

Ladies and Gentlemen

Since most people are concerned about appearing in court, I offer the following rules and procedures to help you understand how the court functions. The court has jurisdiction over traffic and non traffic ordinances in the Village of Paddock Lake. You have a right to be represented by an attorney, or you may go ahead without one. If you want an attorney, you must retain one at your own expense. The court will not provide you with an attorney.

INITIAL APPEARANCE

At the initial appearance, the defendant may enter a plea. Only those cases where the defendant enters a Guilty or No Contest plea will be heard. Where the defendant enters a Not Guilty plea, the case will be scheduled for a pre-trial at a later date. The Attorney will attempt to resolve the case at this time. If the case cannot be resolved at the pre-trial, the case will be scheduled for a trial at a later date.

COURT PROCEDURE

When your name is called, please advance promptly to a position in front of the bench. I will then inform you of the charges and ask you to plead Guilty, No Contest or Not Guilty.

Upon a plea of Guilty or No Contest, a forfeiture plus cost may be imposed. Forfeitures are payable immediately. However, I may defer payment for 60 days. If you fail to pay your forfeiture, you may be committed to the **House of Correction**; or in some cases, your drivers license shall be suspended for one (1) year. After payment of your fine a reinstatement fee must be paid to the Division of Motor Vehicles to reinstate your driver's license.

TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS

If you are found Guilty of a traffic offense, in addition to any judgment made by the Court, the Department of Transportation may assess demerit points against your driving record, which may result in the suspension or revocation of your driver's license. The assessment of 12 demerit points in one year shall result in the loss of your license.

JUVENILES

The Municipal Court has jurisdiction over persons between 12 and 16 years of age charged with non-traffic ordinance violations. Juveniles have the same rights with respect to pleas. They have a right to a private (closed) hearing, but may waive this right. A money judgment may be entered against a juvenile found guilty of a non-traffic ordinance violation. If the offense is alcohol related the driver's license of the defendant may be suspended regardless of payment.

COURT CONDUCT

This is a court of law and the rules of proper decorum and evidence will be followed. Please remain quiet while the court is in session and give others the courtesy to be heard and present their case. Persons who fail to conduct themselves in an orderly manner shall be cited for contempt.

REQUEST FOR INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PLAN

If you need to make payments due to poverty or other circumstances, please ask the Court Clerk for request forms after you have completed speaking to the Judge.

Hopefully, your appearance in Municipal Court will be a beneficial and learning experience.

Robert E. Brenner
Municipal Judge