

In the Iowa Supreme Court

In the Matter of changes to Chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules and adoption of Domestic, Elder, and Sexual Abuse Forms for Self-Represented Litigants	Order
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The Iowa Supreme Court adopts changes to chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules as well as self-represented litigant forms for domestic, elder, and sexual abuse matters.

I. General changes to chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules

Chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules includes self-represented litigant forms for dissolution of marriage actions without minor or dependent children under rule 17.100, for dissolution of marriage actions with dependent children under rule 17.200, for modifying child support actions under rule 17.300, and for child custody and visitation matters for unmarried parents under rule 17.400. Each rule includes a complete set of forms for each type of case and directs that unrepresented parties must use those court forms. Attorneys may use the forms but are not required to do so.

Each rule in chapter 17 sets forth each form under the rule in its entirety. Each self-represented litigant form is also available on the Iowa Judicial Branch website in a fillable and savable .pdf format. The judicial branch is in the process of developing interactive or guided interview versions of these forms, also available on www.iowacourts.gov.

The supreme court is amending chapter 17 to remove the forms from the published version of the Iowa Court Rules. The forms, however, will remain listed by name and court rule number as the approved court forms available on the judicial branch website, which unrepresented litigants must use in the type of matter.

Removing the forms themselves from the court rules will facilitate making adjustments to the forms without having to undergo the formal rule publication process. This will enable the court to be more nimble, timely, and responsive in making necessary adjustments to the forms on the judicial branch website. This will also significantly lessen the number of pages of the Legislative Services Agency's publication of the Iowa Court Rules in book form.

The amended chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules is provided with this order and is effective December 1, 2022. The chapter 17 forms remain currently effective.

II. Adoption of domestic, elder, and sexual abuse litigant forms

The supreme court approves domestic, elder, and sexual abuse forms as set forth in the revised chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules provided with this order.

The forms have been in use for some time and available in a fillable and savable .pdf format from the Iowa Judicial Branch website at www.iowacourts.gov/for-the-public/court-forms/. The fillable and savable forms were updated in March 2022. Since then, the branch has made additional updates to the forms based on feedback from judges, clerks of court, attorneys, service providers, and litigants. The court-approved forms are listed in the revised chapter 17 of the Iowa Court Rules and must be used by unrepresented persons in domestic, elder, and sexual abuse matters. Attorneys may and are encouraged to use the listed forms.

- Iowa Court Rule 17.10 lists the forms for required use in domestic abuse matters.
- Iowa Court Rule 17.20 lists the forms for required use in elder abuse matters.


- Iowa Court Rule 17.30 lists the forms for required use in sexual abuse matters.

The new chapter 17 rules refer users to the Iowa Judicial Branch website, which contains the approved forms in fillable and savable .pdf format. The judicial branch is also working to provide each set of forms in interactive or guided interview versions which will also be available at www.iowacourts.gov/for-the-public/court-forms/. Similar to removal of the aforementioned dissolution forms from the court rules, providing approved domestic, elder, and sexual abuse litigant forms on the website will allow easier and more timely adjustments to the forms, providing better service for unrepresented Iowans.

New Iowa Court Rules 17.10, 17.20, and 17.30 are provided with this order and are effective December 1, 2022. The self-represented litigant forms under those rules are currently available for use on the Iowa Judicial Branch website.

Dated this 7th day of November, 2022.

The Iowa Supreme Court

By: 

Susan Larson Christensen, Chief Justice