

§ IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT
§ OF THE CITY OF FERRIS
§ ELLIS COUNTY, TEXAS

LOCAL RULES FOR THE
MUNICIPAL COURT
CITY OF FERRIS, TEXAS

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Table of Contents

Page

1. RULE ONE: AUTHORITY

1.1 Authority for Rules	4
1.2 Application	4
1.3 Effective Date	4
1.4 Availability	4
1.5 Citation Form	4
1.6 Authority of Municipal Court Judges	4
1.7 Hours of Operation	5

2. RULE TWO: COURTROOM DECORUM

2.1 Formal Opening	5
2.2 Conduct Required of All Persons Attending Court	5
2.3 Conduct Required of all Attorneys and Pro se Defendants	6
2.4 No Recording Inside the Courtroom	7

3. RULE THREE: APPEARANCE, BONDS AND PLEAS

3.1 Appearance	7
3.2 Information on Dispositions Given Only to the Attorney of Record	7
3.3 Bond Required	8
3.3.1 Oath of Surety Required on Bonds	8
3.3.2 Cash Bond Required After Forfeiture of Surety	8
3.4 Payment in Full Constitutes Plea of Guilty by Defendant	8
3.5 Plea by Defendant	8
3.6 Request for Assistance	9

4.	RULE FOUR: NOTICE	
	4.1 Responsibility	9
	4.2 Notice	9
	4.3 Verbal Representations	9
	4.4 Complaint	9
5.	RULE FIVE: MOTIONS	
	5.1 Motions of Continuance	9
	5.1.1 Code	10
	5.1.2 Form	10
	5.1.3 Emergency Motions	10
	5.1.4 Factors	10
	5.1.5 Denied Motions	11
	5.2 Vacation Letters	11
	5.3 Motions to Withdraw	11
	5.3.1 Multiple Attorneys of Record	11
	5.3.2 Withdrawal without a Hearing	12
	5.3.3 Withdrawal with a Hearing	12
	5.3.4 Substitution of Counsel	12
	5.3.5. Requirements for Appearance as Co-Counsel	12
	5.3.6 Affidavit of Intent to Surrender and Affidavit of Surrender	12
	5.3.7 Motions for Discovery; Pre-trial, Trial and Post-Trial Motions	12
	5.3.8. Sua Sponte Order on Discovery	13
	5.3.9 Prosecutor’s Representations on Discovery	14
6.	RULE SIX: OFF-DOCKET PROCEDURES	
	6.1 Off-Docket Motions	15
	6.2 Open Court	15
7.	RULE SEVEN: ATTORNEY PLEA DOCKETS	
	7.1 Attorney Plea Dockets	15
	7.2 Failure of Defendant to Appear	15
	7.3 Reset to APD	15
	7.4 Attorneys to Appear Timely	16
	7.5 Posting of an Attorney Bond Places Case on APD	16
8.	RULE EIGHT: TRIAL SETTINGS	
	8.1 Docket Order	16
	8.2 Preferential Setting	16
	8.3 Defendants Must Attend Trial Dockets	17

9.	RULE NINE: JUVENILE PROCEEDINGS AND MINORS	
	9.1 Juvenile Defined	17
	9.2 Entering a Plea	17
	9.3 Notice of Current Address	17
	9.4 Minor in Possession and other Alcoholic Beverage Code Violations	17
10.	RULE TEN: POST TRIAL PROCEEDINGS	
	10.1 Admonishment	17
	10.2 Inability to Pay Fine	17
	10.3 Indigence upon Appeal	18
11.	RULE ELEVEN: SEVERABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION	
	11.1 Severability	18
	11.2 Inapplicability to Civil Cases	18
	11.3 Construction	18
12.	ADOPTION	18

RULE ONE: AUTHORITY

1.1 Authority for Rules

Under the inherent power and duty of all Texas courts as codified in Section 21.001 of the Texas Government Code, the following Local Rules of the Municipal Court of the City of Ferris, Texas (hereinafter "*Local Rules*") are promulgated and shall apply and govern any and all proceedings held within any Municipal Court of the City of Ferris, Ellis County, Texas. These rules are adopted for the purpose of securing uniformity in those proceedings and in order to promote justice.

1.2 Application

The *Local Rules* apply to attorneys and their staff members, to each Defendant representing himself/herself (hereinafter "*pro se Defendants*"), to all court staff, to the City's Prosecutor, and to witnesses and observers. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the imposition of sanctions, including contempt.

1.3 Effective Date

These *Local Rules* are effective January 14, 2014 and supersede all previous Local Rules and Standing Orders of the Ferris Municipal Court that are in conflict with these Rules.

1.4 Availability

A copy of these *Local Rules* shall be available in the courtroom of the Ferris Municipal Court and on the City of Ferris website, which can be accessed at www.cityofferris.org.

1.5 Citation Form

These *Local Rules* shall be known as the Local Rules of the Municipal Court of the City of Ferris, Texas and each rule may be cited as "Ferris Local Rule ____" or "FLR ____".

1.6 Authority of Municipal Court Judges

The Municipal Court Judge may be assisted by an Alternate Municipal Judge sitting for the Municipal Court Judge in his absence, and who has authority of the Municipal Court Judge in general on the cases heard by the Associate Judge as does any Municipal Judge of a Court of Record in the State of Texas. The Municipal Court Judge and each Alternate Municipal Judge is also a Magistrate for every county into which the City of Ferris extends and has all authority as a Magistrate of those counties, as set forth in state law.

1.7 Hours of Operation

The hours of operation of the Ferris Municipal Court shall be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Hours of operation shall be posted on the City of Ferris website at www.cityofferris.org. Any exception to said hours shall be for City observed holidays or as determined by the City Manager of the City of Ferris. The foregoing notwithstanding, the Municipal Court Judge shall have the authority to schedule the dockets of the court during the hours of operation of the court's offices.

RULE TWO: COURTROOM DECORUM

2.1 Formal Opening

Each session of the Court shall be brought to order by formal announcement by Bailiff of the Court.

2.2 Conduct Required of All Persons Attending Court

Court is in session whenever the Judge is on the Bench. While the Court is in session, unless the Judge directs otherwise, the following conduct must be observed:

- a. No smoking or use of tobacco products, including snuff or chewing tobacco.
- b. No propping feet or sitting on tables, railings or the backs of benches or chairs.
- c. No loud noises. Any children brought into the Courtroom must be quiet or they must be removed from the Courtroom.
- d. No eating or drinking in the Courtroom.
- e. No standing in the Courtroom, except when addressing the Court or by direction of the Judge, or when necessitated by the business of the Court.
- f. No gestures, facial expressions or sounds indicating approval or disapproval of a ruling by the Court or a comment on testimony of a witness.
- g. All persons, whether lawyers, parties, witnesses, jurors, or spectators, conducting business, participating in trials, or otherwise attending proceedings in a courtroom of the Municipal Court of the City of Ferris, Texas, shall be dressed appropriately so as to maintain the dignity, integrity, decorum, seriousness and professional atmosphere of the Court and the administration of justice. As such, no inappropriate attire, including short shorts, tank tops, sleeveless shirts, jeans with holes or cut-outs, low pants with underwear showing or inappropriate "message" shirts, or sunglasses shall be allowed. No hats or head coverings including scarves, bandanas or do-rags shall be worn in the Courtroom, unless such item is of a religious nature or for medical reasons.

- h. All male attorneys shall wear coats and ties inside the Courtroom or shall be excluded from the Courtroom by the Bailiff or his/her designee. Female attorneys shall wear appropriate professional attire inside the Courtroom.
- i. No unattended children in the Courtroom.
- j. No cellular telephone calls are to be made in the Courtroom. All phones shall be set to vibrate or turned off. Any device which rings or otherwise makes noise may be taken by the Bailiff or his designee and not returned until the conclusion of the court proceeding.
- k. Absolutely no weapons shall be brought into the Courtroom, with the exception of those intended to be offered as evidence. The foregoing notwithstanding, Commissioned peace officers may bring weapons in the Courtroom. The Judge shall have the discretion to have any object removed from the Courtroom.

2.3 Conduct Required of all Attorneys and pro se Defendants

Attorneys shall observe both the letter and the spirit of all Canons of Ethics and the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, including those Canons concerning improper ex parte communication with the Judge and those dealing with discussion of cases with representatives of the media. In addition the following rules of conduct shall be observed:

- a. Attorneys shall advise their clients and witnesses of all of the *Local Rules* that may be applicable, and shall ensure that their clients and witnesses follow and fully adhere to all such rules.
- b. Pro se Defendants (Defendants acting as their own attorney) shall conform their behavior to all provisions of the Canons of Ethics applicable to licensed Attorney. Pro se Defendants shall not attempt to converse with the Judge about their cases unless the prosecuting attorney is present.
- c. Attorneys and Pro se Defendants shall be dressed appropriately while in Court. (Attorneys: See Rule 2.2 h above.)
- d. All parties shall be prompt in arriving for Court and attending to Court business. Attorneys, Defendants represented by Attorneys and Pro se Defendants shall be on time or the bonds on their cases are subject to forfeiture. Any attorney with a scheduling conflict preventing his or her arrival to the court shall notify the Court at least 24 hours before the court setting, , unless the delay could not be anticipated.
- e. Failure of an attorney representing a Defendant or Pro se Defendant to appear on time and as scheduled may result in a warrant being issued for the Defendant. An

Attorney who fails to appear timely may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to contempt.

- f. During trial or any hearing, all objections, arguments and comments shall be directed to the Judge and not to opposing counsel or to Pro se Defendants. Any objections which have been raised during a hearing or trial shall be supported by the legal basis for such objection.
- g. During trial or any hearing, all participants in the proceedings shall address each other and members of the Jury, if any, without familiarity. The use of first names shall be avoided. While addressing the Court, Attorneys, and Pro se Defendants shall rise and remain standing at their position at the counsel table, unless directed otherwise by the Judge.
- h. During trial or any hearing, Attorneys and Pro se Defendants shall not approach the Bench, except after requesting and receiving permission from the Judge, or as directed by the Judge.

2.4 No Recordings inside the Courtroom

No one is allowed to record any court proceedings inside the courtroom, without the express permission of the Judge. Broadcast media wishing to film proceedings from outside the Courtroom must position equipment so as not to impede ingress or egress to or from the Courtroom.

RULE THREE: APPEARANCE, BONDS AND PLEAS

3.1 Appearance

An attorney must make an appearance in a case in writing filed with the Clerk of the Court in which the case is pending, which appearance shall include the Defendant's name, docket numbers for all cases being handled by the attorney, and the attorney's name, address, email address, fax number, and telephone number. [See FLR 7.5].

3.2. Information on Dispositions Given Only to the Attorney of Record

The Court Clerk shall release information on cases only to the attorney of record, or the person or entity who posted a bond for a Defendant. Therefore, it shall be incumbent upon attorneys utilizing the services of co-counsel (See FLR 5) to dispose of their cases to obtain information on the disposition of those cases from those attorneys with whom they have collaborated. No attorney shall be permitted to enter a plea for and on behalf of a Defendant unless the attorney is the attorney of record for the Defendant (See FLR 5 below).

3.3 Bond Required

For any Defendant with an active alias warrant, or if no warrant has been issued, on any case more than 60 days past the date of the issuance of the citation, the attorney or pro se Defendant shall be required to post a cash or surety bond, before the warrant is lifted and a court date is set. No bond is required if the Defendant or his attorney pleads guilty.

3.3.1 Oath of Surety Required on Attorney Bonds

Attorneys and sureties posting bail bonds shall append to and make a part of their bail bonds the oath required by Article 17.13 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. The Judge may, in his discretion, waive this requirement as authorized by Article 17.13. *[Note: A model attorney bond form containing the oath required by this FLR 3.3.1 shall be made available to attorneys on the Court's website at www.cityofferris.org.]*

3.3.2 Cash Bond Required After Forfeiture of Surety Bond

As authorized by Article 23.05 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, if the Judge forfeits the bail of a Defendant, the Clerk shall immediately issue a warrant for the arrest of the Defendant, and when the Defendant is arrested, the Defendant shall be required to post a cash money in order to be released from custody and/or, if not arrested, to obtain the release of the warrant and obtain a new court date.

3.4 Payment in full constitutes plea of guilty by Defendant

Payment in full of the fine on a case pending in the Ferris Municipal Court shall constitute a guilty/no contest plea and a waiver of jury trial.

3.5 Plea by Defendant

No partial payments of fines and costs shall be accepted without a plea of guilty and waiver of jury trial from the defendant. A plea of not guilty by a Pro se Defendant will result in a trial setting. The Pro se Defendant shall inform the Court whether he/she desires a jury trial or a bench trial (a trial without a jury). Once a defendant has entered a plea of not guilty and the case is set for trial, the defendant, whether or not represented by an attorney, shall personally appear at each subsequent setting of their case until the case is finally disposed of by entry of a final judgment.

The date of the postmark shall be deemed the date of filing of any plea received by mail.

The date of receipt of a fax transmission by the Clerk's office shall be the date of filing of such plea.

3.6 Request for Assistance

A Defendant requesting the services of an interpreter in any language must appear in person on their assigned court date and make their request in writing. Other requests for assistance from persons with disabilities should be made at the time the plea is entered.

RULE FOUR: NOTICE

4.1 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all persons with business before the Court to:

- a. determine the date, time, location and nature of each setting of the case(s) and,
- b. update or notify the Court of any changes of address, telephone number and email address of the Defendant or of Attorney(s) for the Defendant.

4.2 Notice

- a. Notice of the date, time, location, and nature of each setting shall be given by the Court to a Pro se Defendant in person, by email, or by regular United States mail at the last known address provided to the Court by the Pro se Defendant. Notice of the date, time, location and nature of each setting shall be given by the Court to the Attorney for Defendant in person, by mail, or by email directed to the last known address of the Attorney.
- b. Notice to the Prosecutor shall be given by email to the Court Clerk at ferriscourt@ci.ferristx.us, who shall promptly forward the email to the prosecutor.

4.3 Verbal Representations

Reliance by any party upon verbal representations from any Court staff or a police officer concerning any matters shall not be binding as grounds for continuance, setting aside a warrant or judgment, dismissal of any case, or any other relief.

4.4 Complaint

A copy of the Complaint will be made available to the Defendant or Counsel upon request in open court, at the court window, or by email. Copies of complaints shall not be mailed unless the Defendant or his/her attorney provides the Court with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

RULE FIVE: MOTIONS

5.1 Motions for Continuance

Motions for Continuance require good cause shown and will not be granted for delay purposes. A Motion for Continuance shall be filed with the Court as soon as the

Attorney for the Defendant or the State or Pro se Defendant is aware of the necessity for seeking a continuance, but no later than the requirements set forth in 5.1.2(a) herein. All motions must be sworn to in accordance with Article 29.08 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

5.1.1 Code

Continuances are governed by Chapter 29 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. This Rule 5.1 is intended to supplement and not to replace the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

5.1.2 Form

- a. All Motions for Continuance shall be in writing and shall be filed with the Court Clerk in which the case is set at least seven (7) working days prior to the scheduled court date.
- b. Each Motion for Continuance shall contain:
 - 1) the Cause Number;
 - 2) the name of the Defendant;
 - 3) the date and time of the setting for which the continuance is sought;
 - 4) the specific facts justifying the continuance. If the reason for the continuance is a conflict with a setting in another court, the Motion shall contain the Style and Cause Number of the other case, as well as the Court Number and time of the conflict;
 - 5) an oath attesting to the truth of the matters contained in the Motion; and
 - 6) a proposed order for the Judge to designate whether the motion is "Granted" or "Denied."

[Note: A model form motion for continuance is available on the Court's website at www.cityofferris.org]

5.1.3 Emergency Motions

Where the underlying facts (good cause) which form the basis for a Motion for Continuance were not discovered and could not have been discovered through the exercise of due diligence prior to seven (7) days before the scheduled trial date (See FLR 5.1.2), an emergency Motion for Continuance may be filed, in writing or orally before the Court. Such Motion may be filed at any time prior to the respective Court proceeding and will be ruled on by the Judge at the call of the docket.

5.1.4 Factors

With the exception of continuances sought on Constitutional or Statutory grounds, the following factors will be considered in the determining whether a Motion for Continuance will be granted or denied:

- a. the specific nature of the conflict in scheduling;
- b. the age of the case;
- c. the number of previous continuances granted to each party;
- d. the timeliness of the filing of the Motion, including the date on which the scheduling conflict, if any, became known to the Movant; and
- e. any other matter relevant to the Motion.

5.1.5 Denied Motions

If a Defendant's Motion for Continuance is denied, in order for the Defendant to avoid a warrant, a bond in the amount set by the Court may be required to be posted, at the discretion of the Judge denying the Motion. It is the responsibility of the Pro se Defendant or the Counsel for Defendant to determine whether the Motion was granted or denied and to determine whether a bond is required. If a State's Motion for Continuance is denied, the case will proceed to trial, plea, or other disposition.

5.2 Vacation Letters

Attorneys shall file with the Clerk of the Court a vacation letter no less than 60 days prior to the anticipated date that the vacation is to begin. Such notices shall be filed by email to www.ferriscourt@ci.ferristx.us. If the vacation letter is not filed at least 60 days prior to the vacation commencement date, the Attorney shall file Motions for Continuance in each case set during the vacation period for the Judge to consider.

5.3 Motions to Withdraw

Any Attorney who makes a written appearance on behalf of a Defendant shall be deemed the attorney of record for that Defendant until a written Motion to Withdraw is filed by that Attorney and is granted by the Court; or the case is disposed of by trial, plea, deferred disposition or attendance at a driver safety course, dismissal or substitution of counsel.

5.3.1 Multiple Attorneys of Record

Letters of representation and notices of appearance that list the names of additional attorneys in a law firm, whether partnership or professional corporation, are all deemed attorneys of record for the case(s) identified in the letter of representation or notice of appearance. The motion to withdraw of an attorney of record of a partnership or professional corporation shall not apply to other members of the partnership or professional corporation unless they are specifically identified in the motion and order to withdraw by name and Texas State Bar Number.

5.3.2 Withdrawal without a Hearing

A Motion to Withdraw as Counsel for Defendant may be granted without a hearing only if the moving Attorney files a verified certificate stating the last known mailing address telephone number, and email address of the Defendant (if available) and describes what efforts have been made to locate the Defendant. Additionally, Counsel may file along with the Motion to Withdraw a written consent to the withdrawal signed by the Defendant that acknowledges that the Defendant has been advised of all future court settings and sets forth the current mailing address, telephone number, and email address (if one exists) of the Defendant .

5.3.3 Withdrawal with a Hearing

If the requirements of Rule 5.3.1 are not satisfied, a Motion to Withdraw must be presented to the Court at a hearing after notice to the Defendant and to all other parties.

5.3.4 Substitution of Counsel

A Motion to Substitute Counsel shall be signed by the Attorney(s) of record who currently represents the Defendant, as well as the Attorney who wishes to undertake representation of the Defendant. The Motion must include an affirmative statement that the Defendant has consented to the substitution. If a Motion to Withdraw as Counsel for Defendant also contains a Motion to Substitute Counsel, a new Notice of Appearance by another Attorney, and a written agreement by the State, the requirements of Rule 5.3.1 are satisfied and the Attorney named in the Motion to Substitute will thereafter be considered by the court as Attorney of record for the Defendant.

5.3.5 Requirements for Appearance as Co-Counsel

Absent a motion for withdraw or substitution, an attorney may appear as co-counsel for the Attorney of Record. To appear a co-counsel, an attorney shall file with the Court a Notice of Appearance as Co-Counsel containing the signature of the Attorney of Record and the signature of the Defendant, or, in lieu of the signature of the Defendant on the Notice of Appearance as Co-Counsel, some other writing evidencing the authority of the Attorney of Record to associate another attorney to assist him/her in the representation of the Defendant shall be required. Upon the filing of the Notice of Appearance meeting the requisites of this 5.3.4., the Co-Counsel shall be deemed an attorney of record, subject to all of the rights, duties and responsibilities of the Attorney of Record under these Local Rules. However, the filing of a Notice of Appearance shall not relieve the original Attorney of Record of his/her responsibilities under the Local Rules.

5.3.6 Affidavit of Intent to Surrender and Affidavit of Surrender

Any Attorney wishing to be removed from the bond of a Defendant shall file the appropriate Affidavit under either Article 17.19 CCP (for Defendants who are not

incarcerated) or Article 17.16 CCP (for Defendants who are incarcerated). Such Affidavit may be presented at any time prior to, or at, any hearing for the case.

5.3.7 Motions for Discovery, Pre-trial, Trial and Post-Trial Motions

All other Motions shall be filed with the Clerk of the Court in which the case is set.

All pre-trial motions shall be filed at least 14 days prior to trial date and responses thereto, if any, shall be filed at least 7 days prior to trial date. If a pretrial Motion has not been ruled on before the trial date, such Motion shall be heard on the date of trial. Each Motion or Response shall contain a certificate of service signed by the Movant or Respondent indicating that a copy of such Motion or Response has been served upon the opposing party, the manner of service and the date of service.

5.3.8 Sua Sponte Order on Discovery

In addition to and not in limitation of the provisions of Article 39.14 of the Code of Criminal Procedures, upon the filing of a pre-trial motion for discovery by the Defendant at least fourteen (14) days prior to final trial, the Prosecutor shall produce to the Defendant, after redacting all personal information (i.e. driver's license numbers, social security numbers, and dates of birth) the following items not less than seven (7) days prior to the trial of the case:

- a. A list of the names and addresses of all witnesses the prosecution intends to call at trial. This list does not include any rebuttal witnesses that may be called by the prosecutor.
- b. A list of the names, addresses and professions of all expert witnesses the prosecution intends to call at trial, along with each expert's qualifications, the subject and a description of his or her contemplated testimony, and his or her report.
- c. All inducements offered by the state which might tend to motivate its witnesses to testify against Defendant, including, but not limited to, plea bargain agreements, fee, expense, or reward arrangements, agreements to dismiss or reduce or not bring charges, or any other agreement of leniency.
- d. All writings used to refresh the recollection of any witnesses, as provided in Rule 612 of the Texas Rules of Evidence.
- e. All written confessions, admissions and statements, made by Defendant to a police officer in connection with this case.
- f. All oral confessions, admissions and statements, made by Defendant to the state in connection with this case, which have been electronically recorded.
- g. The substance of all oral confessions, admissions and statements made by Defendant to the state in connection with this case, which were not electronically recorded.
- h. All statements, written or oral, electronically recorded or not, given by Defendant which are exculpatory or which tend to mitigate punishment.
- i. All statements of a nature as would be arguably admissible as a "res gestae"

statement, spontaneous statement, or other utterance which the State intends to introduce in its case in chief, either during the guilt/innocence stage, or during the punishment stage.

- j. All witness statements as that term is used in Rule 615 of the Texas Rules of Evidence, whether in final, rough, draft, or other form.
- k. All statements made by any suspect, party or witness to this alleged offense which tend to exculpate Defendant or mitigate punishment.
- l. After redacting the driver's license number, social security number and date of birth of the alleged victim(s), offense reports, police reports, crime scene investigation reports or records or reports of any third parties, by way of written memoranda, letters, notes or transcriptions involving the alleged facts of the offense, the crime scene or any location which may have a bearing on any issue of the case.
- m. All hand-written, typed or otherwise recorded notes of law enforcement officers, relating to any part of this case (such as arrest, investigation, interrogation, interviews, or any other aspect) who investigated or participated in the preparation of this case for trial, enforcement agency or of the Office of the District Attorney or otherwise, in connection with this case.
- n. All photographs, videotapes, audiotapes, drawings, charts and diagrams made by the state or law enforcement agency with reference to this case, including, but not limited to those of the scene of the crime and the scene of Defendant's arrest.
- o. All evidence in possession of, or within the knowledge of, the state or any of its agencies, including impeachment evidence, which is favorable to Defendant and material either to guilt or to punishment.

5.3.9 Prosecutor's Representations on Discovery

Per the provisions of Article 39.14(j) of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, the City Attorney in his capacity as the Prosecutor in and for the Municipal Court of Ferris represents that, unless otherwise noted in a specific case, no documents, items, or information will have been provided to a defendant confined pursuant to an alias warrant or instanter citation issued out of the Ferris Municipal Court prior to the defendant making a plea of guilty or nolo contendere. Further, absent a written request for discovery under Article 39.14 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, the Prosecutor, unless otherwise noted in a specific case, will not have provided to a defendant any documents, items, or information prior to the Court taking of a plea from the defendant at a first appearance or plea docket in the Ferris Municipal Court of and concerning a violation set forth in the Texas Transportation Code.

Signed this the 8th day of April, 2014.



Mark Goldstucker, City Attorney in and for the City of Ferris
Prosecutor in and for the Ferris Municipal Court

RULE SIX: OFF-DOCKET PROCEDURES

6.1 Off-Docket Motions

An off-docket motion is any motion filed in a case not set on a docket, in which case, the Attorney shall file the Motion at the court offices at 104 S. Central, Ferris, Texas 75125.

6.2 Open Court

Attorneys and Pro se Defendants may appear at the Court during the Court's hours of operation to dispose of cases with active warrants. Cases may be disposed of during the Court's hours of operation, when a Pro se Defendant wishes to enter a plea of guilty or no contest, present proof of compliance, request deferred disposition, defensive driving, or establish or reinstate a payment plan. The Municipal Court Judge has the discretion to require any case to be reset to permit the Prosecutor an opportunity to be heard on the case(s).

RULE SEVEN: ATTORNEY PLEA DOCKETS ("APD")

7.1 Attorney Plea Dockets

The purpose of the Attorney Plea Docket (APD) is to resolve cases prior to trial and to set for trial those cases that cannot be resolved. Attorneys may obtain a copy of the upcoming docket from the Courts web site www.cityofferris.org. It is the responsibility of the Attorney of Record to advise his/her client of the terms of judgment entered against the client as a result of a plea agreement. (See FLR 3.2)

7.2 Failure of Defendant to Appear

If the Attorney of record for a Defendant does not appear at the APD, the judge may issue a warrant or forfeit any cash or surety bond that has been posted on the Defendant's behalf. A Motion to Withdraw on any case set for the APD shall be filed prior to the APD or presented at the time of the APD and should comply with FLR 5 above. For surety bond cases, any Affidavit of Intent to Surrender or Affidavit of Surrender (for incarcerated Defendants) shall also be filed no later than the calling of the APD.

7.3 Reset to APD

A case will not be reset to the APD without the permission of the Municipal Court Judge. All other cases must either be resolved at APD or set for trial. Any other exceptions will be determined by the Judge calling the APD docket. No case will be set for a jury trial without an appearance by an attorney of record at the APD. Once a case is set for jury

trial, the Defendant's appearance at each subsequent setting shall be required until the case is finally disposed of by way of the entry of a final judgment.

7.4 Attorneys to Appear Timely

Any Attorney appearing at the APD on behalf of a Defendant shall appear timely at the start of the APD. Any Attorney not appearing at the start of the APD due to exigent circumstances shall give notice to the Court Clerk by telephone to (972) 544-2323 indicating the estimated time of arrival and reason for not appearing timely.

7.5 Posting of Attorney (Surety) Bond

Per the provisions of Texas Occupations Code § 1704.163, a duly licensed Texas attorney executing a bail bond or acting as a surety for a Defendant shall be required to file a notice of appearance as counsel of record in the case for which the bond was executed or surety provided. The Ferris Jail at 201 S. Church Street, Ferris, Texas 75125, will have available Notice of Appearance forms for use by attorneys. Every case in which a bond was either executed or surety provided by a duly licensed Texas attorney shall be placed on the APD.

RULE EIGHT: TRIAL SETTINGS

8.1 Docket Order

Subject to the discretion of the Judge calling the docket, the order of cases actually proceeding to trial, whether bench trial or jury trial, shall be as follows:

- a. preferential settings
- b. cases set according to age, oldest first
- c. other circumstance as determined by the Court in the interest of justice.

All cases not reached for trial and not otherwise disposed of on a docket, will be noted as a Court's reset unless a reset was requested by a party and granted by the Court.

8.2 Preferential Setting

To receive a preferential setting, subject to the Judge's approval, a party must meet one of the following criteria:

- a. reside more than one hundred (100) miles outside the city limits of Ferris;
- b. have a condition, illness or injury that would necessitate an expedited disposition of the case; or
- c. have an outside witness who has appeared at least one prior trial setting without the case having been reached.

8.3 Defendants Must Attend Trial Dockets

Every Defendant, who has pled not guilty, and been assigned a trial date shall be present at the call of every **trial** docket, unless his/her attorney has filed and been granted a Motion for Continuance in advance of the calling of the trial docket. Every Pro se Defendant shall be present at the call of his/her trial docket, unless he/she has filed and been granted a Motion for Continuance. Once a case has been set for trial whether by judge or jury, thereafter, the Defendant shall be present at every setting of the case until the case is finally disposed of by entry of a judgment. The Judge may issue a warrant for Failure to Appear for any Defendant who fails to appear at a trial docket without having been granted a continuance.

RULE NINE: JUVENILE PROCEEDINGS AND MINORS

9.1 Juvenile Defined

A juvenile is a Defendant who is at least 10 years of age and is younger than 17 years of age.

9.2 Entering a Plea

A juvenile must enter his/her plea in open court with a parent or guardian present.

9.3 Notice of Current Address

The parents and the juvenile have a continuing obligation to give written notice of their current address and any change of address.

9.4 Minor in Possession and other Alcoholic Beverage Code Violations

A minor (anyone under the age of 21 years at the time of the alleged violation) may only enter a plea to an Alcohol Beverage Code violation in open court.

RULE TEN: POST TRIAL PROCEEDINGS

10.1 Admonishment

Pro se Defendants are admonished, due to the inherent complexities of appellate law, to seriously consider retaining counsel to represent them on appeal.

10.2 Inability to Pay Fine

If a Defendant does not appeal the Court's decision, but claims indigence, the Defendant may request an indigence hearing. At that hearing Defendant shall be required to show

cause why he/she cannot discharge the fine by making payments or performing community service hours, if available, in lieu of payment.

10.3 Indigence upon Appeal

If a Defendant is indigent and unable to pay either the Appeal Bond or to pay for the transcript, he/she may file an Affidavit of Indigence with the Court and file a Motion to Waive Costs. Such Affidavit of Indigence and/or Motion to Waive Costs must be filed within the ten (10) day statutory period to file an appeal Bond. A hearing on the Motion to Waive Costs shall then be scheduled by the Judge who entered the Order being appealed, unless that Judge is no longer available.

RULE ELEVEN: SEVERABILITY AND CONSTRUCTION

11.1 Severability

If any provision of these Rules or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect other provisions or application of these Rules, which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application, and to this end the provisions of the Rules are severable.

11.2 Inapplicability of Rules

The *Rules* set forth herein are the Local Rules of Court applicable to criminal proceedings, and are applicable to the civil cases and administrative hearings heard in the Ferris Municipal Court with the exception of FLR 3.3, FLR 7, FLR 9, and FLR 10.2.

11.3 Construction

These Rules shall not be construed so as to enlarge, diminish, modify or alter the jurisdiction, power or authority of the Municipal Court of the City of Ferris.

ADOPTION

The foregoing Local Rules of the Municipal Court of the City of Ferris, Texas are hereby ADOPTED on this the 8th day of April 2014.



**SCOTT E. KURTH, PRESIDING
MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE**