

RULES OF CONDUCT AND COURT DECORUM FOR THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI MUNICIPAL COURT

I. AUTHORITY FOR RULES

Under the inherent power and duty of all Texas Courts as codified **Section 21.001, Government Code**, the following Rules of Conduct and Decorum shall apply and govern any and all proceedings held before the Municipal Court of the City of Corpus Christi, County of Nueces, State of Texas.

II. FORMAL OPENING

Each session of court shall be brought to order by formal announcement by the Bailiff of the Court, requiring all to rise as the Judge takes the Bench.

III. CONDUCT REQUIRED OF ALL PERSONS WHILE ATTENDING COURT

While court is in session there shall be:

- a. No smoking or use of tobacco products.
- b. No chewing gum or candy.
- c. No reading newspaper, magazines, or books.
- d. No propping of feet on benches or leaning on the judicial bench.
- e. No talking or loud noises.
- f. No food or beverages.
- g. No gestures, facial expressions, or sounds indicating approval or disapproval.
- h. No inappropriate attire including, but not limited to:
 - i) Tank tops, spaghetti straps
 - ii) Muscle shirts
 - iii) Vulgar or offensive language on shirts
 - iv) Shorts or skirts which are not two inches above knee or longer.
 - v) Hats
- i. No video or audio recording equipment of any kind shall be turned on in the Courtroom without the prior approval of the Judge.
 - a. Such equipment includes but is not limited to: still cameras, video cameras, and all audio recording devices.
 - b. NO CELL PHONES, IPADS, TABLETS OR COMPUTERS MAY BE USED IN THE COURT ROOM OR JURY ROOM DURING JURY DELIBERATIONS.
 - c. THESE DEVICES WILL BE COLLECTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE JURY IS SELECTED AND RETURNED AT THE END OF THE JURY TRIAL.
 - d. Personal pagers may be used in the vibrating or silent position.
- j. No weapons are permitted except those carried or possessed by commissioned peace officers or as needed for evidence in court.
- k. Children are permitted in the courtrooms subject to Judge's discretion. Noise disruption or disorderly

children may be required to exit Courtroom or any other Court Department.

IV. CONDUCT REQUIRED OF COUNSEL AND PRO SE DEFENDANTS

- a. Attorneys shall observe the letter and spirit of the canons of ethics, including those concerning improper ex parte communications with the Judge and with those dealing with discussion of cases with representatives of the media.
- b. Attorneys shall advise their clients and witnesses of the Rules of Decorum that may be applicable. It is improper for attorneys, defendants, or witnesses to discuss the merits of any case set before the Court with a Judge outside of the Courtroom proceedings.
- c. Pro se Defendants (defendants acting as their own defense) shall conform their behavior to all provisions applicable to Counsel.
- d. Counsel shall be dressed appropriately while in attendance of the court, unless otherwise permitted by the court.
- e. All parties shall be prompt in arriving for Court and in attending to Court business.
- f. Once a party has entered the courtroom and is appearing before the Court, he/she shall not leave without obtaining permission from the Court.
- g. All remarks of counsel to the Court shall be addressed to the Court formally.
- h. All objections, arguments and other comments shall be directed to the Judge or Jury and not to the opposing Counsel.
- i. In addressing the Court, Counsel shall rise and remain standing at their positions at the counsel table.
- j. Counsel shall not lean on the bench, sit on the rails or table, or appear to engage the Court in a confidential manner.
- k. The Court may enforce these rules of conduct and decorum by appropriate action or sanctions.
- l. Request for a language interpreter should be made at the time a plea is entered.
- m. Court Clerks cannot provide legal advice. Reliance upon a police officer's verbal statement(s) regarding disposition of an offense is not binding upon the court.
- n. Nothing herein shall prevent or prohibit the further adoption of additional rules of decorum. ◊

Gail Loeb, Presiding Judge