



A Guide to Courtroom Dress & Decorum

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STATE ATTORNEY'S OFFICE FOR FLORIDA'S FOURTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

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JACKETS FOR JUSTICE



WE CAN PROVIDE YOU CLOTHING FOR COURT.

Your victim advocate can help you access our clothing closets, Jackets for Justice. You can comb through the closets to pick clothing to wear to court during your case.

The clothing you choose is yours to keep.

We have curated an assortment of business clothes in a range of sizes for men and women. If we don't have what you need, let us know. We can work with organizations in the community who can help further.

Our goal is to help you feel COMFORTABLE & CONFIDENT throughout your case.



DRESSING FOR COURT

Dressing appropriately for proceedings shows respect for the court and the time that is given to your case. We suggest business or business casual attire for all courtroom appearances from hearings to trial. Refrain from wearing memorial pins or clothing intended to make a statement.

For women, avoid showing midriff, cleavage, or too much leg. Adding a blazer to an outfit can easily make your attire fitting for the courtroom. Leggings are not appropriate for court. Avoid wearing distracting jewelry or heavy makeup.



For men, we suggest wearing dress pants with no distressing or rips, preferably a button up shirt, and a blazer. Men should tuck in their shirts. Avoid wearing shorts. There should be no offensive language on your attire.



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COURTROOM BEHAVIOR

DO:

- **Turn off your cellphone** and other electronic devices.
- **Wear comfortable clothing.**
You may be in the courtroom for extended periods of time.
- **Bring family and friends** for support.
Your victim advocate will be there for you, too.
- **Sit on the same side** of the courtroom as the prosecutors.
- **Utilize court recesses** to stretch your legs, use the restroom, eat a snack, and gather yourself.
- **Work with your victim advocate** to prepare a victim impact statement. You'll have a chance to address the court during sentencing about how the defendant's crimes have impacted your life.



DO NOT:

- **Don't wear jeans or flip flops** in the courtroom. Casual clothing can appear disrespectful.
- **Don't react audibly** to evidence or testimony. If you make an audible reaction (i.e., gasp, cry), that could create serious impacts for your case — you could be removed from the courtroom, there could be a mistrial, etc.
- **Don't walk in and out of the courtroom constantly.** It's okay to leave to go the bathroom, but you shouldn't frequently exit or enter the courtroom. It's a distraction.
- **Don't whisper or talk** during a hearing or during trial. You could be removed from court.

WHAT TO EXPECT if you're taking the stand

Taking the stand can be difficult after going through trauma.

We're here to help ease your worries by explaining what you can expect in court.

You will also have the chance to work with the prosecutor and victim advocate to prepare accordingly.



- When you take the stand, **expect the prosecutor to start by asking you simple questions** like what's your name or where do you live.



- **Emotionally prepare yourself** for the likelihood that the defendant will be present in the courtroom while you are on the stand.



- Media may be interested in your case. While your case is pending, it is best practice to **refrain from commenting publicly.**



- **Block off ample time to accommodate the court's timeline.** Please plan accordingly to have proper supervision for your children if you are called to address the court.



- When you are on the stand, it is okay to pause and breathe. **Remember, you are not on trial. YOU ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE CASE.**

Resources for Victims of Crime

- State Attorney's Office Victim Advocate
(904) 255-2500
- Sexual Assault Cold Case Information
(904) 255-3076
- Domestic Violence Information (Injunctions)
(904) 255-2000
- Women's Center of Jacksonville
(904) 722-3000
- Hubbard House (Duval)
(904) 354-3114
- Micah's Place (Nassau)
(904) 225-9979
- Quigley House (Clay)
(904) 284-0061
- Probation
(904) 695-4045
- City of Jacksonville Victim Service Center
(904) 255-3388
- Florida Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 500-1119
- FCASV Sexual Assault Crisis Hotline
(888) 956-7273
- Florida Abuse Hotline (Adult & Child)
(800) 96-ABUSE



Scan the QR code for more resources for victims.

Keep track of court dates by signing up for E-Notify:

enotify.flcourts.org

