

# Discovery in Circuit Court

“Discovery” refers to the process of getting information from another party (Plaintiff or Defendant) in a court case. Common discovery requests may be in the form of written questions, a request for documents, or a request to question a party or witness in person prior to trial. Specific rules determine how and when discovery requests can be made.

## Purpose of Discovery

- Information you receive from another party can help you decide how strong or weak that party’s case may be.
- Information you receive from another party can help you decide whether you would like to take the case to trial or attempt to settle the case.
- In discovery, you may obtain documents and other information you can use at trial. Documents and information may only be shown to the judge in court if permitted under the Rules of Evidence.
- Information you receive from another party can help you prepare your case for trial.

## Interrogatories

- Interrogatories are written questions sent to another party in the case.
- Responses to interrogatories must be written and returned to the party who sent the interrogatories.
- All parties are limited to 30 interrogatories (written questions) sent to any other one party in the case.
- You can view [sample](#) interrogatories in the Maryland Rules of Procedure.
- Maryland Rule of Procedure [2-421](#) controls how and when interrogatories are sent and responded to in circuit court cases.

## Request for Admissions

- A request for admissions is a list of statements sent to another party. The receiving party must admit or deny each statement.
- The rules of procedure do not set a limit on the number of statements in a request for admissions.
- Maryland Rule of Procedure [2-424](#) controls how and when admissions are sent and responded to in circuit court cases.

## Request for Production of Documents

- A request for production of documents is a request for the other party to share documents, including electronic documents.
- The rules of procedure do not set a limit on the number of documents requested.
- Maryland Rule of Procedure [2-422](#) controls how and when to request production of documents and to respond to production of documents requests in circuit court cases.

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## Depositions

- A deposition is a recorded in-person session in which the party who requested the deposition asks questions of another party or witness.
- Maryland Rules of Procedure [2-411 through 2-419](#) control how and when to conduct a deposition.

## Timing of Discovery Requests

- The Maryland Rules of Procedure dictate when discovery requests may be sent to the other side.
- A judge may also issue a scheduling order to set deadlines in your case, including deadlines for when you can request or must respond to discovery.
- You must respond to discovery in the time allowed by the rules of procedure. If you do not follow the discovery rules, the court may issue sanctions against you, which may cause you to lose your case.

## Requesting and Responding to Discovery Requests

- You must send your responses directly to the party who made the request (this is referred to as the “propounding party”). Do not send your responses to the court.
- Send a notice to the court that you have sent out a request for discovery (propounded discovery) or that you have responded to the discovery request.

## Resources on Discovery

- You can visit a [law library](#) for more information on discovery. For more information visit [mdcourts.gov/ccl](http://mdcourts.gov/ccl).
- You can read more about the discovery process at the [People’s Law Library of Maryland](https://peoples-law.org/cat/how-do-i/discovery-and-evidence) at <https://peoples-law.org/cat/how-do-i/discovery-and-evidence>.
- You may wish to speak to an attorney for more information on how to send out discovery requests, respond to requests, and the timing of both making and responding to requests.
- You can speak to an attorney for free at the [Maryland Court Help Center](http://mdcourts.gov/helpcenter) at 410-260-1392, or [mdcourts.gov/helpcenter](http://mdcourts.gov/helpcenter).