

Step 1: Filing and Serving your Request for Order (RFO)

- A. When you file your RFO, also provide the Court with a Proposed Order.
- B. Serve the other party with the filed RFO, your Proposed Order and this Instruction Sheet.

Step 2: Obtaining the Court's Tentative Ruling

- A. The Unified Family Court will publish a written tentative ruling by 2 p.m. on the court day BEFORE your court hearing to tell you how the judge is planning to rule on your Request based on the information that was provided. This is called a Tentative Ruling. This is NOT a final decision or ruling.
- B. There are three two ways to obtain (view) your Tentative Ruling.
 1. Internet: View your Tentative Ruling at the Court's website: <http://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/online-services/tentative-rulings>. NOTE: Family Law cases that are designated as confidential by California law or by Court order will not be posted online.
 2. Telephone: Call (415) 551-3637.
 3. At the Courthouse: Visit the courthouse and use the public computer located outside Dept. 403 to obtain your Tentative Ruling via the Internet.

Step 3: Once You Obtain Your Tentative Ruling

- A. If you want the Tentative Ruling to become the Court's order and you do not hear from the other party by 4 p.m., then you do not have to appear at the Court hearing the following morning.
- B. If you disagree with the Tentative Ruling or have questions and want to come to court, then you must do both of the following:
 1. Contact the Court Clerk in the Department where the hearing is scheduled to let the Clerk know you intend to come to the hearing. Contact the Court Clerk in Dept. 403 at (415) 551-3741 and in Dept. 404 at (415) 551-3744. NOTE: If the Court Clerk does not answer, you must leave a message on the voice mail no later than 4 p.m.
AND
 2. Contact the other party (unless there is a restraining order), or the other party's attorney if they have one, no later than 4 p.m. on the court day before the hearing date, and let the other party know that you intend to come to the hearing. NOTE: If you do not reach the other party (or the other party's attorney) directly, you must leave a message on their voice mail. If you do not have the other party's telephone number, you must so inform the Court Clerk. **IF YOU FAIL TO NOTIFY THE OTHER SIDE AND THE COURT, THE COURT MAY NOT ALLOW YOU TO MAKE ORAL ARGUMENT AT THE HEIARNG AND THE TENTATIVE RULING WILL BE ADOPTED.**

Step 4: At the Hearing

- A. If you are the only party who appears at the hearing, the Court will not allow you to argue unless, no later than 4 p.m. on the court day before the hearing date, you informed the Court Clerk and gave notice to the other party that you intended to appear and argue. Instead, the Tentative Ruling may be adopted by the Court.
- B. **If neither party appears, the Tentative Ruling will be adopted by the Court.**

Other Important Information:

- If the Tentative Ruling states "Appearances Required," both parties must appear at the hearing. Failure to appear at the hearing may result in the Court granting the orders requested or taking the matter off-calendar.
- The Tentative Ruling will be available only in English. The Court cannot provide translations of the Tentative Ruling. If you have difficulty understanding English, you must have someone available to help you translate the Tentative Ruling.
- **If you are protected by a restraining order or if the other party is protected by a restraining order, do not contact the other party to tell him or her that you intend to appear at the hearing. You only need to contact the Court. Note: You are permitted to contact an attorney representing the other party.**
- If you and the other party have agreed to continue a hearing, you must notify the Court by 12 p.m. three (3) court days before the hearing. You may notify the Court by faxing your request for continuance to (415) 551-3915.