

Paperless Plea Policy

Purpose:

This section outlines the procedures for processing plea paperwork electronically in County Criminal Court #11. The goal is to streamline the plea process, reduce paper usage, and enhance efficiency while ensuring all legal requirements are met.

Scope:

This policy applies to all plea agreements processed in County Criminal Court #11, involving the assistant district attorney, defense attorneys, the judge, and court staff.

Policy Statement:

County Criminal Court #11 operates a paperless plea process. The assistant district attorney (ADA) uses tablets to load and manage plea paperwork, which is then reviewed, signed, and electronically processed by all parties involved. This process ensures that all documents are securely saved, properly uploaded to the case management system, and handled in accordance with court protocols.

Procedures:**1. Loading and Reviewing Plea Paperwork:**

The ADA will load the plea paperwork onto one of the three designated tablets.

Once the paperwork is prepared, the ADA will provide the tablet to the defense attorney. The defense attorney will review the plea with their client using the tablet, ensuring that all terms and conditions are clearly understood.

2. Signing the Plea Paperwork:

After the defense attorney and client have reviewed the plea, all necessary parties, including the defendant, defense attorney, and ADA, will sign the plea paperwork electronically in their designated areas on the tablet.

The tablet is then provided to the judge for final review.

3. Judge's Approval and Document Upload:

The judge will electronically sign the plea paperwork on the tablet and save the document to a designated OneDrive folder.

The judge will then access this OneDrive folder from her computer and upload the signed documents to the court's case management system, Odyssey.

Once the paperwork is successfully uploaded to Odyssey, the documents will be electronically forwarded to the clerks for processing.

4. Fingerprinting:

The bailiff will take the defendant's fingerprints using a traditional fingerprint card, separate from the electronic tablet process.

The fingerprint card will be handled and processed according to standard court procedures.

5. Document Security and Backup:

All electronic documents will be stored securely in the OneDrive folder, with appropriate access controls in place to ensure confidentiality and data integrity.

Regular backups of the OneDrive folder will be conducted to prevent data loss.

Responsibility:

The ADA is responsible for preparing and loading the plea paperwork onto the tablets.

The defense attorney is responsible for reviewing the plea with their client and ensuring all signatures are obtained.

The judge is responsible for reviewing, signing, and uploading the plea paperwork to the case management system.

The bailiff is responsible for taking fingerprints using the fingerprint card.

The clerks are responsible for final processing of the uploaded documents.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology, court procedures, or legal requirements