



Civil Filing Center, Room 296 City Hall
First Judicial District of Pennsylvania
Court of Common Pleas
Office of Judicial Records Trial Division - Civil

Informational Guide for Petitions to Open Default Judgment

What is default judgment?

A default judgment is a judgment that can be entered against you in a court case when you do not file a response to the Plaintiff's Complaint on time or you have not appeared for a court date. (See Pa.R.C.P. 1037(b) and (c)).

What is a Petition to Open Default Judgment?

A *Petition to Open Default Judgment* is a document that you can file to ask the Court to open the judgment entered against you. If you file this petition for a judgment that has been entered against you for failing to respond to the Plaintiff's Complaint, the petition must include the following information:

1. A detailed explanation on why you did not respond to the Plaintiff's Complaint.
2. A detailed explanation on why the Plaintiff should not succeed in their case against you.
3. The *Petition to Open Default Judgment* should be filed within 10 days of the date that the default judgment was entered. If you are filling the petition more than 10 days after the default judgment was entered, you should explain why the petition was not filed sooner.
4. If the default judgment was entered because you did not file a response to the Plaintiff's Complaint, you should prepare a response to the Complaint and attach it to the *Petition to Open Default Judgment*.

❖ **ONCE YOU FILE THE PETITION, YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED BY MAIL IF YOUR PETITION IS GRANTED OR DENIED OR IF THE JUDGE DECIDES TO SCHEDULE A HEARING ON THE PETITION.**

NOTICE: This document is an optional court resource for people who do not have an attorney. You are free to research legal information and create your own petition if you do not want to use the court's resources. This document is also not intended to be legal advice or take the place of an attorney. If you need assistance finding an attorney, our court staff can give you information on legal service organizations that may be able to help you.

This informational guide is intended for non-attorneys only.