

Frequently Asked Questions about arguments before the Iowa Court of Appeals

Where do I go? The Iowa Court of Appeals is on the third floor of the Iowa Judicial Building at 1111 E. Court Avenue, Des Moines. Please check in with the bailiff inside the entrance to the office at the south side of the rotunda on the third floor before oral arguments.

When do I need to arrive? Please arrive at least ten to fifteen minutes before your oral argument time so you can check in with the bailiff. The bailiff will be available to check you in thirty minutes before the beginning of each session.

Is there an area where I can prepare for arguments? We have an attorney preparation room immediately to the right, as you approach the Iowa Court of Appeals courtroom. You may also use the light court on the second floor.

Where should I sit in the courtroom? Usually the appellee sits at the table on the side of the courtroom by the windows, and the appellant sits at the table on the other side. Only counsel should sit at these tables.

How long are the arguments? Arguments are scheduled for ten minutes each for the appellant and appellee, plus five minutes of rebuttal time for the appellant. If there are multiple appellants or appellees, they must share the allotted time. There is a timer on the podium so litigants can see how much time they have. Also, a yellow light will come on when there are five minutes left in regular arguments, and two minutes left in rebuttal. A red light will come on when your argument time has been completed.

What is the other red light on the podium? There is a separate red light on the podium, which is not connected to the timer. This red light shows that the microphone on the podium is activated.

What can I expect during arguments? Your case will likely be heard by a three-judge panel. When you check in with the bailiff, you will find out which panel of judges will be hearing your case. The judges will be familiar with your case and may ask questions.

What if I want to use an exhibit during argument? See Iowa Rule of Appellate Procedure 6.908(6).

Who may observe oral arguments? Anyone is welcome to observe oral arguments before the Iowa Court of Appeals. If you need to discuss matters with a client or others, please feel free to use the open rotunda area, the attorney preparation room, or the light court. No food or drink is permitted in the courtroom.

We have seating in the courtroom for forty people. If you expect more people will be present for a particular case, please contact us at 515-281-5221 before your argument.

There is an auditorium available on the first floor of the Judicial Building that can be set up so spectators may watch and listen to oral arguments.