

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

### **IN FORMA PAUPERIS PETITION**

***IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU CONSULT  
AN ATTORNEY***

## **DISCLAIMER**

THE STAFF IN ANY COURT OFFICE ARE UNABLE TO GIVE YOU LEGAL ADVICE. THE INFORMATION IN THE PACKETS IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL LEGAL ADVICE. THE COURT ASSUMES NO RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCEPTS NO LIABILITY FOR ACTIONS TAKEN BY USERS OF THESE DOCUMENTS, INCLUDING RELIANCE ON THEIR CONTENTS. IF YOU WANT TO OBTAIN THE SERVICES OF AN ATTORNEY BUT DO NOT KNOW WHOM TO CONTACT, YOU MAY CALL THE LEBANON COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION AT (717)273-3113 WEEKDAYS BETWEEN 10:00 A.M. AND 2:00 P.M.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING A PETITION TO PROCEED IN FORMA PAUPERIS (IFP) AND ORDER**

To file any lawsuit you must pay a filing fee. However, it may be possible to have the filing fee waived if you can prove to the court that you cannot afford to pay the fee.

To do this, you must file a Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis (IFP). An IFP is simply a detailed list of your income and expenses. You must complete the IFP and file it at the same time that you file your Complaint or Petition at the Prothonotary's Office. The following are step-by-step instructions on how to fill out the IFP.

### **ORDER TO PROCEED IN FORMA PAUPERIS**

1. Print the full legal name of each party above "Plaintiff" and "Defendant". The Prothonotary's Office will assign your case a docket number when you file the IFP along with the Complaint or Petition.
2. Do not fill in the date or the judge's name. The court will complete the rest of the Order.

### **MOTION FOR ORDER TO PROCEED IN FORMA PAUPERIS**

1. As in your Complaint or Petition, print the full legal name of each party above "Plaintiff" and "Defendant". The Prothonotary's Office will assign your case a docket number when you file the IFP along with the Complaint or Petition.
2. Sign and date the Motion for Order to Proceed In Forma Pauperis.

### **AFFIDAVIT OF FINANCIAL STATUS**

1. Print the full legal name of each party above "Plaintiff" and "Defendant". The Prothonotary's Office will assign your case a docket number when you file the IFP along with the Complaint or Petition.
2. **Line 1** – If you are the Plaintiff – circle the word "Plaintiff". If you are the Defendant – circle the word "Defendant".
3. **Line 2** – You are stating that you cannot afford to pay the costs in this action and that you are unable to borrow money to pay the costs in this action.
4. **Line 3**
  - (a) List your name, address, telephone number and social security number.

- (b) If you are currently employed, print your employer's name and address, your **MONTHLY** salary, and the type of work you do. If you are not currently employed, fill in the date of your last employment (if none, write "none"), your wages at your last job and the type of work you did.
- (c) List any other income you received within the last twelve (12) months. If any of the entries apply to you, fill in your average monthly income from that source. If an entry does not apply, simply write "none".
- (d) List any income that is received by other people in your household that helps to support the household. If someone is not a member of your household, do not list their income here unless they give you money. For example, if you are suing your spouse for divorce, do not list your spouse or their income here unless they are providing you with money. Simply write "none" and go on to the questions about household contributions from your children, parents or others who live with you. If none of these apply, simply write "none".
- (e) List any property you own and its value. If you do not have any of the types of property listed, simply write "none".
- (f) Fill in an average monthly figure where applicable and write "none" to a type of debt that does not apply to you.
- (g) List the people who depend on you for support. Once again, if you are suing your spouse for divorce, for example, you would not list your spouse here unless you provide money to them. If you have dependent children, list their full names and ages. Also, list any other people dependent upon you for support and their relationship to you.

5. **Line 4**

This statement means that you understand you must report any improvement in your financial situation to the court.

6. **Line 5**

This statement means that you are providing accurate information and that you understand certain penalties can be imposed if you make false statements.

7. When you have completed the Affidavit of Financial Status, sign and date it where indicated. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY SPACES BLANK OR STATE THAT SOMETHING IS NOT APPLICABLE. DO NOT USE THE RESPONSE OF "N/A", INSTEAD WRITE "NONE".**

**MAKE TWO (2) COPIES OF THE COMPLETED FORM. THEREFORE, YOU WILL HAVE THREE (3) TOTAL (THE ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES).**

Take the original and the copies to the Lebanon County Prothonotary's Office, which is located on the first floor of the Lebanon County Municipal Building, Room 104, 400 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Lebanon, Pennsylvania 17042. The hours of operation for the Prothonotary's Office are 8:30 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

The Prothonotary's Office will date stamp your forms. The Prothonotary's Office will keep the original and one (1) copy and give you one copy for your records.

You will file the "Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis" with the Complaint/Petition.

The "Motion to Proceed In Forma Pauperis" will be reviewed by the Court, and a hearing may be scheduled if the Court has questions concerning the information provided in the Motion.