

# MARIN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR SMALL CLAIMS PARTIES

The notice of entry of judgment (attached) is the final ruling in your small claims case. Occasionally, parties have questions or issues or additional information that they would like to bring to the judicial officer's attention after a judgment has been entered. Please be advised that any ex parte communication with the judicial officer who heard your claim is not permitted.

Under California Rules of Professional Conduct, which define how judges must conduct themselves, a judicial officer to whom a case has been assigned, such as a small claim, is prohibited from receiving and/or considering and/or initiating any "ex parte" communications with one party to that case outside the presence of all other parties. An "ex parte" communication is any form of oral or written communication, such as a letter, that is either initiated by one party or by a judicial officer to whom that case is assigned and occurs outside of the presence of all other parties to that case. In other words, it is a prohibited one-sided communication between the judicial hearing officer and only one party. Even after the case is concluded, this kind of communication is prohibited.

## HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO TO GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

You may seek assistance or information about the small claims judgment from legal specialists who are knowledgeable about small claims matters. Staff at Legal Self Help Center is available on a drop in basis to answer your questions. There is no fee for this service. These legal specialists can help you determine whether you may appeal the small claims judgment. Further, they may be able to clarify the judgment or help you to prepare a motion to correct or amend a judgment, if appropriate. Finally, they can guide both parties to resources to help either collect a judgment or how to request a payment plan.

Legal Self Help Center is located at the Hall of Justice, 3501 Civic Center Drive, Room C-44, San Rafael 94903. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday. **To allow yourself enough time to receive assistance from the staff, and to complete your paperwork, please arrive no later than 45 minutes prior to closing.**

You may also call the Small Claims Advice line at (415) 444-7130 for answers to frequently asked questions.