County Court at Law 2

Important Notice

EIGHTH AMENDED NOTICE REGARDING COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 2 COURT PROCEDURES DURING THE CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 EMERGENCY Last Updated: June 1, 2020

In compliance with the COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Fort Bend County Judiciary, which was approved by Judge Susan Brown, the Presiding Judge over the Eleventh Administrative Judicial Region on May 26, 2020, in-person hearings will resume on June 1, 2020 for criminal plea/non-issue dockets, arraignment dockets and any other docket County Court at Law No. 2 (the "Court") designates as an in-person hearing. Jury trials will not resume until after August 1, 2020, or later. Guidance from the Office of Court Administration will be forthcoming on the procedure to resume jury trials.

All criminal plea/non-issue cases that the attorney or pro-se defendant intends to reset will do so electronically. The electronic reset ensures compliance with the COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Fort Bend County Judiciary, and reduces the number of people within the courthouse. In-person dockets shall be for pleas or oral arguments only, NOT to reset a case. The Court encourages all business be conducted remotely, if possible. If you intend to plea your client to the alleged charges, you must submit all plea paperwork to the Court the Friday before your scheduled docket. Failure to submit the paperwork will result in your hearing being rescheduled.

The Court has adopted the following procedure for electronic resets:

The attorney of record will email the Court Coordinator to receive a new date and an electronic reset form to be signed by both the defendant and attorney before their next hearing date. If the attorney of record is having trouble getting their client to sign a reset they need to email the coordinator, Candi Hooper at <u>candi.hooper@fortbendcountytx.gov</u> for alternatives. It is the attorney's responsibility to notify his/her client of the new court date, and ensure their appearance;

Unrepresented defendants shall email the Court Coordinator, Candi Hooper at <u>candi.hooper@fortbendcountytx.gov</u> to receive an electronic reset.

This reset policy does not apply to the Court's juvenile dockets, civil dockets or probate dockets.

We ask that the public be patient and understanding for any inconvenience these changes may cause. The Court is following all governing guidance. These measures are in place for the health and safety of the public and court personnel. Continue to look to the Court's website for further details and information.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Candi Hooper, Court Coordinator, via email at <u>candi.hooper@fortbendcountytx.gov</u>, and Brenda Michalik, Probate Auditor, via email at <u>brenda.michalik@fortbendcountytx.gov</u>.

NOTICE OF ACCOMMODATIONS FOR AT-RISK INDIVIDUALS

DUE TO COVID-19 MANY OF YOU ARE PART OF THE VULNERABLE POPULATION. INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE OVER 65 AND INDIVIDUALS WITH SERIOUS UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS, SUCH AS HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, CHRONIC LUNG DISEASE, OBESITY, ASTHMA, AND THOSE WHOSE IMMUNE SYSTEMS ARE COMPROMISED SUCH AS BY CHEMOTHERAPY FOR CANCER OR OTHER CONDITIONS REQUIRING SUCH THERAPY ARE CONSIDERED TO BE VULNERABLE POPULATIONS. IF YOU ARE PART OF THIS VULNERABLE POPULATION PLEASE CONTACT THE COURT AT <u>candi.hooper@fortbendcountytx.gov</u>

TO ADVISE THE COURT REGARDING YOUR NEED FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS AND A SPECIALIZED DOCKET TO ENSURE YOUR CONTINUED SAFETY.

Honorable Jeffrey A. McMeans, Judge

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