



Trial

- Trial is when a Jury hears about your case from your Defense Attorney, the State Attorney, and "Witnesses." Witnesses are people who say they know about your case.
- You don't have to talk about your case to the Jury or Judge.
- You shouldn't talk unless your Defense Attorney says OK.
- If you think something is wrong, you should whisper it to your Defense Attorney.
- The Jury decides if you are:

"Not Guilty"

- ❖ You won't have any punishment.
- ❖ You won't have a criminal record.
- ❖ You don't have to do anything else for your case.

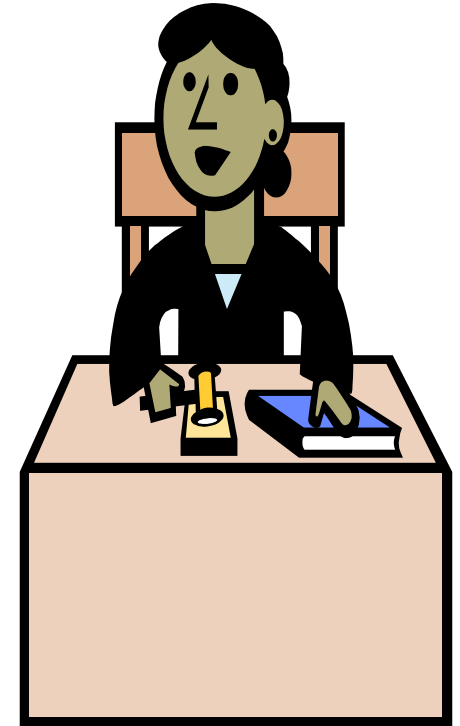
"Guilty"

- ❖ You'll have a punishment.
- ❖ You may go to jail or prison.
- ❖ You'll have a criminal record.

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THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

GOING TO COURT



This brochure contains general information that is current through the date of publication (10-5-09). It should not be used as a substitute for legal advice. If you have questions about this information, then you should talk to a lawyer.

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GOING TO COURT



What rules do I have to follow in Court?

- A Judge is a person who is the boss in the Courtroom.
- Judges have rules about what a person can do in Court.
- Follow the Judge's rules. If you don't, you can get in serious trouble.
- Here are some other rules to follow in court:
 - ❖ If you can, dress in nice clothes.
 - ❖ Whisper when you talk.
 - ❖ Talk only to your Defense Attorney. Don't talk to the Judge directly. Don't talk to the State Attorney.
 - ❖ If you want the State Attorney or the Judge to know something, tell your Defense Attorney.

When Do I Go To Court?

- It's very important to go to *every* Court Date. Find out your court date.
- Find out your court date by:
 - ❖ Looking at your "Notice to Appear" if the police officer gave you one.

- ❖ Looking at letters from the court or your Defense Attorney.
- ❖ Looking at the paper you signed at your last court date.
- ❖ Calling your Defense Attorney.
- If you don't go to Court when you're supposed to, the Judge can send you to jail.

What Are Important Court Days?

- 1) "Arraignment"
 - On this Court Day, the State Attorney tells the Court what crimes they think you did.
 - You tell the Court what you want to do about your Case. You can say:

"Not Guilty:" This means

- ❖ You want to go to Trial, or
- ❖ You want your Defense Attorney help get you a better Plea Deal.

"Guilty" or "No Contest:" This means you want to agree to the State Attorney's offer.

- ❖ It means you'll be punished.
- ❖ Punishment can be: jail or prison time, probation and having a permanent criminal record.
- Never say "yes" to a Plea Deal if you don't understand it.
- It is very hard to take back a Plea Deal if you tell the Judge you agree to it.

2) "Pre-trial Conference"

- You have 3 choices at Pre-trial Conference. You can:
 1. Go to Trial: this means that you did not do a crime. Your Defense Attorney will help you decide if you should go to Trial.
 2. Enter a Plea: means you want to agree to the State Attorney's Plea Deal; including punishment.
 3. "Continue:" means you want more time for your Defense Attorney to work on your Case. Don't ask the Judge to Continue your Case a lot of times.

3) "Trial Status"

- Trial Status is almost the same as Pre-trial Conference.
- State Attorneys and Defense Attorneys may use this Court Day to tell the Judge if they're ready for Trial.
- It may also be used for people to agree to a Plea Deal.

4) "Jury Selection"

- Your Defense Attorney will pick a Jury for your Trial.
- You can sit with your Defense Attorney while they pick a Jury. You should help.

