

# DRESS, CIVILITY AND COURT PROCEDURES

**The following guidelines can help you understand some basic rules for your court appearance. When you come to court you must be dressed appropriately and behave with civility.**

1. When you enter either courthouse you must go through security screening. It is against the law to bring weapons and contraband into the courthouses.
2. Always arrive in court a few minutes early. Bring your Order to Appear/Subpoena and all of your relevant documents with you. Do not bring your children with you unless absolutely necessary or required.
3. In **criminal** cases, if you do not appear at the scheduled time an arrest warrant will be issued.
4. In **civil** cases, if you do not appear at the scheduled time, your case may be heard without you or dismissed. In some cases, a warrant will be issued for not obeying a court order to appear.
5. Wear long pants or a dress, shoes and an appropriate shirt without slogans or advertisements. Pants must be worn at the waist, covering the hips, without displaying underwear, as required by Lafourche Parish Ordinance 15:18 and La. R.S. 14:106. Do not wear shower shoes, flip-flops, shorts or gang symbols. Do not wear "political cause" buttons or vulgar words on your clothing. Remove sunglasses and hats inside the courthouses.
6. Be courteous to everyone in the courthouse. Showing anger or hostility will not help your case. Do not curse, use vulgar gestures or call people insulting names. Do not threaten, confront or argue with people in the courthouses. When finished, leave peacefully.
7. Make sure to **turn off all cell phones and smart phones** before entering the courtroom. If it is left on and interrupts court, or if you attempt to use it during court, the bailiff will seize it. You will then face a contempt hearing with the judge, possibly resulting in jail or a fine, before it will be returned to you.
8. Recording or taking pictures in court is not allowed by law. Any attempt to do so could result in your being held in contempt of court with a penalty of jail, fines or both.
9. If you have hearing problems or a serious medical condition, notify court personnel before the trial begins.
10. Notify the court more than fifteen (15) days in advance if you need a sign language or foreign language interpreter.
11. The bailiff has control of the courtroom when the judge is not on the bench or court is in recess. You are to follow his/her instructions and directions.
12. When your case is called to begin, you will be instructed where to be seated.
13. Because the judge will be making the decision in your case, the judge is not allowed to talk to you about your case outside of court unless all parties are present. Do not try to talk with the judge or have anyone else do so. Also, the judge cannot give you legal advice about your case.
14. Do not leave the courtroom until your case is over and the judge excuses you.