
Online Interactive Pro Se Court Forms

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A Collaborative Project of Idaho Supreme Court & Idaho Legal Aid Services

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What is the Idaho Interactive Forms Project?

- A partnership between Idaho Legal Aid Services and the Idaho Supreme Court to convert the most widely used civil legal and family law court forms to an interactive online format for unrepresented litigants.
 - In 2005, 45% of domestic relations plaintiffs filed pro se and 79% of defendants went unrepresented. When all other civil cases are considered 93% of defendants were unrepresented in Idaho.

Why we're creating interactive forms...

- ❑ Increase access to courts for the underserved and poor.
- ❑ Decrease the number of pro se litigants unsuccessful in representing themselves in court because of illegible or incorrect forms.
- ❑ Increase efficiency in the judicial process for judges and court staff.
- ❑ Increase perception of fairness to all.
- ❑ Increase opportunities to reach the greatest number of people with the information they need.

A sampling of what will be and is available...

Form packets for:

- Divorce*
- Parenting Plan
- Child Support Plan
- Custody
- Guardianship
- Protection Orders
- Adult/Minor Name Change*
- Tenant Repairs*
- Tenant Answer to Eviction*
- Tenant Rtrn of Security Deposit
- Landlord Eviction*
- Small Claims*

*Some forms in this category are available now.

History of support from the Idaho Courts...

- Excellent support from Supreme Court with regard to help for self-represented litigants
- Standing 'Access to the Courts Committee' appointed to recommend and implement goals
- Court Assistance Office Project created in response to those recommendations
 - Court Assistance Offices piloted
 - Court Forms created

Interactive Forms Options

- Subcommittee created to study technology options
 - Fillable forms
 - Software developer created forms
 - Commercial document assembly programs

Examples

- EZ Legal Forms
- Utah Interactive Divorce forms
- Pine Tree Legal Assistance
- HotDocs - A2J Author - NPADO

Our Considerations

■ Costs

- Startup
- Maintenance
- Adding new forms

■ Flexibility

- Updating/Modifying
- Adding new Forms
- Non-technical support staff

■ Minimal hardware/software requirements

2005 TIG Grant

- Formed partnership with Idaho Legal Aid to develop interactive court forms, with the intent of increasing usability and accuracy of the forms.
 - Served mutual goals of providing greater access for self-represented litigants
 - Low cost\flexible development
 - Availability of NPADO server

Forms are created by...

Statewide Standardized Court Forms

- ❑ Supreme Court Standard Forms Committee
- ❑ Supreme Court Form Development Policy
- ❑ Mandatory Acceptance
- ❑ Flexibility to pilot forms

Recommendations Based on Our Experience

- Have a well defined form development policy
 - Statewide uniformity
 - Mandatory acceptance by judges & clerks
 - Central standing committee for consistency in format, etc.

Recommendations (cont'd.)

- Avoid local forms
 - Creates confusion among the users
 - Hard to train court assistance staff where forms differ from county to county—where plausible, forms should be acceptable statewide
 - Causes cases to migrate
 - Limits delivery processes such as document assembly programs

Recommendations (cont'd.)

- Set limits on form development
 - Limit to proceedings where self-representation is high
- Identify proceedings where forms should not be developed
 - Cases where appointed counsel is available
 - cases which involve money and there are resources to hire counsel
 - cases which are simply too complex—don't encourage self-representation by creating forms

Recommendations (cont'd.)

- Provide opportunities for input on both need and design
 - Populate forms committee with:
 - health and welfare representatives
 - private counsel-specialized practice areas
 - judges who will be dealing with the forms
 - clerks/court assistance staff
 - court administrators
 - language/communication specialists
 - interactive court form developer

Where to Start with Standardized Form Development

- Access to Justice Committee
 - Get on the committee
 - Help set the policy
- Find a Judge or Court Administrator who will lead the charge
- Use National Networking/White papers to convince naysayers
- Demonstrate other states' successes

Considerations for Initial Planning of Automated Forms

- Don't be overly ambitious.
- Plan ahead when you are working with a committee and forms that continually change.
- Allocate plenty of time for form issues, working with other stakeholders, revisions and review.
- Assess time needed for learning the software (HotDocs and/or A2J).
- Develop a plan for both developing marketing materials and marketing the project.
- Begin developing a plan to gather statistics.
- Begin developing a plan to collect effective evaluations and feedback from users and advocates.

Determine Your Developer

- Pros and cons of having an on-staff developer versus hiring a contractor
 - Size of project
 - Internal buy-in, marketing and outreach, website development, troubleshooting
- Attorney vs. non-attorney developer
 - Type of project
 - Realistic role
 - Partnership with subject matter expert

Project Oversight Committee

- Project Director
- Developer
- Lead Court Assistance Officer
- Lead Court Assistance Officer

Planning for Development

- Determine forms and how they will be made available (packets, individual).
 - Rich Text Templates vs. PDF Templates
- Create user instructions.
- Develop automated templates using forms.
 - Determine variables and logic.
- Develop user interview (HotDocs or A2J)
 - Identify qualification information for users.
 - Draft introduction/description.
 - Draft questions and “learn more” help.
- Draft content and develop web pages.

Inside a HotDocs Template

Before...

If a dating relationship please describe: (complete for adult or minor in a dating relationship):
 Nature of relationship _____
 Length of time of the dating relationship _____
 How often saw each other _____
 Time since the relationship ended _____

3. Residence
 I live or am staying in _____ County, Idaho. Respondent lives in _____ County, State of _____.
 The Respondent does not live with me.
 I live with the Respondent at _____.
 Our home is rented or owned by both of us by me by the Respondent.
 I have left a residence where I lived with the Respondent. I want to return yes no If yes, to live to get personal belongings Other _____
 A business is run from the home. Type of business: _____
 _____ The business is run by me by the Respondent by both of us.

4. Child/ren affected by the protection order
 I am the natural/adoptive parent or legal guardian of the following child/ren:

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last)	Birth Date	Sex	How Child is Related to Petitioner Respondent	State(s) where child lived last 6 months

During the last six (6) months the child/ren have lived with _____

5. Other court cases List any other court cases relating to the minor child/ren who will be affected by this protection order. (divorce, child protection, guardianship, adoption, other protection order, etc.)

I have applied for a protection order(s) before in the county of _____ on (date) _____

After...

If a dating relationship please describe:
 Nature of relationship «Petitioner nature of relationship w respondent TE»
 Length of time of the dating relationship «Length of dating relationship TE»
 How often saw each other «Frequency saw each other MC»
 Time since the relationship ended «Time since relationship ended TE»

3. Residence
 «IF Residence MC = "Separately"»«ELSE»«END IF» I live or am staying in «Petitioner county MC»
 County, Idaho. Respondent lives in «Respondent county TE» County, State of «Respondent state MC».
 «IF Residence MC = "Respondent doesn't"»«ELSE»«END IF» The Respondent does not live with me.
 «IF Residence MC = "Live with"»«ELSE»«END IF» I live with the Respondent at «Live with respondent
 full address CO».
 Our home is rented or owned «IF Home with respondent own rent MC = "Both"»«ELSE»«END IF» by
 both of us «IF Home with respondent own rent MC = "Me"»«ELSE»«END IF» by me «IF Home
 with respondent own rent MC = "Respondent"»«ELSE»«END IF» by the Respondent.
 «IF Residence MC = "Left res"»«ELSE»«END IF» I have left a residence where I lived with the
 Respondent. I want to return «IF Left home with respondent TF:yes/no» If yes, «IF Left home with resp
 return reason MC = "Live"»«ELSE»«END IF» «IF Left home with resp return reason MC =
 "Belongings"»«ELSE»«END IF» to get personal belongings «IF Left home with resp return
 reason MC = "Other"»«ELSE»«END IF» Other «Left home with resp return other TE:','>0,"n/a"»
 «IF Residence MC = "Biz"»«ELSE»«END IF» A business is run from the home. Type of business: «Type
 of biz run from home TE:','>0," n/a "» The business is run «IF Biz run from home by MC =
 "Me"»«ELSE»«END IF» by me «IF Biz run from home by MC = "Respondent"»«ELSE»«END IF»
 by the Respondent «IF Biz run from home by MC = "Both"»«ELSE»«END IF» by both of us.

4. «Child ren CO» affected by the protection order
 I am the natural/adoptive parent or legal guardian of the following «Child ren CO»:

Name (First, Middle Initial, Last)	Birth Date	Sex	How Child is Related to Petitioner Respondent	State(s) where child lived last 6 months	
«REPEAT Child Repeat Information»«Child full name CO»	«Child date of birth DA»	«C hild ge nd er MC »	«Relatio nship to children MC»	«Child related to responde nt MC»	Idaho

Inside an A2J Interview

A2J Author
Adult Name Change [AdultNameChange V3.a2j]

new open save save as

SEND FEEDBACK

Filter: All Steps

(0)1-Introduction :Welcome to the Idaho
(1)1-Do you qualify? :Please acknowledge
(1)1a-Exit :I'm sorry, this program can
(2)1-Name :Please enter your current
(2)2-Address :Hello %%[Petitioner first
(2)4-Phone number :What is your phone
(2)5-Birthday :What is your date of birth
(2)5a-Not 18+ :You must be at least 18
(2)6-Born information :Where were you born
(3)1-Change name to? :What do you want
(3)2-Change name to correct? :Is this
(3)3-Reason for name change :Why do you
(3)3a-Other reason for name change :
(4)1-Father living? :Is your father living
(4)1a-Father's address :What is your father's
(4)2-Father's living relatives? :How many
(4)2a-Father's closest living relative :Name
(4)2b-Father's closest relative address :
(4)2c-Father's 2nd closest relative :Please
(4)2d-2nd relatives address :What is the

Starting Point: (0)1-Introduction :Welcome to the Idaho

fit 100% 66% 25%

HotDocs vs. A2J Author Interface

Automated Documents Online
FOR NONPROFIT LEGAL SERVICES

Frequently Asked Questions

you are not logged in

Motion for Temporary Custody & Child Support

Interview Outline

- Attorney Information
- Case Details
- Plaintiff's Information
- Defendant's Information
- Child's Information
- Legal Custody of Child/ren
- Physical Custody | Visitation
- Pick-ups & Drop-offs | Phone
- Child Support
- Medical Insurance
- Work Related Child Care Co
- Income Tax Exemption
- Service

Attorney Information

Attorney First Name: _____ Attorney Middle Name: _____ Attorney Last Name: _____

Attorney Suffix: _____

State Bar #: _____

Attorney Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Attorney Phone: _____ Phone Ext.: _____ Attorney Fax: _____

My client is the:

Plaintiff

Defendant

Navigation: First Previous Next Last

HotDocs ↑

A2J Author ↓

BACK NEXT MY PROGRESS 1 Welcome to the Idaho Adult Name Change interview. SOUND IS ON SEND FEEDBACK

a2j Access To Justice
AT CHICAGO-KENT COLLEGE OF LAW

Welcome to the Idaho Adult Name Change interview. This interview will help you prepare court documents necessary to change the name of an adult.

Continue

Adult Name Change Interview

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SJI

Sample Interactive Form...

Enforcing a Small Claims Judgment

[Click Here to Begin.](#)