appearance slip, request one from the bailiff. Complete the slip by entering the name and court file number of your matter, your full name, and whether you are the plaintiff or defendant. Hand the completed slip to the bailiff.

## During the hearing

- When the name of your matter is called by the bailiff, walk forward and stand behind the bar.
- Drinking water will be available at the bar table.
- Each party will be required to present their case to the court.



- Be courteous in all interactions in the courtroom:
  - Bow towards the judge when entering and leaving the courtroom and whenever the judge enters or leaves.
  - Address the judge as “Your Honour”.
  - Stand up whenever the judge speaks to you or when you are invited to speak - otherwise remain quietly seated.
  - Listen carefully to any questions the judge may ask and answer carefully and clearly.
  - If the meaning of a question is unclear, advise the judge and request that they repeat or rephrase the question.
  - Do not interrupt the judge, or the other party, when they are speaking.
  - Do not speak to the opposing party or parties during the hearing.
  - Direct all comments or questions to the judge.

*\* These email contacts are for officers in the Brisbane registry. If your proceeding is in another district, request relevant contact details from that [regional registry](#).*

