



Maricopa County Justice Courts

ABOUT YOUR PRETRIAL CONFERENCE (also known as a "PTC")

It is mandatory that you attend any scheduled pretrial conference. If you have an attorney, your attorney should attend with you. If you do not attend the PTC it will be a violation of a court order and a warrant will be issued for your arrest. You may be subject to a \$45.00 warrant fee and other penalties.

Your PTC may be held virtually. Check with the court for instructions. This document applies to both virtual and in-person PTCs.

- Check in to court at least 15 minutes before the scheduled hearing, either by phone or at the front counter.
- Do not bring children to court with you on this day.
- In-person PTCs may take a long time. Expect to spend several hours so plan this as your only commitment.

If you have been appointed a public defender you will meet with your public defender at the pre-trial.

The pretrial conference is for the purpose of discussing the case with the prosecutor, if you wish to do so. The prosecutor will give you or your attorney a copy of the police report. He/she will also advise you or your attorney of the sentence that will be recommended in the event you are convicted. They may offer you a plea deal (i.e. dismissing one charge in return for a guilty plea on another). At this point, you will have three options to consider:

1. Change your plea to 'guilty' or 'no contest' and be sentenced by the judge (usually on that same day);
2. Enter into a plea agreement with the prosecutor and be sentenced according to the terms of the agreement (unless the judge does not accept the agreement, in which case you have a right to withdraw your plea); or
3. Reject any plea agreement the prosecutor may offer and ask for a trial.

You will make this decision for yourself or with your attorney. If you plead guilty or enter a plea agreement, there are no appeals once the judgment is signed. After you have met with the prosecutor, you must wait for your name to be called to sign additional paperwork or to receive a new court date. Do not leave the court without first getting the 'all clear' from the clerk or judge.

The clerks are here to assist you and to ensure you receive all your paperwork. They are not able to answer legal questions. At your court date a fine may be imposed. It will be due and payable that same day. If you are not able to pay the fine in full on your court date, you may ask for a Time Payment Plan. The court's Fines Manager will determine if you qualify. There are additional fees for these installment plans and you may be required to make a minimal initial payment.

ABOUT YOUR TRIAL

DO YOU NEED A LAWYER?

Only you can answer this question. You may represent yourself, or you may choose to hire an attorney and be represented by that attorney at your trial.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO BEFORE THE TRIAL?

You are responsible for making any necessary preparation for the trial. You may wish to look for evidence in your favor, locate witnesses, and prepare photographs; sketches or maps that might help you explain your case.

The public library and [State Legislative web site](#) will have the Arizona Revised Statutes citing the law for the violation for which you have been charged. The [Arizona Rules of Criminal Procedure](#) is the set of rules you must follow.

If there are witnesses that you feel will not or cannot come to court without a subpoena, complete and file a subpoena form available at the court or on our website: www.JusticeCourts.maricopa.gov. The court will issue the subpoena requiring the witness to come to court to testify in your case.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE TRIAL?

The prosecutor will present the state's case.

You will have a right to cross-examine each of their witnesses.

You may present witnesses or other evidence.

You may testify on your own behalf. If you testify you would be subject to cross-examination by the prosecutor.

If you are found not guilty, any bond you have posted will be refunded.

If you are found guilty, a sentence will be imposed.

If you are found guilty, you have the right to appeal the conviction and/or sentence by filing a notice of appeal within 14 days after sentencing. The appeal would be a review of the record of the proceedings of the case and not a new trial.