



Maricopa County Justice Courts

ABOUT YOUR PRETRIAL CONFERENCE (Criminal Proceeding)

It is mandatory that you attend the pretrial conference, if one has been set in your case. If you have an attorney, your attorney should come with you. If you do not attend the pretrial conference it will be a violation of a court order and a warrant will be issued for your arrest. You may be subject to a \$45.00 warrant fee and other penalties.

- Be in court at least 15 minutes before the scheduled hearing. You must check in at the front counter.
- Please do not bring children to court with you on this day.
- Expect to be here all day.
- Plan ahead and inform your employer, babysitter, or anyone else that this hearing may take most of the day.
- Bring enough change for your needs. The court cannot make change for you.

If you have been appointed a public defender you will meet with your public defender at the pre-trial.

The pretrial conference is for the purpose of discussing the case with the prosecutor, if you wish to do so. The prosecutor will give you or your attorney a copy of the police report. He/she will also advise you or your attorney of the sentence that will be recommended in the event you are convicted.

At this point, you will have three options to consider:

1. Change your plea to guilty or no contest and be sentenced by the Judge (usually on that same day.)
2. You can enter into a plea agreement with the prosecutor and be sentenced according to the terms of the agreement (unless the Judge does not accept the agreement, in which case you have a right to withdraw your plea).
3. You can reject any plea agreement the prosecutor may offer and a trial date will be scheduled.

You will make this decision for yourself or in counsel with your attorney. You cannot appeal from a guilty plea given to the judge or entered by plea agreement. After you have met with the Prosecutor, you must wait for your name to be called to sign additional paperwork or to receive a new court date. Do not leave the court without first checking with the clerk.

The clerks are here to assist you and to ensure you receive all your paperwork. They are not able to answer legal questions. A fine may be imposed on your court date. Fines are . due and payable on the same day they are imposed. If you are not able to pay the fine in full on your court date, you may complete a financial application and meet with a Fines Manager who will determine if you qualify for an installment plan. You may be required to make an initial payment. Additional fees will be added to fines paid by an installment payment plan.

ABOUT YOUR TRIAL

DO YOU NEED A LAWYER?

Only you can answer this question. You may represent yourself, or you may choose to hire an attorney and be represented by that attorney at your trial.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO BEFORE THE TRIAL?

You are responsible for making any necessary preparation for the trial. You may wish to look for evidence in your favor, locate witnesses, and prepare photographs; sketches or maps that might help you explain your case.

The public library should have the Arizona Revised Statutes citing the law for the violation for which you have been charged and the Arizona Rules of Criminal Procedure citing the rules you must follow.

If there are witnesses that you feel will not or cannot come to court without a subpoena, complete and file a subpoena form (available at the court or online at www.JusticeCourts.Maricopa.Gov) and the court will issue the subpoena requiring them to come to court to testify in your case.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE TRIAL?

The prosecutor will present the state's case.

You will have a right to cross-examine each witness for the state.

You may present witnesses or other evidence.

You may testify in your own behalf. If you testify you would be subject to cross-examination by the prosecutor.

If you are found not guilty any bond you have posted will be refunded.

If you are found guilty, a sentence will be imposed.

If you are found guilty, you have the right to appeal the conviction and/or sentence by filing a notice of appeal within fourteen (14) days after the entry of the sentence. The appeal would be a review of the record of the proceedings of the case (not a new trial).