



VIDEO COURT OPERATIONS

POLICY.

It is the policy of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office – Adult Jail (AJ) to reduce the amount of transfers to the courthouse with the use of video court equipment.

PURPOSE.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for members to follow regarding the proper operation of video court equipment and collection of data for inmate management purposes.

OREGON JAIL STANDARDS:

- B-207 Custody File
- B-403 Release Authorization
- B-406 Release Documentation

REFERENCES:

- ORS 169.076 Standards for Local Correctional Facilities, (2) (a) Legal confinement authority.
- ORS 135.010 Arraignment (time and place).
- ORS135.255 Release agreement.

DEFINITIONS:

Arraignment. A court appearance. Typically the first appearance of a defendant arrested on criminal charges when release, bail setting, and appointment of an attorney are discussed and court decisions are made.

Attorney. A lawyer appointed by the court or retained by a defendant who represents the defendant in all court appearances and decisions.

Court Disposition. A form generated through the jail computerized management system (JMS) with the name and criminal charges of an inmate. The form may be used to take notes during the court appearance.

Court Docket. A schedule produced by court schedulers that sets the time and place for a defendant to appear in court.

Court Documentation. Paperwork generated by the courts for information passed between the defendant, attorney and district attorney. These documents include District Attorney Information, indictments, charging instruments, court appointed attorney forms, sentencing documents, and court minutes.

Court Minutes. A document produced by the courts that delineates release information, conditions of release, sets bail amounts and future court appearance dates for a defendant.

District Attorney (DA). A public official appointed or elected to represent the State in criminal cases in a particular judicial district.

Inmate. A person, whether sentenced or not, in the custody of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office and lodged in the Adult Jail (AJ).

Security Deputy. A deputy assigned to provide security during video court appearances.

Odyssey/OECI. The web based document management system for the State of Oregon court system. Court staff electronically send documents and AJ members access documents from the Oregon eCourt Case Information (OECI) website. Electronic document sharing increases efficiency and clarity.

Video Camera. A video camera set up to view a person for the purpose of two-way audio and video communications between the courthouse and jail.

Video Court Assignment. Member specifically assigned to oversee the court proceedings during video court. The member listens, collects data for entry into the computerized Jail Management System (JMS) and collects, distributes and files paperwork related to video court appearances.

Video Court Room. A room located in the AJ designated for the purpose of holding video court appearances.

Video Monitor. A television specifically set up for two-way communications with court facilities through a closed circuit connection.

PROCEDURES.

SECTION A: GENERAL GUIDELINES

A-1. Prior to scheduled arraignments, the assigned deputy or other member will print out the court docket for all bookings for the 24 hours preceding the appearance (with the exception of weekends and holidays where the printed information will include any arrest since the previous arraignment period) and:

- a. Determine in-custody scheduled appearances.
 - b. Identify inmates requiring an interpreter.
 - c. Identify inmate keep-aways by printing a keep away list from the JMS.
- A-2.** Utilizing the court docket information, the inmates' names will be written on the video arraignment roster using *Video List Form No. 431*. Inmate names will be listed in order (considering housing assignments and safety and security considerations). Keep-away information will be added along with pending cases, out of county holds, time served information, parole holds, probation holds, immigration holds and:
- a. Copies of the completed list will be sent to the AJ Control Center and applicable Transports/Court Security Unit members.
 - b. From the copy of the video arraignment list, Control Center staff will notify the listed inmates of the court appearance and have them stand by for video court.
- A-3.** The assigned video arraignment deputy will gather all documentation and set up the video court room for the arraignment process. The member will log-on to the JMS and enter relevant data to the individual inmate records and:
- a. Make adjustments to the inmate charges as set forth by the District Attorney's charging instrument.
 - b. Add any new charges listed from an indictment.
 - c. Adjust the disposition in the case if a charge has not been filed.
 - d. Add any identified keep-away information gathered from newly provided court documentation.
- A-4.** The court will call the jail video system from the courthouse. The video arraignment equipment will connect and the video and audio connection will be maintained during all video court appearances:
- a. In the event the video system does not connect, the shift supervisor will be notified and arrangements will be made to service or repair the equipment through the DCSO Information Technology Unit.
 - b. In the event that the video equipment is not immediately repairable, arrangements will be made to transfer the scheduled inmates to the courthouse for arraignment purposes.

SECTION B: VIDEO ARRAIGNMENT

- B-1.** Inmates will be sent by AJ Control to video arraignment utilizing radio communications and jail video cameras. Control will call the inmate's name in the housing unit and direct the inmate to proceed to the video courtroom.
- B-2.** The deputy assigned to security will monitor the inmates and maintain order during video court appearances. The deputy will assist with handing out paperwork and escorting civilian staff (attorneys or interpreters) to and from the courtroom from the AJ administration lobby.

- a. The assigned security deputy will complete a security inspection in video courtroom prior to and after video court. The security inspection will be logged in the JMS.
 - b. The security deputy will ensure no more than ten inmates are in the video arraignment room at any given time.
- B-3.** Arrangements will be made to isolate inmates for valid medical reasons, including possible exposure to communicable diseases or pathogens and high risk, high security concerns.
- a. Normally, these types of inmates will be escorted at the end of a video court session.
 - b. Force will not be used to escort inmates unless specifically directed by a supervisor after consultation with a judge.
 - c. Restraints must be used for high risk inmates.

SECTION C: VIDEO COURT PROCEDURES

- C-1.** The deputy will gather information about disposition of the charge, verification of case numbers, future court dates/times and any release decision and conditions. This information will be added to the JMS for each inmate and:
- a. The assigned case numbers will be added to the charge line for each charge.
 - b. The date and times of the next court appearance will be added to the court date field on the first charge only.
 - c. The bail amount will be adjusted to reflect the total bail for each case number.
 - d. The status line will be changed from PA-pending arraignment to P-pending, NF not filed, S- sentenced, TS- time served, R- released as applicable.
- C-2.** The judge will call the inmate to the chair located in the front of the video court camera/monitor. The inmate may have an attorney or an interpreter in the video room who will join them at the table for the court proceeding. At the conclusion of the proceeding, the interpreter and/or attorney will leave the table and either leave the court room or sit in the back of the room by the video deputy.
- a. When the video appearance is complete, the deputy will instruct the inmate to self-escort back to their assigned housing unit.
 - b. When all scheduled inmates have been through the proceedings, the deputy will advise the judge if there are remaining inmates who were scheduled to appear but were not called. The judge will determine if charges have been filed on the inmate and order release if appropriate.
- C-3.** The deputy will gather all court generated documents for filing purposes. Court journal entries and other court generated documentation will be electronically (Odyssey/OECI) provided by court house staff. The deputy will retrieve a copy of all video arraignment paperwork. All custody files for released inmates will be separated from all other files. The inmate files of those released from custody shall be forwarded to the shift supervisor, who will review the files and approve or deny each release. Additionally, the deputy will:
- a. Place court journal entries into the individual inmate files.

- b. Return in-custody files for those inmates not being released from custody to the file storage area in booking.
- c. Forward custody files (and journal entries and sentencing paperwork) for inmates who were sentenced during video court, to the shift supervisor or Classification Specialist for time calculation purposes.

SECTION D: OTHER VIDEO COURT APPEARANCES

D-1. The court may schedule video court appearances at other than established video arraignment times. Other video court appearances will usually be announced on the court docket for that day, but not always. The court may call and ask that an inmate be brought to video court for an appearance. The Court Security/Transports Unit will coordinate completion of these appearances. Video court procedures for these types of appearances are the same and may be used for:

- a. High risk/high security inmates. (High risk inmates will be hand cuffed during these appearances.)
- b. Mentally unstable inmates.
- c. Special needs inmates.
- d. Last minute plea negotiations.
- e. Emergency release hearings.
- f. Extradition hearings.
- g. Probation hearings.

D-2. At the conclusion of the video appearance, follow instructions outlined in **C-3** above.

FORMS USED:

- Court Docket
- Court Journal Entry
- Court Sentencing Form
- District Attorney's Charging Instrument
- JMS Inmate Keep-Away Listing
- Video Court Form No. 431