

Current Procedures in the Magisterial District Courts

The Magisterial District Courts will be open to conduct all judicial services during regularly scheduled business hours. The Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas is taking precautions to manage concerns related to personal appearances in court facilities by following recommendations made by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The welfare and safety of the public and court personnel is important to us. The following precautions are taking place in all court facilities:

- Face masks are required to be worn to enter any court facility and must remain on while in the court. Bring your own mask.
- Hearings will be given a specific start time so it is important to arrive on time for your scheduled event.
- Anyone requesting an exemption from the requirement that face coverings be worn in all Court facilities due to medical reasons, should contact the Court ADA Coordinator listed herein as soon as possible, but no later than three (3) days before the scheduled event.

Court of Common Pleas ADA Coordinator
Office of District Court Administration
50 N Duke St
PO Box 83480
Lancaster, PA 17608-3480

Voice (717) 299-8041; Relay Service TTY/TDD 711 or (800) 654-5984
FAX (717) 295-3599; Email CourtADACoordinator@co.lancaster.pa.us

Criminal Cases

All Preliminary Hearings will begin to be scheduled in the Magisterial District Court of Origin. The schedule of Block Hearings can be found on the Courts website using this link: <https://courtccl.co.lancaster.pa.us/CourtAdmin.Public/>.

All Preliminary Hearings involving incarcerated defendants will be conducted using advanced communication technology. The defendant will not be transported to the Magisterial District Court. Exceptions may be made by the presiding official in high profile or complex cases.

Generally, Preliminary Hearings require the presence of the parties in the Magisterial District Courts and therefore subpoenas will be issued for witnesses to appear at the initial Preliminary Hearing. Proceedings requiring in-person appearances shall be conducted in a manner that employs all safety measures consistent with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) guidelines.

Each presiding official may conduct business as it determines to be appropriate and feasible and are encouraged to consider deciding matters on the papers and/or to conduct court proceedings through the use of advanced communication technologies, to the extent that constitutional requirements can be satisfied.

While electronic payments on outstanding fines, costs and restitution is preferred, in person cash payments will be accepted.

Civil Cases

All Civil Cases will be scheduled to in the Magisterial District Court of Origin.

Generally, Civil Hearings require the presence of the parties in the Magisterial District Courts. However, each presiding official may conduct business as it determines to be appropriate and feasible and are encouraged to consider deciding matters on the papers and/or to conduct court proceedings through the use of advanced communication technologies.

Any party to a case who wishes to utilize advanced communication technology rather than appear in person, must contact the Magisterial District Court in advance of the hearing to make the necessary arrangements.

Summary Cases

Summary Trials will be scheduled to take place in the Magisterial District Court of Origin..

All Summary Cases involving incarcerated defendants will be conducted using advanced communication technology. The defendant will not be transported to the Magisterial District Court.

Generally, Summary Trials require the presence of the parties in the Magisterial District Courts. However, each presiding official may conduct business as it determines to be appropriate and feasible and are encouraged to consider deciding matters on the papers and/or to conduct court proceedings through the use of advanced communication technologies, to the extent that constitutional requirements can be satisfied

Any party to a case who wishes to utilize advanced communication technology rather than appear in person, must contact the Magisterial District Court in advance of the hearing to make the necessary arrangements.

While electronic payments on outstanding fines, costs and restitution is preferred, in person cash payments will be accepted.

Landlord/Tenant Cases

All Landlord/Tenant Cases will be scheduled to in the Magisterial District Court of Origin.

Generally, Landlord/Tenant Hearings require the presence of the parties in the Magisterial District Courts. However, each presiding official may conduct business as it determines to be appropriate and feasible and are encouraged to consider deciding matters on the papers and/or to conduct court proceedings through the use of advanced communication technologies.

Any party to a case who wishes to utilize advanced communication technology rather than appear in person, must contact the Magisterial District Court in advance of the hearing to make the necessary arrangements.