ANSWER PACKET—NON-SPECIFIC

INSTRUCTIONS ON PREPARING AN ANSWER

You are strongly encouraged to obtain help from an attorney in order to protect your rights and to correctly follow all the applicable substantive and procedural rules of law. Courthouse personnel are prohibited by state law O.C.G.A. § 15-9-51 from giving you legal advice. Different situations might require special procedures, and courthouse personnel are not allowed to advise you on how to proceed or what forms may be necessary in specific situations.

It is very important to file a written answer to any legal action which is brought against you. Filing an answer gives you the right to be notified of the hearing date and place. If you fail to file a written answer, this tells the Court that you are not contesting or disputing what the other side has asked for, and you are waiving your right to be notified by the Court of any court dates. Preparing an answer can be complicated. Please consult with an attorney if you have any questions about your legal rights and responsibilities.

If you are served by the sheriff, special process server or if you acknowledge service of a petition, you normally have thirty days to file a written answer with the clerk of Superior Court in the County in which the original petition was filed. If you have been served by publication, then you have sixty days from the date the petition is first published in the legal newspaper to file a written answer.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING YOUR ANSWER

Step 1: Carefully read the Petition that was served on you.

Review the petition that was served on you. It is sometimes helpful if you go through it with a pencil and make notes on whether you agree or disagree with what the other side has stated in his or her petition. Jot down any points you want to make in response.

Step 2: Begin filling out the Answer

Insert the name of the person who sued you where it says "Plaintiff/Petitioner." Insert your name where it says "Defendant/Respondent." Where it says "Answer to: _____," fill in the name of the petition that was served on you.

Following the complaint or petition which was served on you, admit or deny each numbered paragraph using the spaces provided. The number of your paragraph should correspond to the number of the paragraph to which you are responding. If you need to add additional facts, you may do so in the space provided.

Step 3: Requests to the Court

After the numbered paragraphs of the answer, there is a section which begins with "Wherefore I request." In paragraph (a) insert the type of action that was served on you. Then fill in the date, sign your name, and write your address and telephone number.

Step 4: Complete the Verification form

Complete the attached Verification Form. Insert the file number from the Complaint or Petition which was served to you. Go to a notary public at your local bank or other place of business. Sign your name where it says "Defendant/Respondent pro se" while the notary is watching you. The notary will then sign his or her name, and affix his or her stamp on the paper.

Step 5: File your Answer

Make three (3) photocopies of your documents. Take all three copies to the docket clerk of the Juvenile Court of Muscogee County where the original petition was filed. Give the clerk your original. Have the clerk also stamp your copies. Keep one copy for yourself.

Step 6: Timely appear at any hearing, conference, or seminar required by the Court.

Your failure to appear at any hearing or other meeting or activity scheduled by the Court on the date and time appointed may, and often will result in your claims being dismissed and the action taking place without you. The result of your failure to appear could result in the granting of all relief requested by the Plaintiff/Petitioner, an award of attorneys fees against you, incarceration for contempt, or other appropriate relief. **DO NOT BE LATE OR MISS A COURT DATE.**

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF MUSCOGEE COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE:	§	File Number:
_____	§	_____
_____	§	_____
_____	§	_____
_____	§	_____
_____	§	_____

ANSWER TO PETITION FOR LEGITIMATION

My name is _____, and I am representing myself in this action. In response to each of the numbered paragraphs of the Plaintiff's Complaint or Petition, I state as follows:

1. The allegations of Paragraph One are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. The allegations of Paragraph Two are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. The allegations of Paragraph Three are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. The allegations of Paragraph Four are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know

the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:

_____
_____
_____

5. The allegations of Paragraph Five are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:

_____
_____
_____

6. The allegations of Paragraph Six are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:

_____
_____
_____

7. The allegations of Paragraph Seven are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:

_____
_____
_____

8. The allegations of Paragraph Eight are : ___ admitted as true ____ denied as untrue ____ neither admitted or denied because I do not have enough information to know the truth of the matter ____ partly true and partly untrue, specifically as follows:

_____
_____
_____

WHEREFORE, I request

a) That the *Petition for Legitimation* be dismissed and that all relief prayed for by the Plaintiff/Petitioner be denied;

b) That I be given any additional relief as this Court believes to be fair and appropriate.

This _____ day of _____, _____.
(day) (month) (year)

_____
Defendant *pro se*
Address: _____
Telephone: (_____) _____

VERIFICATION

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned duly authorized officer to administer oaths, who on oath, states that the facts set forth in this *Answer* are true and correct to the best of her knowledge and belief.

_____
Defendant/Respondent *pro se*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, 20___.

_____
Notary Public
My commission expires: