

# Conduct in Court

## Do:

- Turn off all electronic devices and cell phones before entering courtroom
- Always stand when speaking to the Judge and always call the Judge "Your Honor"
- Keep calm: Control your emotions and stay focused
- Act respectfully and politely to everyone in the courthouse
- If you do not understand a question, ask to have the question repeated or explained to you
- Always be honest when answering questions

## Don't:

- Bring weapons of any kind
- Bring people with you unless they are expected to testify as a witness as court space is limited
- Bring children to court (unless instructed to do so)
- Smoke, eat, drink, or chew gum in the courtroom
- Talk unless it is your turn to speak
- Argue or interrupt

# For More Information:

## Visit the TDHS Child Support Website for Information and Office Locations:

TN.Gov/HumanServices/For-Families/Child-Support-Services.html

## You can find your nearest Child Support Office at:

<https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/for-families/child-support-services/child-support-office-locator.html>

**P:** 1-833-772-TDHS (8347)

**E:** ChildSupport.CustomerService.DHS@tn.gov

**A:** 505 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243



Department of  
**Human Services**

## What to Expect in Court Child Support Proceedings



Department of  
**Human Services**

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# How to Dress for Court

It is important to dress appropriately when appearing in Court. Everything that you wear to Court should be clean and neat in appearance.

## Examples of inappropriate clothing:

- Shorts
- Caps and hats (except those worn for religious reasons)
- Tank tops
- Muscle shirts
- Halter-neck tops
- Flip flops
- See-through clothing
- Baggy pants that fall below your hips
- Ripped or torn jeans
- Mini skirts
- Pajama pants
- Sunglasses (unless those worn for medical purposes)
- Shirts with vulgar or profane words, or which depict drugs, alcohol, violence, or sex
- House shoes or slippers

If you are not dressed appropriately, you may be asked to leave the courtroom.

# Helpful Tips

## Before your Court hearing:

- Make sure you are able to attend your Court date. If not, call your local Child Support office immediately to inform them. However, it is the Court that determines if you may be excused from attending your hearing.
- Print any documents that you may need for your Court hearing (the Court may not allow cell phones in the Courtroom):
  - Three (3) most recent pay stubs (or proof of income for a longer period of time, if instructed)
  - Proof of health insurance
  - Proof of payment for childcare
  - Proof of any children you are legally responsible for who are not part of this case and proof of support for the previous 12 months
  - Proof of support you pay for each individual child on this case since the child's birth or separation from the other parent

(You may be required to provide additional documentation as well.)

Courts will make reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. If you require reasonable accommodations, notify the Court prior to your Court date.

# The Day of Your Court Hearing

- Plan to arrive early. If you arrive late, your case may be delayed, cancelled, or the Court may proceed without you.
- Bring any papers, documents or other items of proof with you to Court. Print these documents as you may not be able to rely upon your cell phone, if the Court does not allow you to have them on your person.
- When arriving to the Courthouse, metal detectors are set up at the front doors. Make sure you are not carrying anything that might be considered a weapon.
- Once you have entered the courthouse, go directly to the courtroom your case has been assigned.
- Stand when the Judge enters the room (you will be told when you can sit down).
- Quietly wait on your case to be called.
- When your case is called, you will be directed where to stand while the Judge reviews your case.
- When speaking to the Judge, speak clearly and answer "Yes" or "No" questions with "Yes Your Honor" or "No Your Honor".
- After the Judge has reviewed your case, a Court officer will tell you when you are allowed to leave the courtroom.

