

NEWS RELEASE

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DA's Office offers guidance for public on court dates, pending cases

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – As North Carolina courts prepare to expand some operations on June 1, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office is diligently working to tackle the backlog of cases halted in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The vast majority of criminal and traffic cases have been postponed since mid-March as the court system took steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and new court dates must be set in each of these cases. The District Attorney's Office is offering guidance for anyone who may have pending matters, including traffic citations. Information about court dates and traffic matters may be available online, thus reducing the number of people in the courthouse at a time when we continue to practice social distancing.

Beginning June 1, Mecklenburg courts will resume administrative hearings in Superior Court on a limited schedule. The number of people allowed in a courtroom at any given time will be reduced in order to allow all parties to put a safe distance between one another. No trials in District Court or Superior Court will be held during the months of June or July.

If you are the victim in a pending case:

Members of the District Attorney's Office continue to be available to speak with crime victims about their cases. Some court hearings, such as bond or detention hearings, have and will continue to be held during these times of limited operations. If there are considerations of bond during hearings in which the Victim Rights Act obligations apply, attempts will be made to contact victims before those hearings. In civil court, requests for restraining orders and domestic violence protective orders will continue to be heard. If you are a victim and you have any questions about court dates or the status of your case, please do not hesitate to contact the District Attorney's Office at 704-686-0700.

If you have a pending matter and had a court date scheduled on or after March 16, 2020:

While critical court proceedings have continued, most District and Superior Court proceedings were postponed in March, April and May. If you had a court date during this time period, your case was likely rescheduled. To determine your new court date, please do one of the following:

1. Visit www.nccourts.gov/court-dates to search online by name or citation number.
2. Call the District Attorney's Office at 704-686-0700.
3. Call the Clerk of Superior Court at 704-686-0600.

Be aware that, although the courts are expanding operations on June 1, the courts will still be operating on a limited basis and court dates may be delayed again. To ensure you receive the most up-to-date information about your court date, please take advantage of the state's court date notification system, which sends notifications of any date changes, as well as court date reminders, via email or text message. Visit www.nccourts.gov/services to sign up.

If you have a pending traffic citation:

Hearings related to most traffic matters are expected to be delayed until late summer. Depending on the nature of your traffic citation, you may be able to resolve the matter online. You can request a reduction of some speeding tickets or request the dismissal of traffic violations pertaining to your driver's license, registration and inspection if you have obtained compliance with the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Visit www.nccourts.gov/services to submit your request or to pay court costs, fines or fees. You may also be able to also resolve some traffic matters by calling the District Attorney's Office at 704-686-0700 or emailing DA.traffictickets@nccourts.org.

Since the pandemic struck our community, the District Attorney's Office has authorized people who were asked to complete a driving safety course to take the course online through the Safety and Health Council of North Carolina. The District Attorney's Office is temporarily waiving the requirement for in-person classes so that members of the public can practice social distancing to protect themselves and their loved ones. For more information, please visit www.safetync.org.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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