

CAUSE NO.

§ **IN THE COUNTY COURT**
§
§ **AT LAW NO. 2 OF**
§
§ **HUNT COUNTY, TEXAS**

ADMONISHMENT FOR SELF-REPRESENTED (*PRO SE*¹) LITIGANTS²

The Court issues this notice to ensure that all self-represented parties understand the responsibilities and risks associated with self-representation.

This case is pending in a court that is governed by the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, the Texas Rules of Evidence, applicable statutes, local rules, standing orders, and controlling case law. Proceedings in this Court are substantially different from proceedings in Justice Court and generally involve more complex procedural and evidentiary requirements.

Any party who chooses to represent himself or herself is held to the same standards as a licensed attorney. Self-represented parties must comply with all applicable rules, court orders, filing requirements, deadlines, and evidentiary standards. A lack of legal training or unfamiliarity with the law does not excuse noncompliance.

The Court cannot provide legal advice, prepare pleadings, explain litigation strategy, assist in presenting claims or defenses, examine witnesses on a party's behalf, or otherwise act as an advocate for any party. The Court must remain neutral and impartial at all times.

Failure to comply with applicable rules, deadlines, or court orders may result in adverse consequences, including the exclusion of evidence, waiver of claims or defenses, dismissal of claims, entry of default judgment, assessment of costs or sanctions, or other relief authorized by law.

An attorney can assist a party in evaluating claims and defenses, conducting discovery, responding to motions, presenting evidence, examining witnesses, preserving issues for appeal, and protecting legal rights throughout the litigation process.

Accordingly, the Court strongly encourages any self-represented party to consult with and retain legal counsel. The Court specifically advises that self-representation is generally not wise and carries substantial risks. In the Court's experience, parties who proceed without counsel are often at a significant disadvantage in navigating procedural requirements, evidentiary rules, and other legal issues that may affect the outcome of their case.

The Court strongly advises all parties not to represent themselves and instead to retain a qualified attorney whenever possible. Any party who elects to proceed without counsel does so voluntarily and assumes full responsibility for complying with all legal and procedural requirements applicable to this case, as well as the risks associated with self-representation.

SIGNED on the following date: _____.

JOEL D. LITTLEFIELD, PRESIDING JUDGE

SIGNATURE

¹ "*Pro se*" is a Latin term, meaning "on one's own behalf."

² A "litigant" is a person that is either suing someone in court (e.g., the "Plaintiff") or is being sued in court (e.g., the "Defendant"), that is they are a party to the lawsuit.

³ Entities typically cannot be self-represented and must have an attorney. Corporations, for example, cannot be self-represented.