

TRIAL/HEARING INFORMATION SHEET
READ CAREFULLY!

TRIAL/HEARING DATE: Do not forget your hearing date. Failure to timely appear at the virtual hearing on the date and time may result in the case being dismissed or a default judgment being entered. This hearing will be conducted virtually by ZOOM. Give yourself plenty of time to log in to the ZOOM application/link provided on the Notice of Hearing. Parties (and attorneys) shall familiarize themselves with the ZOOM platform and, if necessary, sign up for a free account or download and install ZOOM **PRIOR** to the hearing date and time. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE TO PREPARE FOR YOUR HEARING.**

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO PARTICIPATE: A laptop, phone, or other device with a camera, microphone, and internet connection. Wi-Fi or cellular is fine. The Court must be able to see and hear you clearly. If you do not have any of this equipment available to you or you are unsure it will work correctly, please contact 74orange@ninthcircuit.org **7 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR HEARING** so you can coordinate with the Judicial Assistant to come to the Courthouse and utilize a laptop that the Court will provide in order to attend the hearing virtually. You will be required to schedule this in advance with the Court. Do not show up to the courthouse without scheduling this in advance.

ONCE CONNECTED:

- Before the hearing, make sure that you are properly named on ZOOM using your full real name. Unidentified parties will not be permitted entry in to the hearing from the waiting room.
- When you sign in, be sure that the video/camera/microphone is turned on, the audio is not muted, and your camera is facing forward.
- This is a court proceeding. Please dress appropriately for your hearing. Do not drive or be located in a loud environment.

TRIAL PREPARATION:

- The plaintiff has the initial burden of proving its case. The plaintiff must use proper, legal proof to prove each element of the claim(s). If the plaintiff cannot prove its case, the judge may dismiss the case.
- You do not have to hire an attorney to represent you at trial, but you may hire an attorney to represent you. You may not personally record by audio or video the proceeding in any manner. If you wish to have your proceeding recorded, you must hire and pay for a court reporter.
- If you are a defendant and your legal defenses are unsuccessful, or you fail to appear at trial, a judgment will be entered against you. A judgment is a legal document signed by the judge that sets out the amount that you owe the plaintiff. It may include

attorney's fees, costs, and interest. It is a document that will become public record and may be recorded by the plaintiff.

- You are responsible for making sure that if you have any witnesses that they appear for trial and you provide them the information they need to attend the hearing. It is your responsibility to subpoena witnesses if you need to do so.

ADDRESS CHANGES: If your address changes, you must send a Notice of Change of Address to the Clerk of the Court. Failure to change your address may result in you not receiving your notice of hearing and missing the hearing. You are responsible for changing your address with the Clerk of the Court.

INTERPRETERS: The court does not provide language interpreters for civil cases. If a party or witness needs the assistance of an interpreter, the litigant who needs the interpreter (or whose witness requires assistance) is responsible to provide the interpreter.

SETTLEMENTS BEFORE TRIAL: In the event that all claims and counterclaims are settled by the parties prior to trial, both parties shall notify the division's Judicial Assistant by e-mail at 74orange@ninthcircuit.org so the case may be removed from the Court's docket. A voluntary dismissal or settlement/stipulation/agreement should be filed and sent to the Court with an accompanying order approving the settlement/stipulations/agreement in order for the case to be closed. If a counterclaim has been filed, settlement of one claim has no effect on the other claim, and the remaining claim will proceed to trial.

TRIAL/HEARING EXHIBITS & EVIDENCE: The parties shall provide the Court, at least five (5) business days in advance of the hearing, any evidence you intend to offer at the hearing. The parties shall mail the evidence to the Court. The evidence must have your case number on it. The Exhibits/Evidence must be clearly identified and labeled in Alphabetical order [e.g. Exhibit A (A Descriptive Name of Exhibit); Exhibit B (A Descriptive Name of the Exhibit); etc.]. The Court does not accept USB or emailed copies of evidence. If you have video evidence, you may submit a USB with only the video evidence. As an alternative to mailing evidence, parties may drop off evidence at the Courthouse at 425 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida, Room 370 for Judge Wish c/o Danitza Caceres, Judicial Assistant. There is a mailbox for Division 74 outside Room 370 and you may drop it off there. Parties must then confirm via e-mail that they have dropped off evidence by e-mailing the Judicial Assistant at 74orange@ninthcircuit.org. You must also give a copy to the other side either via email or by mail.

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the ADA Coordinator, Human Resources, Orange County Courthouse, 425 N. Orange Avenue, Suite 510, Orlando, Florida, (407) 836-2303, at least 7 days before your scheduled court appearance, or immediately upon receiving this notification if the time before the scheduled appearance is less than 7 days; if you are hearing or voice impaired, call 711.