

Guidelines for the Operation of the Karuk Tribe Self Help Center / Family Law



Karuk Tribal Court
P.O. Box 629, Yreka, CA 96097
Tel: (530) 493-1630
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(1) Independence and integrity

An attorney and other staff working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should, at all times, uphold the independence and integrity of the center in conjunction with its role within the court, legal system and the Karuk Tribe.

(2) Role as representative of the court

An attorney and other staff working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should recognize that they are representatives of the court and, as such, should avoid all acts of impropriety and the appearance of impropriety at all times.

(3) Impartiality and diligence

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should perform his or her duties impartially and diligently. Impartiality means delivering services to all eligible litigants in a neutral manner. Diligence requires that the attorney provide the litigants with pertinent information to allow them to bring their matter before the court. This may include appropriate referrals to other resources as well as direct information and assistance at the center. The attorney should require similar conduct of all personnel.

(4) Respect and patience

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should be aware of the social and economic differences that exist among litigants and maintain patience with and respect for the litigants who seek the services of the center. The attorney should require similar conduct of all personnel. However, if a litigant becomes unruly or disruptive, the attorney may ask the litigant to leave the center.

(5) Bias and prejudice

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should assist the litigants who seek assistance without exhibiting bias or prejudice based on race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or other similar factors, and should require similar conduct of all personnel.

(6) Competent legal information

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center and his or her staff should provide the litigants who seek assistance with procedural and legal information and education so that the litigants will have increased access to the court. Family law information centers and family law facilitator offices are not intended to replace private counsel.

(7) Full notification of limits of service

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center should ensure that conspicuous notice is given that no attorney-client relationship exists between the center, or its staff, and the family law litigant. The notice should include the advice that the absence of an attorney-client relationship means that communications between the party and the family law information center or family law facilitator office are not privileged and that the services may be provided to the other party. Attorneys and other center staff shall ensure the litigants are informed of the center's limited role and that they provide their signature indicating such knowledge as set forth in the Statement of Understanding in the center's Intake Sheet.

(8) Public comment

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center and his or her staff must not make any public comment about the litigants or about any pending or impending matter in the court.

(9) Gifts or payments

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center and his or her staff should not accept any gifts, favors, bequests, or loans from the litigants whom they assist, since this may give the appearance of impropriety or partiality—except for nominal gifts such as baked goods, as allowed by local rules.

(10) Communications with bench officer

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center and his or her staff should avoid all unauthorized ex parte communications with a bench officer. In addition, an attorney should avoid all communications with a bench officer in which he or she offers an opinion on how the bench officer should rule on a pending case. Communications about purely procedural matters or the functioning of the court are allowed and encouraged.

(11) Communications with represented litigants

An attorney working in the Karuk Tribe Self-Help Center and his or her staff should not assist a litigant who is represented by an attorney unless the litigant's attorney consents or the court has referred the litigant for assistance.