
Harris County District Courts Remote Plea Process for Defendants on Bond

Updated July 8, 2020

Prior to the Court Date

1. The Defense Counsel and the Assistant District Attorney will negotiate a plea offer. If the defendant accepts the offer, then Defense Counsel will communicate the acceptance to the Assistant District Attorney.
2. The Assistant District Attorney e-files the plea paperwork via the District Clerk's KIOSK.
3. The Defense Counsel goes over the plea paperwork with client, and both electronically sign it via the District Clerk's KIOSK
4. The Defense Counsel will contact the Court Coordinator, the Court Clerk, and, if the plea is to a probation sentence, the HCCSCD Liaison Officer (CLO). Defense Counsel will provide the defendant's name, cause number and court information, and a plea date will be set.
Contact information for the Court Coordinator can be located here:
<http://www.justex.net/Courts/Criminal/CriminalCourts.aspx>
CSCD can be contacted by email at Felony.CLO@csc.hctx.net or Misd.CLO@csc.hctx.net.
5. Once the plea date is set, **the defendant must appear** at the Harris County Joint Processing Center, 700 N San Jacinto St., to provide a thumbprint for the judgment. This must be done at least 24 hours prior to the zoom remote plea. Deputies will be available to accept the thumbprint on the first floor at the Joint Processing Center, 24-hours a day.
6. If the plea is to a probation sentence, then the defendant must complete an HCCSCD Client Information Sheet and email the completed form to CSCD via the email address provided. The Client Information Sheet can be accessed from the HCCSCD website:
<https://cscd.harriscountytexas.gov/Pages/Remote%20Court.aspx>. The defendant will need to provide a valid and accessible email address to the CLO for all probation pleas.

On the Court Date

1. ALL parties will appear in person or remotely via Zoom.
 2. If the defendant and Defense Counsel are both on ZOOM and the defendant has a question during the proceedings, the Judge or coordinator will create a "break out" room where only Client and Defense Counsel are present.
 3. For probation pleas, the defendant and the CLO will discuss the probation terms in a separate ZOOM breakout room.
 - a. The CLO and the District Clerk have the ability to put the probation conditions on the District Clerk's KIOSK for the defendant to sign following completion of the plea.
 4. **If the plea is for prison time, the Court will determine whether**
 - a. the defendant will take the plea remotely but be sentenced in court at a later date; or
 - b. the defendant will take the plea in court with no sentencing date and immediately be taken into custody; or
 - c. the defendant will plea in another facility, such as the Joint Processing Center, and go immediately into custody.
 5. For probation pleas, all court activity will occur on the same day.
 6. Following completion of the plea, the court clerk will email the defendant a copy of the fee bill, if there is one. The Defense Counsel will need to input the defendant's email address in the District Clerk's KIOSK.
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