

PLEA OF NOT GUILTY

A plea of not guilty means that you are informing the Court that you deny guilt and that the State must prove its charges against you. If you plead not guilty, your case will be scheduled for the next available trial date. You will need to decide whether to employ an attorney to represent you at trial. Only you or a licensed attorney may defend a case in court.

If you represent yourself, please be advised that this court is a court of record. All proceedings will be conducted according to the rules of criminal procedure and the rules of evidence. If you choose to represent yourself, you must be prepared. The court staff, baliff, prosecuting attorney, or judge cannot act as your attorney by providing legal advice or legal assistance in the presentation of your case.

Under our American system of justice, all persons are presumed to be innocent until proven guilty. On a plea of not guilty, a formal trial will be scheduled. As in a criminal trial, the State is required to prove the guilt of the defendant "beyond a reasonable doubt" of the offense charged in the complaint before a defendant can be found guilty by a judge or jury.