

# Aiding and Abetting: Public Library & Law Library Partnerships

Thursday, April 18, 1:45-3:00pm

Handouts for **Self-Represented Litigants Workshops** discussion  
Barbara Engstrom, Executive Director, King County Law Library

## Table of Contents

Planning Document.....	2-4
Joint Library Flyers.....	5-7
SRL Workshop Password-Protected Website*.....	8-10
Articles.....	11-17
Sample SRL Workshop Handouts	
Class Syllabus.....	18
Annotated Complaint.....	19-21
Blank Complaint.....	21-25

\*To access the SRL Workshop Password Protected Website go to <http://www.plkc.org/wp/self-help-resources-at-the-law-library/srl-workshop/> Password: SRLHelp

# PLLKC SRL CIVIL PROCEDURE WORKSHOP PROJECT PLANNING

November 2, 2017

## OVERVIEW

### 1. Project Background and Description

There is an unmet need for a basic understanding of the litigation process for persons who choose to represent themselves in court, herein referred to as self-represented litigants or SRLs. To help meet this need we propose:

- Creating regularly scheduled workshops on **basic and advanced civil procedure for SRLs** to help them understand court rules, deadlines, and procedures.
- Developing **form packets** with instructions for various stages of litigation to be used in conjunction with the workshops.
- Enlisting **volunteer attorneys** to teach the workshops and assist with follow up questions during the workshop.

The workshops will have the immediate benefit of enabling more effective use of attorney services at limited legal advice clinics across King County. With better prepared clients, the clinic attorneys can spend more time on substantive issues and will be able to more easily explain procedural issues.

The workshop will have the long term benefit of better prepared submissions to the court which will reduce the amount of time that district and superior court clerks have to spend trying to explain proper format and procedures. Workshop attendees will also be better prepared for their hearings easing the burden on judges, bailiffs, and court staff.

### 2. Project Scope

At this point the project is limited to civil procedure workshops for SRLs to help them understand court rules, deadlines, and procedures. The workshops will be about an hour to ninety minutes in length and will be taught at a very basic level using simplified language and bullet point instructions. The workshops will be regularly scheduled starting with at least two per month with a goal of a weekly workshop. Workshops on subject specific areas are currently outside of the scope of the project but may be considered if the initial project implementation is successful.

### 3. Requirements

The workshops will require the following:

- Lead volunteer attorney coordinator to initiate creating, planning, and implementing the workshop
- Law library staff coordinator to partner with lead volunteer attorney
- Dedicated space to run the workshops (partner with public libraries?)
- Online registration system to facilitate attendee registration
- Process for creating continually updated materials with forms and instructions to be distributed at the workshop
- System for recruiting and scheduling volunteer attorneys
- System for marketing the workshops

- Development of a disclaimer stating that participation in the workshop does not constitute an attorney client relationship
- System for gathering data and evaluating the following: profiles of the registrants (ex: income, race, gender, education), types of issues being litigated, where registrants have gone for legal help previously, where registrants are in the litigation process, and follow-up on the success (or not) of their case.
- Development of an up-to-date compendium of legal assistance clinics to refer attendees to for further help.

#### 4. Deliverables

Workshop attendees: The basic forms required to commence a lawsuit along with instructions on next procedural steps and resources for where to seek additional help

Workshop organizers: Data on registrant profiles, legal issues addressed, legal assistance services currently being utilized, and what the outcomes were for the attendees.

#### 5. Affected Parties

- District and superior court clerks' staff
- Judges, commissioners, and their staff
- Legal Aid Organizations that provide limited legal assistance to SRLs
- Law library reference staff
- Public library reference staff

#### 6. Affected Business Processes or Systems

- Law library staff time
- Law library conference room space or public library meeting space
- Law library reference referrals (initially to workshop rather than other clinics)
- Clerk's office referrals
- Court referrals

#### 7. Specific Exclusions from Scope

Seeking grant funding for this project to pay a project coordinator at present is outside of the scope of the project. With that said, if the project is successful this may be something to consider in the future.

#### 8. Implementation Plan

Phase One:

- I. Determine objectives and outcomes for the workshop
- II. Develop class outline to facilitate successful completion objectives and outcomes
- III. Develop class materials to flesh out the points covered in the outline
- IV. Develop forms coordinated with the points covered in the outline
- V. Develop a system for tracking rule changes and updating course materials
- VI. Plan for recruitment and training of volunteer attorneys
- VII. Plan for on-going volunteer attorney scheduling and room scheduling
- VIII. Determine registration caps and attendance requirements
- IX. Develop online registration system with follow-up notifications

- X. Develop follow up procedure for gathering statistics on attendee outcomes
- XI. Determine potential partners for constructive feedback
- XII. Determine potential partners for marketing and promotion
- XIII. Develop a long range timeframe for periodic evaluation of the workshop for continued efficacy and relevance

#### Phase Two:

- I. Solicit outside review of workshop content and materials from partners determined in phase one
- II. Refine course content and materials based on feedback
- III. Develop marketing plan based on feedback from marketing and promotion partners in phase one

#### Phase Three:

- I. Run a soft launch of the workshop open to beta testers
- II. Ask review partners from phase two to attend the soft launch and give feedback on execution of workshop
- III. Evaluate outcomes and make adjustments as needed

#### Phase Four

- I. Implement marketing plan
- II. Run a hard launch of the workshop open to the general public
- III. Use feedback from attendees to create additional marketing and promotion materials
- IV. Periodically evaluate according to the timeline developed in phase one

## 9. Timeline/Schedule

This will likely change depending on how quickly (or not) things come together, but this is a very rough timetable that we can use as a starting point and flesh out with actual dates and deadlines as we work our way through phase one.

- ✓ November 1: Exploratory meeting for feasibility assessment
- ✓ November 9: Initial planning meeting
- ✓ November 30: Survey development meeting
- ✓ December 14: Content development meeting
- ✓ January 11: Content development meeting
- ✓ February 1: Focus group planning meeting
- ✓ February 8: Focus group session
- ✓ February 15: Focus group evaluation; Initial workshop planning
- ✓ March 1: Continued refinement of initial workshop
- ✓ March 15: Initial workshop: KCLS Kent Branch 7-8:30 pm

## Goals

- January: Phase One Completed
- February: Phase Two Completed
- March: Phases Three & Four Completed

# Represent Yourself in Court



## **Civil Lawsuits without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court** **Wednesday, March 6, 7-8:30pm**

Representing yourself in court is a complicated process and can be overwhelming. Learn the basics of the civil litigation process with a focus on court rules, court procedures, forms, scheduling and deadlines. Attendees will receive blank copies of some of the most commonly used civil litigation forms and will be granted access to a password protected website with additional information and resources.

Note: This class does not cover criminal litigation.

## **The Nuts and Bolts of Motions** **Wednesday, March 27, 7-8pm**

Taught by a civil litigation attorney with over 30 years of trial experience.

This advanced workshop is designed for those who have attended Civil Lawsuits without Tears or those who need more information on the process for drafting, filing and responding to motions and orders.

Learn about the purpose, content, format and calendaring of motions along with the court rules governing them. Attendees will be granted access to a password protected website with additional information including sample motions and orders, blank motions and orders, and instructions.

This class does not cover immigration proceedings or criminal proceedings such as DUI or felony and misdemeanor offenses.

## **Have It Your Way: Creating a Durable Power of Attorney for Finances and Healthcare**

**Thursday, April 18, 7-8pm**

Taught by McKean Evans, an attorney at Pivotal Law Group.

If you become sick or unable to make decisions for yourself, do you have a plan in place to have someone you trust make financial decisions for you? What about medical decisions?

In Washington, you can create a legal document called a Power of Attorney (POA) to authorize another person to make decisions on your behalf. In this workshop, learn about Washington's Durable Power of Attorney for Finances and Durable Power of Attorney Health Care.

Discuss the law that governs them and the practical issues to be aware of when creating or revoking them. You will also have access to forms that you can use to draft your own Durable Power of Attorney for Finances and Durable Power of Attorney Health Care.

Presented by  
The Public Law Library of King County.  
*Registration required for all workshops*

Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities is available; please contact the library prior to the event if you require accommodation.

Shoreline Library • 345 NE 175<sup>th</sup> Street • Shoreline, WA 98155 • 206.362.7550  
Monday-Thursday, 10am-9pm • Friday, 10am-6pm • Saturday, 10am-5pm • Sunday, 11am-7pm  
[kcls.org/shoreline](http://kcls.org/shoreline)





REPRESENT YOURSELF  
IN COURT

## A Beginner's Guide to Starting a Family Law Case

**Online registration required:**  
<https://kcls.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index>

Before you begin your family law case, come to this 90-minute class to learn about the process of starting a case and the basic steps involved in preparing your documents for filing. We also discuss the options for legal help, including legal technicians, Washington's newest kind of legal professional.

Presented by members of the Legal Technician Division, PLLC, in association with the Public Law Library of King County.

Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities is available; please contact the library prior to the event if you require accommodation.



THE PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY  
"Without Access to Information, There Is No Justice"



Legal  
Technician  
DIVISION, PLLC



KING  
COUNTY  
LIBRARY  
SYSTEM  
KCLS.org

Saturday  
Nov. 10  
3:30pm —  
5:00pm

—  
Kent  
Library

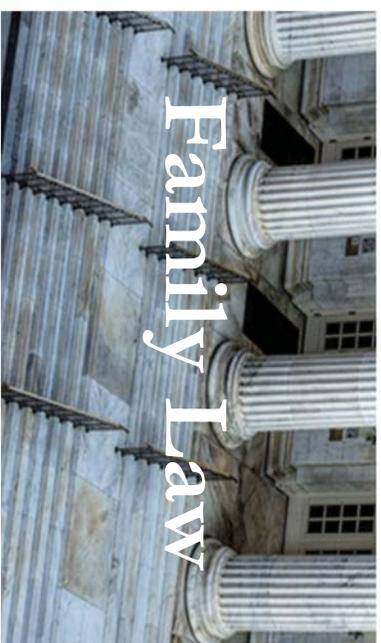
Presented by:  
The Public  
Law Library of  
King County

&  
The  
King County  
Library System  
&

Legal Technician  
Division, PLLC

KENT  
LIBRARY

212 2nd Ave N  
Kent, WA 98032  
[www.kcls.org/kent](http://www.kcls.org/kent)



REPRESENT YOURSELF  
IN COURT

## You've Filed—What's Next?

**Online registration required:**  
<https://kcls.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index>

Filing a family law case is the first step to getting court orders. If you cannot wait for final orders for things like child support, restraining orders, and decisions on where you, the other party, and/or children may live, then temporary orders may be what you need. Come learn more about temporary orders in this one-hour class.

Presented by members of the Legal Technician Division, PLLC, in association with the Public Law Library of King County.

Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities is available; please contact the library prior to the event if you require accommodation.

Saturday  
Dec. 1  
12:00pm —  
1:00pm

—  
Kent  
Library

Presented by:  
The Public  
Law Library of  
King County

&  
The  
King County  
Library System  
&

Legal Technician  
Division, PLLC

KENT  
LIBRARY

212 2nd Ave N  
Kent, WA 98032  
[www.kcls.org/kent](http://www.kcls.org/kent)



THE PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY  
"Without Access to Information, There Is No Justice"



Legal  
Technician  
DIVISION, PLLC



KING  
COUNTY  
LIBRARY  
SYSTEM  
KCLS.org

## Self-Represented Litigant (SRL) Workshops



Civil Trials Series

# THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF MOTIONS

## Advanced Workshop for Self-Represented Litigants

Online registration required:

<https://kcls.bibliocommons.com/events/index>

This workshop is designed for those who have already attended *Civil Lawsuits without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court* or those who need more information on the process for drafting, filing and responding to motions and orders. In this workshop you will learn about the purpose, content, format and calendaring of motions along with the court rules that govern them. Attendees will be granted access to a password-protected website with additional information including sample motions & orders and instructions.



The PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY  
"Without Access to Information, There is No Justice"



KING COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM  
KCLS.org

Thursday,

February 13

6:30pm - 8:00pm

Kent Regional

Library

212 2nd Ave. N.

Kent, WA 98032

Presented by:

The Public Law  
Library of King  
County  
&

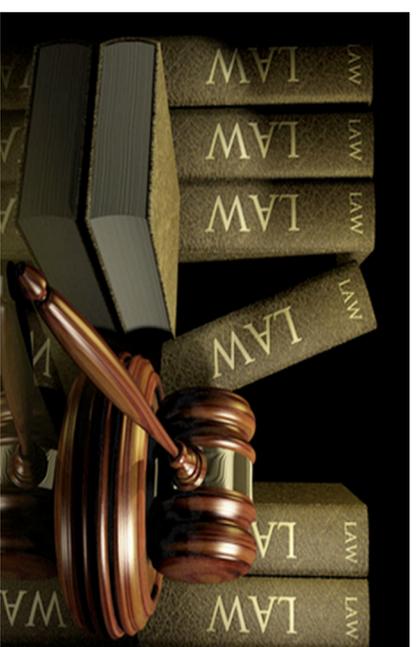
The King County

KENT

REGIONAL

LIBRARY

212 2nd Ave N  
Kent, WA 98032



# EXPLORING PRE- TRIAL DISCOVERY

Online registration required:

Registration is required at [www.spl.org/event-calendar](http://www.spl.org/event-calendar)

This advanced workshop is designed for those who have attended *Civil Lawsuits without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court* or those who need more information on the process for conducting pretrial discovery. In this workshop you will learn about: the process of requesting information and documents from the other party and responding to requests, asking and answering interrogatories (written questions to the other party), the basics of depositions, and the court rules governing the discovery process. Attendees will be granted access to a password protected website with additional information including sample documents and instructions. This class does not cover immigration proceedings or criminal proceedings such as DUI or felony & misdemeanor offenses.

Reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities is available; please contact the library prior to the event if you require accommodation.

Wednesday

April 24

6:00 p.m. —  
7:30 p.m.

—  
Central

Library Level

4 Room 2

Presented by:

The Public

Law Library of

King County

&

The Seattle

Public Library

CENTRAL LIBRARY

1000 4th Ave  
Seattle, WA  
206.386.4636  
[www.spl.org](http://www.spl.org)



The PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY  
"Without Access to Information, There is No Justice"



The Seattle  
Public  
Library

# KING COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

Without access to information, there is no justice.

[Forms](#) [Legal Clinics](#) [Probate](#) [Classes](#) **[Self-Help](#)** [Services](#) [Guides](#) [Ask Us](#)

## PROTECTED: SELF-HELP RESOURCES

Representing yourself in court is a complicated process and can be overwhelming. Through these workshops and supplemental materials, you will learn the basics of the civil litigation process in King County with a focus on court rules, court procedures, forms, scheduling, and deadlines.

### ON THIS PAGE:

**Class Handouts:** Did you lose or misplace one of the handouts you received in class? Access them [here](#).

**Future Classes:** Are you interested in attending a future class? [Subscribe to our email list here](#).

**Forms Library:** Download court forms [here](#).

**Suing Someone:** Videos, instructions, and forms explaining the [Summons, Complaint, and Service of Process](#)

**Being Sued:** Videos, instructions, and forms explaining an [Answer](#) and a [Notice of Appearance](#)

**Civil Rules:** Videos and instructions explaining the relevant [Court Rules and where to find them](#)

**Case Schedule Order:** Videos and instructions explaining the [Case Schedule Order](#)

**Motions & Orders:** Videos, instructions, and forms explaining [Motions and Orders](#)

**Pro-Se Handbook – *Preparing for Your Day in Court*:** A [handbook](#) to self-representation in the King County Superior Courts.

**Lawyers in the Law Library:** [free legal clinics](#) and other free and low-cost help in King County

**Legal Dictionary:** [definitions of legal terms](#) used on this website

**Legal Advice Disclaimer & Other Library Policies:** [what we can and can't do to help you](#)

**Let Us Know What You Think:** Let us know what you think about our ongoing workshop series for self-represented litigants by [taking our short three-minute survey here](#).

### CLASS HANDOUTS:

Did you lose or misplace one of the handouts you received in the workshop? You may download a copy of the class materials below:

Basic Class Presenter Materials (Civil Lawsuits Without Tears – The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court):

Basic Class Handouts (Civil Lawsuits Without Tears – The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court):

Advanced Class Presenter Materials (The Nuts & Bolts of Motions):

Advanced Class Handouts (The Nuts & Bolts of Motions):

# VIDEOS, INSTRUCTIONS, & FORMS:



## Protected: Forms Library

Forms may be downloaded at no charge. Patrons in the library may print the forms at our standard printing charge, \$0.20 per page. PDF forms can be filled in, and Word forms can be customized for longer entries. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all available... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)



## Protected: Suing Someone – Plaintiff

Sometimes disputes cannot be settled amicably, and you must take the other person to court. Filing a lawsuit with the court is the first step any Plaintiff in a civil case must take to ask the court to decide a dispute. These first papers filed with the court identify who... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)



## Protected: Being Sued – Defendant

The Defendant responds to the Summons and Complaint by filing a Notice of Appearance or an Answer with the Court Clerk and serving a copy of it on the plaintiff (or, if the plaintiff is represented by a lawyer, on the plaintiff's lawyer). The Notice of Appearance shows the appearance... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)



## Protected: Civil Court Rules

There are two primary kinds of civil court rules that you need to pay close attention to: Washington State Court Rules – Statewide Local Rules: Local Rules of the Superior Court for King County (LCR) The Washington Court Rules – State are the same throughout the state; in other words,... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)



## Protected: Case Schedule Order

The Clerk's Office issues a Case Schedule Order (also known as a Case Scheduling Order) at the time of filing a new case. LCR 4(b). The Case Schedule Order establishes a trial date, important deadlines for pretrial events, and it governs the flow of the case through the court. LCR... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)



## Protected: Motions & Orders

A Motion is a formal request to the judge to take a specific action, such as to grant an order or judgment. A common misconception among pro se litigants and inexperienced attorneys is that there are only certain kinds of motions authorized by the Civil Rules. In fact, a motion... [Read more](#)

 [Print](#)  [PDF](#)

## PRO SE HANDBOOK:

### *Preparing for Your Day in Court*

The Pro Se Handbook is a guide to self-representation in the King County Superior Courts. This handbook is designed to shed some light on what you can expect as you prepare for your day in court. The handbook provides example documents and more detailed instructions for the procedures outlined in this guide. Additionally, this handbook alerts you to some of the common challenges that you can expect to encounter while representing yourself in King County Superior Court in a civil matter.

[Download a copy of the handbook here.](#)



# LAWYERS IN THE LAW LIBRARY – FREE LEGAL CLINICS:



## Debt Collection Defense Clinic:

- **Every Tuesday in the Seattle Library from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**
- 30-minute meeting
- No appointment necessary
- Focused specifically on low-income debtors with questions about debt collection, abusive collection practices, garnishment and medical debts
- Sponsored by the [Northwest Justice Project](#)



## YLD Walk-In Clinic:

- **Every Wednesday in the Seattle Library from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm**
- 30-minute meeting
- Focused on civil legal and procedural questions
- Sponsored by the [Young Lawyers Division of the King County Bar Association](#)



## Neighborhood Legal Clinic's Downtown Clinic:

- **Every Thursday in the Seattle Library from Noon – 2:00 pm**
- 30-minute meeting
- Appointment required; please call (206) 267-7070
- Focused on civil legal and procedural questions. The Downtown Clinic is one of several neighborhood legal clinics sponsored by KCBA. For information about services provided at the other clinic locations please visit the [KCBA's Neighborhood Legal Clinics web site](#).
- Sponsored by the [King County Bar Association](#)



## Re-Entry Clinic:

- **2nd Monday of each month in the Seattle Library from 2:45 pm to 4:45 pm**
- 1-hour meeting
- Appointment required; please call (206) 287-8625
- The Reentry Clinic provides free legal services to low-income men and women with criminal records facing barriers to successful reentry. The clinic focuses on legal issues related to legal financial obligations (fees, fines and restitution) and access to employment and housing.
- Sponsored by [Columbia Legal Services](#)

Find other free and low cost legal help in King County [here](#).

## How to Get the Most Out of Your Visit to a Free Legal Clinic

Generally, you will only have about 30 minutes to meet with an attorney. To get the most out of your visit, be as prepared as possible:

- If you already have forms, fill out as much as you can on your own.
  - Do not walk into a clinic with a stack of blank forms.
  - The attorney will not have time to go through all of your forms with you.
  - Only ask the attorney about the sections of the form that are confusing. Mark them with sticky notes so that you can locate them quickly.
- Have a short and succinct version of the facts of your case prepared.
  - Have a written outline or timeline of the facts prepared in advance, so that the attorney can quickly get a sense of the issue.
  - Do not get bogged down with unnecessary details or casting blame.
- Do as much research on the law of your case as you can beforehand.
  - The more you know about the law of your case, the better the attorney can guide you towards the next steps.
- Pick the one issue that you are having the most trouble with or that is the most immediate concern
  - Where are you on your case schedule?
  - Have you been served with a document that you do not know how to respond to?

## LEGAL DICTIONARY:

Visit either of the following web sites for definitions of the terms used here:

- Law.com's [Legal Dictionary](#)
- The Washington State Court's [Glossary of Terms](#)

## DISCLAIMERS: WHAT WE CAN AND CAN'T DO TO HELP YOU

### Legal Advice Disclaimer:

As an attendee of the SRL Workshop hosted by the Public Law Library of King County, I understand the following:

- The Public Law Library of King County and the SRL Workshop do not provide legal advice.
- Attendance at the SRL Workshop does not create an attorney-client relationship between you and any of the staff or volunteers of the workshop.
- SRL Workshop staff and volunteers are not available for hire as legal representatives.

## Civil Litigation without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court

📅 March 1, 2018 | in [General](#), [King County Law Library](#)

### MARCH 2018 BAR BULLETIN

By **Barbara Swatt Engstrom**



While the title of this column might more accurately be called, “Civil Litigation with Fewer Tears,” it is, in fact, the title of the inaugural presentation of the self-represented litigant (SRL) workshop that the Public Law Library of King County has developed in collaboration with volunteer attorneys and the King County Library System. The idea behind the SRL workshop is to provide a basic understanding of the litigation process for persons who choose to (or must) represent themselves in court in King County.

The SRL workshop was born out of the experience of working with SRLs at the law library reference desk. As we conduct our reference interviews with patrons who request help, we often see SRLs who find themselves painted into a corner because they have failed to do any number of things such as file an answer or notice of appearance, answer interrogatories, or show up for a hearing. We also see people who have filed a summons and complaint to initiate a lawsuit, but didn’t realize that this was just the first step in a complicated process. They had no idea that once they initiated their suit the clock started ticking for compliance with the various court rules and procedures.

As we started to think about the ways in which we could help people before they were hamstrung by something they inadvertently either did or neglected to do, the idea of creating a workshop for basic civil litigation began to seem like a viable method for helping SRLs a bit further upstream. We knew that a project like this was bigger than the law library had the capacity to handle alone so

we reached out to find attorneys and librarians interested in collaborating on this project. We found several volunteer attorneys who threw their hats into the ring and the King County Library System has enthusiastically agreed to partner with us to secure venues, assist with registration, and handle outreach and marketing.

As our project started to take shape, we determined that the primary goal was to create a basic workshop to help SRLs understand court rules, deadlines and procedures. We wanted to create packets of the most commonly used forms for the initial part of the litigation process and explain the forms' various components. Additionally, we aspired to have the workshops taught by attorneys and offered at least twice per month at easily accessible places around Seattle and King County.

For the initial workshop, our working group carefully considered who the audience would be, who the instructors should be, at what level the workshops should be taught, where it would make sense to hold them, what types of handouts we should provide, and how we should gather data to determine the attendees' needs at the outset of the workshops to make them as tailored and specific as possible. We surveyed judges and court staff, the clerk's office, volunteer civil legal aid attorneys, public library librarians and various other stakeholders who interact with SRLs. We also held an informal focus group of SRLs to determine what they would find useful in a workshop. We used the information we gathered to help fine tune our inaugural workshop. "Civil Litigation without Tears: The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court" will be held on March 15 from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Kent branch of the King County Library System.

Those of us at the law library are very excited to see this project come to fruition. Once we have successfully implemented the basic civil litigation workshop, we have plans to launch an advanced civil litigation workshop that will guide SRL attendees through the next steps of the litigation process. It is our hope that the workshops will have the immediate benefit of enabling more effective use of attorney services at limited legal advice clinics across King County. With better-prepared patrons, the clinic attorneys can spend more time on substantive issues and will be able to more easily explain procedural issues.

We also hope that the workshops will have the long-term benefit of better-prepared submissions to the court, which will reduce the amount of time that district and superior court clerks have to spend trying to explain proper format and procedures. Additionally, we hope that workshop attendees will also be better prepared for their hearings, easing the burden on judges, bailiffs and court staff. Ultimately we want to provide SRLs a better chance at a successful outcome.

At this point, the project is limited to civil procedure workshops for SRLs to help them understand court rules, deadlines and procedures. If the basic and advanced civil litigation workshops are

successful, we plan to explore the feasibility of offering shorter, subject-specific workshops. As mentioned earlier, this project is beyond the scope of what the law library can do on our own.

We need your help to make this project viable for the long term. Please contact the law library at [services@pllk.org](mailto:services@pllk.org) if you are interested in being a part of this exciting project.

## New Workshops Join Growing Self-Represented Litigants Series

📅 February 1, 2019 | in [General, King County Law Library](#)

### FEBRUARY 2019 BAR BULLETIN

By **Rick Stroup Assistant Director**

#### The SRL Series One Year Out



We are fast approaching the anniversary of the launch of our Self-Represented Litigants (SRL) workshop series. In terms of its impact on the self-represented litigants we serve and in helping those folks be better prepared to work with our local courts, the series is one of the most successful programs PLLKC has ever created.

It is significantly different from our earlier education efforts because it leverages partnerships and resources with volunteers from the local law community and with staff from local public library systems. We are deeply indebted to both for their contributions and continuing support.

We are particularly grateful for the many hours our “seasoned” volunteer bar members, Jeff Cowan and Anthony Gibbs, have donated to help develop content and to teaching each month. One of the tricky operational challenges of a program like the SRL series is sustainability. Cowan’s and Gibbs’s commitments have helped us overcome that hurdle.

We are also excited to welcome new volunteer collaborators and instructors. David Witus joined “the team” this fall to teach our existing “Civil Lawsuits Without Tears” workshop at a new location — the University Heights Center. McKean Evans created and will be teaching a new workshop on “Drafting Durable Powers of Attorney” this spring. Jennifer Ortega and Sarah Bove joined us to create and teach a new set of workshops on family law. More about all of these below.

## **How the SRL Series Helps**

We work with a number of self-represented litigants in our Seattle and Kent libraries. Statistically speaking, they are our biggest client group. Regardless of whether they stay the course and try to represent themselves or decide to hire counsel, their problems are substantive and mechanical.

The language of the law is foreign to them, as are the concepts behind causes of action and civil procedure. They need a great deal of help understanding how court rules work and how to meet deadlines imposed by the court. The content of our SRL workshops is aimed at helping them understand these issues and at giving them a basic framework for understanding how civil cases are handled.

Mechanically, our earlier efforts were always hampered by the fact that we relied exclusively on our staff as instructors, and patrons needed to come to the courthouse for training. By partnering with the Seattle Public Library, the King County Library system and our newest partner, the University Heights Center, and by working with volunteer instructors from the local legal community, we are able to offer a much wider variety of workshops in locations that are more familiar to our patrons and closer to where they live and work.

## **A New “Family” of Family Law Workshops**

In the fall of 2018, Jennifer Ortega and Sarah Bove, limited license legal technicians with Legal Technician Division, PLLC, joined our team as both content developers and instructors. They helped us launch a new set of SRL workshops aimed specifically at family law. The lion’s share of questions we get from self-represented litigants relate to family law matters, so we were confident these new workshops would be well received and useful.

The first workshop, titled “Beginner’s Guide to Starting a Family Law Case,” is a 90-minute introduction to the procedures people need to follow to begin a typical family law case. It includes an emphasis on Washington’s mandatory plain-language forms and the questions petitioners will need to consider to be prepared to file properly. The discussion also includes phases of a family law case and the basics of service of process.

The second workshop, titled “You’ve Filed – What’s Next,” is a 60-minute workshop aimed specifically at understanding how temporary orders work in a typical family law case. The discussion includes a review of common forms needed to draft a temporary family law order, noting hearings, and how court rules relate to and govern the process. These first two workshops were offered in November and December and are scheduled to continue in 2019.

Beginning in April, Ortega and Bove will launch two more workshops in the series. “Working It Out With The Other Side,” is a 60-minute workshop focusing on the basics of the discovery process as it relates to a typical family law case and the role that alternative dispute resolution plays in family law cases. A 60-minute workshop titled “Let’s Talk about Parenting and Parenting Plans,” will discuss the ins and outs of establishing parentage and setting up parenting plans.

### **Personal and Estate Affairs**

In addition to family law matters, we also field a number of questions related to personal affairs management and estate planning. McKean Evans has partnered with us to develop and teach a workshop on the creation and use of durable powers of attorney for finances and health care. It will debut in April.

If drafting wills is one of the skills in your professional toolkit, we’d like to talk with you about creating or teaching a workshop on the basics of wills in Washington.

### **In the Bullpen: Civil Discovery and Common Legal Issues for Small Businesses**

Jeff Cowan is developing content for a third class in our original civil trial series to tackle the tricky topic of discovery. David Witus is also developing content for a workshop discussing common legal issues faced by small businesses. Stayed tuned for more information about these workshops and their launch dates.

### **We Can Use Your Help**

The viability and utility of the SRL series depends on our ability to keep the current set of workshops up and running and on our ability to grow the content to meet the changing needs of our patrons. We could use your help in either of these areas.

If teaching is your thing, we would love to talk with you about joining our group of volunteer instructors. Expanding that group will spread the teaching load and potentially allow us to expand the locations where we offer workshops. If you have an hour or two to spare once a month, please contact us. If you have ideas for additional workshops or would like to work with our law library staff in developing and modifying content, we would also love to talk with you.

The “community” aspect of the SRL series is critical to its long-term success, so we invite and welcome your contributions. If you have any questions about the SRL series or would like to talk with us about volunteering in some capacity, please contact our staff at 206-477-1305 or email us at [services@pllk.org](mailto:services@pllk.org).

## **Shout Out to Our Volunteers**

Once again, we'd like to extend a sincere "Thank You" to the following legal community members for volunteering their time and expertise. The SRL series would not be possible without their contributions: Jeff Cowan, Anthony Gibbs, Jennifer Ortega, Sarah Bove, David Witus, McKean Evans, Debbie Williams, LeighAnn Thompson and Noelle Rauschendorfer.

We would also like to thank the many staff members at the Seattle Public Library, the King County Library System and the University Heights Center, who have helped us with logistics, marketing and location support.

*Civil Lawsuits without Tears:  
The Basics of Representing Yourself in Court  
Class Syllabus*

- 1 Why are we here?
- 2 Lawyer or Not?
- 3 The Rules
- 4 Case Schedule Order
  - A. Caption
  - B. Introduction
  - C. Notices
  - D. Case Schedule
  - E. Order
- 5 Discovery
- 6 Motions
- 7 Evidence
- 8 Ethics
- 9 Substantive Law

---

*How to Access the Online Class Website:*

---

- 1) Go to <http://www.pllkc.org/wp/self-help-resources-at-the-law-library/srl-workshop/>
- 2) Type in the password and click “Enter” **Password: SRLHelp**

1  
2 The first page of every filing must have a **3 inch margin** between  
3 the top of the page and the start of the Case Caption.  
4

5  
6  
7  
8 **SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON**  
9 **FOR KING COUNTY**

10 )  
11 )  
12 )  
13 )  
14 )  
15 )  
16 )  
17 )  
18 )  
19 )  
20 )  
21 )  
22 )  
23 )  
24 )  
Landlord  
PLAINTIFF(S)

v.

Tenant  
DEFENDANT(S)

No. 12102017

COMPLAINT FOR  
Eviction and Damages

**Case Caption**

The case caption goes on the **first page** of every filing.

The information in the case caption must be consistent on every filing.

Plaintiff Landlord alleges:

I. **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

1. This court has jurisdiction because: Under RCW 2.08.010, King County Superior Court shall have original jurisdiction in cases in which the value of the property in controversy amounts to three hundred dollars. In this case, Plaintiff has an action for damages that exceeds \$3,000.

Your first & last name, **mailing address**, and phone number must be listed on every page.

Name: Landlord  
Address: 11122 Water Gate Ave  
Ne, Seattle, WA 98000  
Phone Number: 206-777-7777

1 2. Plaintiff Landlord is a resident of King county, Washington

2  
3 3. Defendant Tenant is a resident of King County, Washington

4 II. **BACKGROUND FACTS**

**Short & Plain:** enough facts to establish your legal claim in Part III

5 4. Landlord owns the following described real property in said county: 11122 Water Gates Ave Ne, Seattle, WA 98000

6 5. Landlord served the Tenant a 30-day notice on December 10, 2017, to deliver possession for the following reason: (a) Termination of tenancy at will; (b) Non-compliance with rental agreement.

7 6. Tenant has failed to correct or discontinue the drug-related activities.

8 7. Tenant has failed to deliver the possession of the property to the Landlord.

9 8. Tenant has damaged the Landlord's property by destroying certain personal property and other fixtures located on the rental property.

10 9. Tenant owes Landlord \$3,000 for damages to above described property which exceeds \$1,000 damage deposit.

11 III. **CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION**

**State the legal basis for your lawsuit:** If you are unsure of what your legal basis is, then seek the advice of an attorney. Include a short and brief statement of Defendant's actions that led to your legal right to sue.

12 A. CLAIM FOR POSSESSION

13 10. Plaintiff restates the allegations in Paragraph 1 through 8.

14 11. Defendant had statutory duties to discontinue drug-related activity and deliver the possession of the property after termination of tenancy, and by failing to do so violated RCW 59.12.

15 B. CLAIM FOR DAMAGES

16 12. Plaintiff restates the allegations in paragraph 1 through 8.

17 13. Defendant had statutory duties to repair or replace a damaged item in the property within thirty days after written notice by the landlord specifying the noncompliance, and by failing to do so violated RCW 59.18.

Be consistent with your numbered paragraphs

Damages are the actual harm that you suffered because of the Defendant's actions. In this section, please make a short and brief statement of the actual harm that occurred.

IV. DAMAGES

14. Plaintiff has sustained the following damages due to defendant's failure to deliver the possession of the property

a. lost 3-month rent

12. Plaintiff has sustained the following damages due to defendant's damages to certain personal property and other fixtures located on the rental property

a. repair of damaged heat system

b. replacement of damaged water pipeline

State, in plain language, the legal remedies that you are requesting and list them using numbered bullet points.

V. REQUEST FOR RELIEF

Plaintiff Landlord requests that judgment be entered against defendant Tenant as follows:

- 1. Awarding plaintiff possession of the property against defendant.
2. Awarding plaintiff her claimed damages of \$3,000.

Dated: December 10, 2017 [month, day, year].

[Signature] Landlord
[Print Name] Landlord
 Attorney for Plaintiff OR  Pro Se
[Address] 11122 Water Gate Ave Ne
[City, State, Zipcode] Seattle, WA 9800
[Telephone] 206-777-7777

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

**SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON  
FOR KING COUNTY**

_____ )	
PLAINTIFF(S) )	<b>No.</b> _____
v. )	COMPLAINT FOR _____
_____ )	[e.g., Damages, Employment
DEFENDANT(S). )	Discrimination, Wrongful
_____ )	Discharge, etc.]
_____ )	

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_ alleges:

**I. JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

1. This court has jurisdiction because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [state basis for subject matter jurisdiction under RCW 2.08.010 or other appropriate statute].

2. Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_ [name(s)] is/are a resident of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [county and state of residence]. [Set out any additional facts about plaintiff necessary to establish venue and, where necessary, plaintiff's ability to bring suit in Washington courts (e.g., payment of licensing fees if plaintiff is a corporation).]

3. Defendant \_\_\_\_\_ [name(s)] is/are a resident of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [county and state of residence]. [Set out any additional facts about defendant necessary to establish jurisdiction or venue, e.g., that

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

1 *defendant does business within the court's jurisdiction, where the defendant is a*  
2 *business entity.]*

3 II. BACKGROUND FACTS

4 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5 \_\_\_\_\_  
6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 5. \_\_\_\_\_  
8 \_\_\_\_\_  
9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 6. \_\_\_\_\_  
11 \_\_\_\_\_  
12 \_\_\_\_\_

13 *[In separately numbered paragraphs, set out a short and plain statement of facts*  
14 *necessary to establish claims and entitlement to relief requested. Where practical,*  
15 *each paragraph should contain no more than 1 or 2 allegations of fact.]*

16 III. CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION

17 *[Set out each cause of action in a separately numbered count. Use subheadings to*  
18 *describe each count where possible, e.g.:*

19 A. \_\_\_\_\_ *[Identify first claim, e.g.,*  
20 *CLAIM FOR EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION]*

21 7. \_\_\_\_\_  
22 \_\_\_\_\_  
23 \_\_\_\_\_

24 *[Set out nature of claim and, where appropriate, violation of application statute, e.g.,*  
*Defendant discharged plaintiff from her employment due to her sex in violation of*  
*Washington Law Against Discrimination, RCW 49.60.180.]*

B. \_\_\_\_\_ *[Identify second claim,*  
*e.g., CLAIM FOR BREACH OF EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT]*

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

1 [Set out nature of second claim, e.g., Defendant's discharge of plaintiff was contrary to  
2 her employment contract with defendant and constitutes a common law breach of  
contract.]

3 IV. DAMAGES

4 9. Plaintiff has sustained the following damages due to defendant's \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_  
6 [specify conduct, e.g., discriminatory conduct] [Identify in separate paragraphs the  
type of damages sustained.]

7 a. \_\_\_\_\_  
[Set out first type of damages sustained, e.g., lost wages.]

8 b. \_\_\_\_\_  
9 [Set out second type of damages sustained, e.g., emotional distress, pain and  
suffering.]

10 10. Plaintiff has sustained the following damages due to defendant's \_\_\_\_\_

11 \_\_\_\_\_  
12 [specify conduct, e.g., breach of contract.]

13 a. \_\_\_\_\_  
[Set out first type of damages sustained, e.g., lost wages.]

14 b. \_\_\_\_\_  
15 [Set out second type of damages sustained, e.g., emotional distress, pain and  
suffering.]

16 V. REQUEST FOR RELIEF

17 Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_ [name(s)] requests that judgment be  
18 entered against defendant \_\_\_\_\_ [name(s)] as follows: [Set  
out each type of relief sought in separately numbered paragraphs]

19 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
[E.g., Awarding plaintiff her claimed damages in amounts to be established at  
trial.]

20 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
21 [E.g., Awarding plaintiff her statutory costs and fees.]

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
[E.g. Awarding plaintiff her reasonable attorney fees and litigation expenses as provided by (statute, contract, or recognized grounds in equity).]

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
[E.g., Awarding plaintiff prejudgment interest on her damages award for (specify, e.g., lost wages).]

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
[E.g., Awarding plaintiff injunctive relief in the form of (specify, e.g., reinstating plaintiff to her former employment position with defendant).]

6. Awarding plaintiff any further or additional relief which the court finds equitable, appropriate or just.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ [month, day, year].

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_

[Print Name] \_\_\_\_\_

Attorney for Plaintiff OR  Pro Se

[Bar Association Number] \_\_\_\_\_

[Address] \_\_\_\_\_

[City, State, Zipcode] \_\_\_\_\_

[Telephone] \_\_\_\_\_