

Basic Rules of Court Conduct

City of Cornelia

If you have been ordered to appear in court, the information below will assist you before your appearance. This information does not constitute legal advice. If you require legal assistance, please consult an attorney. For more information about specific court policies, or if you have any questions that are not covered below, please contact the court clerk's office.

When appearing in Court

- Be on time
- Throw away gum, food and drinks before entering courtroom
- Stand when judge enters and leaves the courtroom
- Stand when speaking to the judge
- Speak clearly when speaking or responding to the judge
- Always address the judge as "Your Honor"
- Never interrupt the judge. If you are unsure of what you heard, wait until the judge or other person speaking has finished
- Enter and leave the courtroom quietly, so you do not disturb others
- Only approach the bench when instructed to do so

Prohibited items: Items that should NOT enter the courthouse:

- Weapons of any kind
- Electronic recording equipment such as a video or voice recorder or camera
- Food, beverages, chewing gum and tobacco

Security Precautions: You should allow the officer to search any bags, packages or personal belongings that will be taken into court. If you refuse to cooperate, you may be denied entry to the facility.

Cell phones and mobile devices: The use of cell phones and other mobile devices will not be allowed in the courtroom, turn your phone off.

Dressing for Court: If you are appearing in court, you should dress in a professional manner that shows respect for the court.

Here are some things you should **NOT** wear:

- Hats or other head coverings inside the courtroom (except those worn for religious or medical reasons)
- Sunglasses
- T-shirts depicting violence, sexual acts, profanity or illegal drugs
- Tube or halter tops/plunging necklines or bare midriffs
- Ripped or torn jeans
- Miniskirts or shorts
- Baggy pants that fall before the waist
- Muscle shirts (usually worn as undergarments)

If you are not dressed properly, you may be asked to leave the court and return at a later date. This will delay your hearing and require you to appear in court more than once.

Respect: The courtroom is a place of order and structure. You should at all times act in a respectful manner in front of the judge. Once the court has made a ruling in your case and you have completed your obligations to the court, you should exit the courtroom in a quiet manner in order not to disrupt the court. Failure to do so may result in being held in contempt which could lead to jail time or a fine.