

County Criminal Court No. 7
Hon. Remeko Tranisha Edwards
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Date Licensed: **November 4, 2005**

Year Elected/Appointed: **2019**

Previous legal experience/area of practice before becoming a judge:

Attorney (Criminal/Family/Juvenile/Federal), Probation Officer, Court-Coordinator, and Detention Officer.

Clerk's Name and Phone No.: **Nora Morales (214) 653-5660**

Court Coordinator's Name and Phone No.: **Tonya Payne / (214) 653-5665**

Bailiff's Name and Phone No.: **Sakima Wisdom / (214) 653-1167**

Court Reporter's Name and Phone No.: **Estrella Pineda / (214) 653-5666**

CCC 7 ADA's Phone No.: **(214) 653-5120 or (214) 653-5119**

CCC 7 Probation Officer: **David Loza / (214) 653-5393 or (214) 712-3056**

CCC 7 Email Address (optional): **tonya.payne@dallascounty.org**

COURT SETTINGS

Describe the Court's policies regarding court settings. How many announcement settings are allowed before a disposition setting?

Three (3) generally after the case is filed; however, it may be at the discretion of the court, depending on the case circumstances. All 2024 and older cases with more than three (3) resets after case filed, MUST see Judge to pass the case to a future date and Defendant MUST be present.

How many plea settings does the Court allow before disposition?

Two (2) generally; however, it may be at the discretion of the court, depending on the case circumstances. All 2024 and older cases with more than two (2) plea settings MUST see Judge for

a future court date and the Defendant **MUST** be present. All 2024 and older cases pass slips with a reset date **MUST** have an ADA's signature and a written recommendation from an ADA.

What length of time is allowed between passes (jail vs. bond vs. MTR)?

Jail Case Resets: 7 days or as approved by Judge.

Bond Case Resets: 30 days or as approved by Judge.

MTR Case Resets: 30 days or as approved by Judge.

Is the Defendant required to be present at all settings (including first setting)?

No, the attorney of record may appear on Defendant's behalf for non-dispositive settings or until the case is set for disposition. All motion hearings, pleas, or trial settings the defendant **MUST appear with the attorney of record. Also, if a case is 2024 or older with more than five (5) settings after filing, the Defendant **MUST** appear.**

When are Defendants in jail brought down on the jail chain?

Depends on the case filing or the overnight jail activity reports reviewed by the Court Coordinator. Ms. Payne will contact the defense counsel and inform if Defendant will be on the jail chain. Defense counsel may also request their client on the jail chain for dispositive settings.

Is the DA required to sign the pass slip?

Yes.

If so, when?

All dispositive settings and motion hearings. In addition, if the case is 2024 or older with a recommendation from the State of Texas.

What are the Court's policies regarding bond forfeitures?

Bond Forfeitures issued when Defendant fail to appear for Court and/or Attorney of Record failed to reset a case. A bond is held insufficient when a probation revocation filed and/or a Defendant violates current bond conditions (i.e. interlock, ELM, new arrest, etc.).

When are the bond forfeitures called?

Daily by Court Coordinator check of the Docket.

What are the Court's policies regarding reinstatement?

Attorney of Record files a Motion to Reinstate bond or appear before the Court with request and a copy of the case docket sheet. It is the Court's discretion if a cash or surety bond is

set. The Court reviews all ATGOB requests and if a Defendant fails to appear for setting and the ATGOB was filed prior to a missed court setting, the Court will grant ATGOB and hold the bond insufficient. At such time, the Court will set a new bond amount on the case docket sheet. The Judge signs bond forfeitures daily and write the amount of the new bond on the docket sheet.

PLEAS AND MOTIONS TO REVOKE

Describe the Court's procedure regarding pleas. What preliminary work must be completed before the Court will take the plea? (e.g., clerks type the judgments, etc.)

The Court is open for in person court hearings and announcement settings. Virtual hearings are available by request of the Attorney of Record. All plea documents are requested from the assigned ADA for the case. Upon completion of signed plea paperwork, Defense Counsel may present documents to the Court in person or via the assigned ADA, if a virtual hearing has been requested and electronically signed plea documents returned. This court does utilize the Magistrate Court and Judge for plea hearings if necessary; however, only with approval by the Judge or Court is in trial.

What are the Court's policies regarding the Pre-Sentence Investigation?

N/A.

Does the Court accept plea bargains on all cases?

YES.

If not, when are plea bargains not accepted?

Upon cases being set for trial and plea negotiations are over and a plea offer has expired.

What are the Court's policies regarding open pleas?

Defense counsel informs the Court of the open plea request prior to plea and with knowledge to the State of Texas prior to submitting paperwork to the Court.

Are parties required to sit at counsel table or may they stand at the bench?

Parties may sit at counsel table or stand before the bench.

Does the Court require the Defendant to enter the first half of the plea before the PSI?

Generally, not applicable; however, if agreed upon by the parties, Court will consider if necessary.

What conditions of probation are typically assessed?

All Cases - Standard Conditions of Probation for an offense. This Court waives community service hours if probationer completes one (1) named condition by the Court within 30 days of the plea completed or upon a specified time given by the Judge if applicable.

Can the Defendant request community service to be served at a particular venue?

Court will consider community service completed from all Court Approved Probation service providers.

What alternatives to incarceration does the Court typically utilize (specific rehabs, bootcamp, shock, etc.)?

ELM, House Arrest, Treatment, & Counseling (case-by-case basis).

What are the Court's policies regarding work release?

Case-by-case basis with discretion of Judge. ELM will attach as condition of bond or for a sentence with house arrest granted for work release purposes.

What are the Court's policies regarding Motions to Revoke?

Must be filed and Defendant checks in with the Court and Probation Officer each setting until disposition of the case. Defense counsel may request a hearing regarding filed motion.

Who makes the recommendations for punishment (DA, Probation Officer, or all open)?

ADA makes recommendations to the Court for punishment with consideration of probation officer recommendation.

MAGISTRATE COURTS/VISITING JUDGES

Describe the Court's policy on the use of Magistrate Courts and visiting judges. For what types of cases or matters do you request the use of Magistrate Court (agreed pleas, ODL'S, bond hearings)?

If presiding or sitting judge for the court is not available, the Magistrate Courts and Judges may be used for agreed pleas, ODL's, jail chain. And Bond Review Hearings with approval of the Court and/or Court Coordinator in the absence of the Judge. All female inmates are brought to Magistrate Court for the jail chain unless special circumstances or requests made by the defense attorney or state.

COURT APPOINTMENTS

Describe how court appointments are conducted in your court. Does the Court use a Public Defender?

Two (2) Public Defenders serve the Court and are assigns 50 cases each month for a total

of 100 cases. In addition, the court assigns cases to the private bar through the Court Wheel for appointments to attorneys for indigent defendants.

If so, what types of cases are reserved for the Public Defender?

All cases are randomly assigned and when a Public Defender reaches the allocated monthly case assigned limit, the Court assigns and appoints defense attorney via the Indigent Defense Portal.

When should a lawyer report to court to do the jail chain?

By 8:30 AM.

Is the jail chain required to be finished by a certain time?

Noon. Court will resume after lunch for docket.

Are lawyers allowed to go into the holdover during trial?

YES.

Are the prosecutors required to put recommendations in the file the day before?

Recommendations should be in writing and included on pass slips. The State of Texas should extend offers via TechShare once conveyed to Defense Attorney until final plea or trial setting.

Does the Court give back time credit for fines and court costs?

YES.

Any other special considerations regarding jail chain cases?

All jail chain cases reviewed by assigned Defense Attorney and the Court's daily goal is for the jail chain to be clear prior to lunch break by the Court.

PRETRIAL MATTERS

Describe any specific requirements of the Court regarding filing motions with the court.

By E-file and a copy made available for Court if requesting a hearing be set or motion heard. Any caselaw for a hearing should be submitted to the Court within 48 hrs prior to the hearing.

Is there any specific time or other requirement for filing motions prior to the hearing?

Proper notice and copies of motions given to opposing side and the court if hearing necessary or requested.

Does the Court accept filings by fax or e-mail?

Court accepts copies of E-filed motions by email for the Court's review and consideration upon notice by filing party and with copies made available to the assigned ADA or Defense attorney as applicable.

If available, where can this filing be made?

Email requests to court coordinator at tonya.payne@dallascounty.org for review and submission to the Court after proper filing with the Clerk's office via the E-File portal.

If an order needs a signature by the Judge, the Attorney of Record shall approach the Court and urge the filed motion.

If a motion needs a hearing set by the Court, the Attorney of Record shall approach the assigned ADA of the Court, agree on hearing date, and submit pass slip to the court coordinator for a hearing on the Court's docket.

Describe any specific requirements of the Court regarding Pretrial Motions. Do you specifically schedule Pretrial Hearings?

Generally, a Thursday or Friday before a trial setting or otherwise approved by the Court. Pre-Trial date designated when a case is set for trial. Defendant must appear for Pre-Trial hearing unless otherwise excused by the Court.

What matters are handled on the day of trial and when (before or after voir dire)?

Generally, none unless special circumstances. If requested, motions may be heard prior to the beginning of voir dire.

Do you want the attorneys to confer upon agreed matters before approaching the bench?

YES. Thus, inform the Court prior to plea or request of agreement with the State of Texas (SOT) or assigned ADA of the Court shall appear with Defense Attorney at time of hearing or request if SOT opposed.

Describe the Court's requirements and policies regarding Motions for Continuance or Motions to Withdraw.

Written motion filed and shared with opposing party. Motion for Continuance must be heard by the Judge. Non agreed Motion for Continuances shall appear before the Court for the request. A case will not be continued without the SOT and Defense appearing before the Court on or before hearing set and the request for continuance granted. After a new date for hearing agreed upon, a pass-slip should be submitted to the Court Coordinator to properly reset the case.

Motion to Withdraw by the Defendant Attorney are granted with proper notice sent by Defense Attorney to the Defendant to appear in Court. Notice should be sent by mail, with a certified return receipt requested and notice of court setting for MTW as Counsel. If Defendant fails to appear after notice, MTW should be granted.

Describe the Court's requirements or policies regarding Bonds and Bond Hearings.

A motion may be filed, or the Defense Attorney / SOT may appear before the Court with request regarding a bond. Hearings are available with the Court if requested.

For motions filed by SOT to hold a bond insufficient, a hearing needs to be set if Defense disagrees with motion filed and request a hearing by the Court.

Describe the Court's requirements or policies regarding competency hearings.

Case-by-case review.

Does the Court prefer briefs or case law to be presented to the court prior to hearings?

YES, but not mandatory or by policy of the Court.

How should same be organized (case law highlighted, etc.)?

Case law should be submitted to Court and opposing party for review at least 48 hours prior to a hearing by each side with argument of presenting party.

What are the Court's specific policies regarding Occupational Licenses and Expunctions?

Standard requirements by law. ODL are heard by the County Criminal Court Magistrate Judge assigned.

Who hears the Motion (Court or Magistrate)?

Generally, Magistrate Judge hear/sign ODL orders. Expunctions and Petition Non-Disclosure are heard/signed by the presiding judge of the Court.

Describe the Court's policy on appointing experts, investigators, and interpreters.

Case-by-case review.

COURT DOCKETS

Describe the Court's policy regarding the setting of the Court docket. Who does the attorney contact to get a trial setting?

See assigned ADA and Court Coordinator.

Are policies different for TBJ vs. TBC?

NO.

Does the Court require a waiver be signed before getting a TBC setting?

YES.

What days of the week are TBJ's and TBC's set?

Generally, TBJ / TBC's are generally set on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of a week.

When are competency trials set and Motions to Revoke set?

Generally, competency trials and Motion to Revoke are set on a case-by-case basis if necessary.

Are there any other special settings?

Case-by-case review by Court and parties. All cases older than 2024 or with 10 or more resets must have court approval to reset to a future date on the Court's docket.

TRIALS

What is the Court's policy regarding calling the Trial Docket?

Called at 9:00 AM, all parties must be present unless otherwise agreed and ordered by the Judge.

Is the docket order determined before the day of trial?

YES.

What time are attorneys (State and Defense) required to announce ready?

9:00 AM.

When are police officers and other State's witnesses required to be present?

8:30 AM or when advised.

When does the Court typically begin voir dire?

Generally, when all parties present and the Court is ready to begin.

Does the Court allow a plea on the day of trial?

Yes, if parties agree and offer still extended.

If not, when must the plea be completed or accepted before trial date?

Depends on the agreement of the parties or order of the Court.

Trial Motions

When should parties present motions in limine and other trial motions?

During discovery period and no later than 10 days prior to trial.

Does the Court have any special rules or policies governing same?

None at this time.

Voir Dire

Describe the Court's specific policies on conducting voir dire. What is the Court's policy regarding time limits?

25 minutes per side.

Does the Court conduct any portion of the voir dire, and, if so, describe what the Court does.

Yes, introduction, rules of the court, and the law.

What is the Court's procedure for striking jurors (i.e., during voir dire or after completion for voir dire)?

Generally, after voir dire unless necessary by the Court during voir dire.

Does the Court question jurors for cause during voir dire or after completion?

Generally, after voir dire unless concern or issue presented to the Court during the process.

Opening and Closing Statements

Describe any specific requirements the Court has regarding opening and closing statements. Does the Court impose specific time limits?

YES.

What are they?

Generally, 10 minutes but court considers extension of time if requested.

Trial Decorum

Describe the Court's specific policies regarding trial decorum (e.g., addressing the court, opposing counsel, or witnesses, approaching the witness, talking or passing notes at counsel table, beverages allowed at counsel table, etc.).

Always Respect the Court. General rules apply (i.e., stand when addressing the court;

counsel and client stand when the verdict is read; direct all objections, arguments and other comments by counsel to the judge or jury and not opposing counsel; respect others speaking; approach the bench by request only; etc.).

Scheduling

Describe typical scheduling during a jury trial. When does the Court typically begin voir dire?

When all parties are present and the Court is ready to proceed.

When does testimony typically begin (same or next day)?

Generally, same day.

During the trial, when does the Court usually break for the day and resume in the morning?

Generally, by 4:30 PM, unless special circumstances.

What are the Court's policies regarding breaks?

Court's discretion and when requested if special circumstances.

Audio/Visual Equipment

Does the Court provide its own blackboard, easel, overhead projector, video equipment, or other presentation equipment?

YES.

What arrangements must be made to use them?

Contact the court with request if additional equipment needed for a hearing.

Does the Court have special rules or preferences regarding physical or demonstrative evidence?

Make sure each exhibit is marked properly and given to court reporter before leaving the court daily. If exhibit does not fit in the exhibit locker, not accepted. The Court does not keep weapons or blood kits.

GENERAL COURTROOM DECORUM

Describe the rules and policies the Court has regarding courtroom decorum. Are there specific rules regarding dress and behavior?

Respect the Court and others. No shorts allowed. Please do not request to approach the bench if not properly dressed for court.

Does the Court allow beverages to be brought into the courtroom?

Yes, if in a proper container.

Are attorneys allowed to go into the holdover during trial or other court proceedings?

Yes, communicate with the bailiff before entering the holdover with a Defendant.

What is the Court's policy on allowing cameras and other news equipment in the courtroom?

None allowed unless approved by the court prior to use.

OTHER

Anything the Court would like attorneys practicing before it to know that is not covered above?

County Criminal Court No. 7 has an open-door policy. If you have any concerns, complaints, or suggestions please do not hesitate to come and speak with the Presiding Judge. Please come to Court prepared to properly and effectively represent your client daily according to your oath taken and responsibility to the Court. We are here to serve the community and provide justice with respect to all who appear in Dallas County Criminal Court No. 7, Dallas County, Texas.

"SERVICE IS THE RENT WE PAY FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF LIVING ON EARTH..." SHIRLEY CHISHOLM