

# Practice Tips

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In preparation for our October 19 Bench/Bar Conference, we surveyed our counter staff for practical tips and reminders that might be helpful to attorneys. Below is a summary of those tips:

## A. Filing Issues

1. Remember to put your name, address and P# on all documents.
2. All documents must be signed.
3. Remember to include the *Interested Persons Statement* and the *Penalties of Perjury Statement* on all petitions.
4. Take advantage of our drop-off basket for *Proofs of Service* and *GAL Reports*.
5. Determine what your filing fees will be prior to coming to court and make sure you have correct filing fee (or bring the checkbook).
6. Complete all information on the Oakland County *Fiduciary Information* form.

## B. Office Procedures

1. Save time by calculating your own inventory fee prior to presenting your inventory. The fee schedule is located in MCLA 600.871(1). We are also happy to distribute our inventory calculation sheet for your use.
2. We will conform up to two of your copies for you at one time.
3. We are happy to make copies of your documents for you; however, there is a \$1.00 per page charge for that.
4. You can go directly to the file room or "vault" to review a file without having to stand in line. However, you cannot request copies of a document from the file room; you must stand in line for that. Also, you cannot retrieve the file from the vault before you stand in line to file documents on that file. It will also save time if you let us know all files we will be working on before we go to the file room when waiting on you.
5. Use our fax machine! Any-thing that does not require a filing fee may be faxed.
6. On court mornings, have your orders, bonds and *Acceptance of Appointments* completed before you get to

the counter after court.

7. Make sure to have your *Proof of Services* filled out before court morning. Remember, we need an original for each file (ie: both the guardianship and conservatorship file).
8. Remember that we use *Orders of Adjournments*, not *Re-notice of Hearings*.

## C. Court Rules/Statute Issues:

1. Be aware that it is the petitioner's duty to serve the ward personally on an adult guardianship, not the GAL's.
2. Recognize that there is a difference between the renunciations and waivers and consents. We will accept *Waivers and Consents* forms with renunciation language added on them.
3. Regarding *Notice of Continued Administration*, please note:
  - You need to file one on every decedent estate annually.
  - A *Certificate of Mailing* must be completed.
  - There is no filing fee associated with this document.
  - The attorney may sign for the client on this form as well.
  - It may be faxed.
  - There is no hearing on these (as there was under RPC's *Notice of Report, Petition and Order for Continuing Pendancy*).

On the lighter side, we did have some humorous tips from our court staff, including that it may not be helpful when presenting documents for the first time to admit, "I don't do much Probate." We have also seen many ingenious ways of trying to get out of waiting in line; be patient, we will get to you!

A special thank you to those practitioners who attended our Bench/Bar Probate section and offered their many suggestions to our captains. I would like to thank Chief Judge Linda Hallmark, Michael Hughes and Jill Koney Daly for their hard work in putting together our conference. I will be following up with future articles, hopefully implementing some of the ideas that were discussed on that day.

Have a healthy and safe holiday season. Stay tuned!