

PRESIDING JUDGES

Judge Ronald W. Lowe holds a Bachelor's degree from Hillsdale College and a Juris Doctorate from the Thomas Cooley School of Law. Judge Lowe is the former Plymouth City Attorney and was elected to the bench in 1994.

Judge Michael J. Gerou received his Bachelor's degree from Eastern Michigan University and a Law degree from the University of Detroit School of Law. Judge Gerou is a former practicing attorney in the district and was elected to the bench in 2002.

Judge James A. Plakas obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree from Central Michigan University and his Juris Doctor from the University of Detroit School of Law. Judge Plakas practiced as a Prosecutor, Assistant City Attorney, Criminal Defense Attorney, and a Civil Litigator. He was elected to the bench in 2008.

WHAT IS THE 35TH DISTRICT COURT?

The 35th District Court in Plymouth, Michigan serves the townships of Canton, Northville, and Plymouth, and the cities of Northville and Plymouth. The court handles all civil infractions, misdemeanors, small claims, landlord-tenant, and general civil matters that occur within these communities and serves as the court of initial jurisdiction in felony matters.

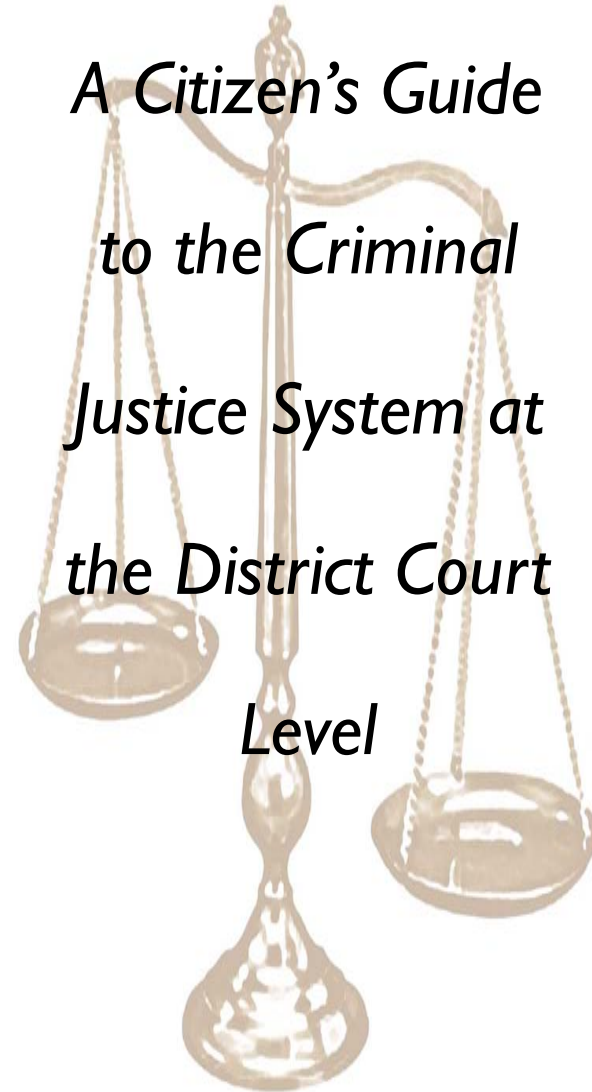


STATE OF MICHIGAN
35TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

660 Plymouth Road
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<http://www.35thdistrictcourt.org>

35TH DISTRICT COURT

*A Citizen's Guide
to the Criminal
Justice System at
the District Court
Level*



What Should I Expect Today in Court?

****NOTE:** This brochure provides only general information. Different facts may result in different outcomes

If you are here today for a(n)...

ARRAIGNMENT- This is the first step of the process. During your arraignment you will be brought before the judge who will inform you of the crime you are being charged with and the possible penalties for that particular crime. This is not the time to discuss with the judge the details of the incident. You will be asked to enter a plea. Should you plead “guilty”, no trial of any kind will be held and the judge will sentence you for the crime. If you plead “not guilty” you will come back for a Pre-Trial. Felony offenses differ.

During your arraignment you may also be asked to post a bond. This insures that you will return to the courthouse for subsequent required appearances. A description of the types of bonds can be found on the right side of this page.

If you are charged with a crime that carries a possible penalty of jail, you may also request an appointed attorney to assist you for the remainder of your case during your arraignment.

PRE-TRIAL- This is your opportunity to speak with the prosecuting attorney and attempt to resolve the issue. Plea bargains may be offered by the prosecutor. If you agree to the plea bargain, no trial of any kind will be held. You will give this plea to the judge and return for sentencing for the crime you have plead guilty to. If you do not agree to the plea bargain the case will go to trial. You may choose either a bench trial or a jury trial (defined on right side of page). You have a constitutional right to a jury trial.

TRIAL- This is where you and the prosecutor each present your evidence to either the judge or a jury. After the trial you will be found “guilty” or “not guilty” by the judge or a jury of your peers. If you are found guilty you will be sentenced on the charge.

SENTENCING- You will be brought before the judge and receive a sentence based partially on penalties provided by law, the nature of your offense, and your previous criminal history.

IMPORTANT TERMS

Types of Bond

Personal- Released on your promise you will return to court. Failure to do so will result in you owing the court the specified amount of money.

Cash- Money must be paid to the court in order for you to be released from jail.

Conditional- May be added onto a personal or cash bond. Failure to follow the rules set before you could result in the forfeiture of your bond or you going to jail.

Appointed Attorney- You have the right to an attorney for all court proceedings. If you do not have one or cannot afford one, you will be provided with one. However, you may still be responsible for reasonable fees associated with the attorney’s assistance based on your ability to pay.

Types of Trials

Bench Trial- The case is presented to a judge and he or she solely determines your guilt or innocence.

Jury Trial- The case is presented to a jury of your peers from the representative communities and they determine your guilt or innocence.