

**5.04 | IF I REPRESENT MYSELF, WHAT WILL I HAVE TO DO?**

If you cannot find a lawyer to represent you, you can pursue your claim or defend a lawsuit by appearing without a lawyer (except a business and corporate entity must be represented by a lawyer).

If you sue, you must diligently prosecute your action or your action will be dismissed. You are responsible for doing everything necessary for the action to move forward. You must:

- Prepare, file, and serve pleadings and legal memoranda;
- Gather evidence, bring it to trial, and have a witness who can testify about it;
- Locate, serve, and reimburse witnesses for the expenses they incur in having to appear;
- Provide required discovery (for example, the names and contact information of each witness you plan to call at trial and each document you plan to introduce at trial);
- Answer the opposing party's discovery requests (in other words, upon request, give them the evidence in your possession that is not subject to protection, even if the evidence is bad for you);
- Prepare and serve your discovery requests;
- File disclosures required by court rules;
- Know and meet all deadlines and filing requirements;
- Attend each court hearings and meeting;
- Attend court-ordered mediation and pay for some of its costs or attend a court-ordered settlement conference before a United States Magistrate Judge; and
- Arrange for and attend depositions, if necessary.

