

# **Report: Impact of Order Preparation: Alameda County (California 2005)**

In 2005, the Alameda Court created the **Day-Of-Court Assistance Project**. Using volunteers from the local bar and local law schools, and working in conjunction with the Family Law Facilitator's office, the goal of the project was to have each and every pro se litigant leave the court after a hearing with a clear, valid and enforceable court order, irrespective of whether this issue decided was custody, visitation, child or spousal support, or property division. If the judge made a ruling on any of these issues during a Family Law hearing, the ruling was to be reduced to a written order by the volunteers, and an endorsed filed copy of the order was to be provided to the litigants before the litigant left court, or at a minimum, was to be mailed to the litigant within 24 to 48 hours.

The results of the study are nothing short of groundbreaking. In short, the study confirms that pro se litigants who are provided with a written court order at the time the court makes a ruling or issues an order, return to court seeking relief on the same issue at half of the rate of pro se litigants who are asked to prepare their own court orders. Stated another way, **pro se litigants who are provided with a timely court order use 50% less courtroom services than pro se litigants who are left to fend for themselves.**

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