

## Table of Contents

# A Guide to Self-Representation in the Court of Appeals of Virginia

The Court of Appeals has issued a [Self-Represented Litigant Guide](#) to assist litigants who do not have an attorney to represent them in their appeals. In most civil cases, in particular, litigants who cannot afford an attorney do not have a right to appointed counsel and many represent themselves. The Self-Represented Litigant Guide includes information about each stage of an appeal and contains links to relevant rules and forms.

“This is an important resource and another step forward in the Court’s continuing efforts to ensure access to justice,” said Chief Judge Marla Graff Decker.

This new guide is available on the [Court of Appeals' website](#) and hard copies are available in the Clerk’s Office and the Virginia State Law Library. While the guide contains helpful information, it may not be cited as an authority before the Court of Appeals. The Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia remain the authoritative source of information and rules concerning the appellate process in Virginia.

The Court of Appeals of Virginia was established January 1, 1985. It is an intermediate appellate court created to increase the appellate capacity of the court system and expedite appellate review. The Court of Appeals has authority to hear appeals as a matter of right from most final judgments, orders, or decrees of a circuit court.

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The Self-Represented Litigant Guide was announced in the Virginia Court of Appeals [March 6, 2025 Press Release](#).

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Print

## Table of Contents

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