


NORTH CAROLINA **Judicial** COLLEGE

# Self-Represented Litigants

Allen Baddour  
Resident Superior Court Judge  
District 15B  
January 2018: New Judges School



www.sog.unc.edu

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## Self-Represented?

**Yes, Self-Represented Litigants...  
instead of pro se litigants**

**Best practices**




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### Best practices:

#### 1. Have a process for handling SRLs in the pre-trial phase

- Notice/communication
- TCA/TCC
- Visiting judge hearing motions
- Senior resident




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Best practices:

2. Provide transparency  
(or what I used to call... *a roadmap for trial*)

(jury selection, openings, evidence, objections, charge conference, closings)



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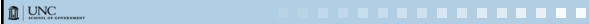
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Best practices:

Helpful techniques in providing transparency:

- Frame subject matter of hearing
- Explain process
- Elicit needed info from litigants
- Articulate decision from bench if able
- Provide written order
- Set expectations for next steps



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Best practices:

3. Ensure procedural fairness

Be fair  
*Appear fair*



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Best practices:

**4. Listen actively**

**Validate**



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Best practices:

**5. Reset**



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Best practices:

**6. Tour your own courthouse**

**Front door**  
**Signage**  
**Website**



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Best practices:

**7. Consider self-help materials**



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