

## Information About Filing A Civil Case

**All legal advice should come from your attorney.**

**[www.michiganlegalhelp.org](http://www.michiganlegalhelp.org)**

### Processing Civil Cases Generally

“Except for small claims, civil infractions, landlord-tenant, and land contract forfeiture cases, most civil cases are processed in the same manner. A complaint must be filed, fees must be paid, a summons must be issued, the parties must be served notice of the complaint, hearings must be scheduled and noticed, answers must be given, and hearings must be attended. The end result of the case will be entry of a judgment. General information about court forms, fees, service, hearings, finding legal information, and how the courts operate can be found in this Self-Help Center by clicking on any of the topics in the horizontal bar at the top of this page. Specific information about processing a general civil case is not provided, but there are more details about general case processing.”

### Starting an Action

**Filing and Serving a Complaint:** A lawsuit begins when a plaintiff files a complaint with the proper court. The complaint identifies the parties involved in the case and describes the nature of the grievance and the remedy that is being sought.

The court issues a summons, and a copy of the complaint and summons is served on the defendant. The summons states that the defendant must respond to the complaint within 21 days.

**Answering a Complaint:** The defendant responds to the complaint by filing an answer in the same court, within the required time. If the defendant does not file an answer or other responsive pleading within the required time, the court may enter a default judgment in favor of the plaintiff.

Information Found at:

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/selfhelp/intro/questions.htm#process>

Forms can be found at [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov)

### **Summons:**

As the plaintiff, fill in your name, address, and telephone number.

Also, fill in the court information located at the top of the form.  
20025 Mack, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236 313-343-2455

Check any boxes that apply to your case.

Date and sign at the bottom where indicated.

**Complaint:**

State the reasons for your claim in full.

State the relief you are seeking from the court.

Complaint must be typewritten or printed legibly on 8 ½ x 11 paper.

You will need the originals for the court, a copy of ALL documents for EACH defendant, and a copy of for the plaintiff.

Please include a SASE to the plaintiff.

**Filing Fees:**

\$599 and under	\$5.50 Payable to GPW
\$600 to \$3,000	\$11.00 Payable to GPW

For service by the Court Officer:

\$28.00 per defendant. Checks must be payable to Leonard Rancilio (check only, no cash).

\*Additional fees may apply

**Please direct all questions regarding service to  
Leonard Rancilio 586-792-3810 (ext 212)**

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The defendant will be required to answer your claim in writing to the court and to you within 21 days after services (28 days if served by mail).

If the defendant answers timely, the court will send the parties a notice to appear for a pre-trial conference.

If the defendant fails to answer, you may file a Default Judgment.

**\*\*Corporations, partnerships, and limited liability companies MUST be represented by an attorney.\*\***