



## *COURT APPEARANCES*

### ***How to Dress:***

Dress as though you were going to a job interview. You will not be allowed into the courtroom if you are wearing shorts and the bailiff may bar you from entering if you are barefoot, wearing a halter top or an offensively printed t-shirt. You will be asked to remove your hat.

### ***Be on Time:***

It is very important to show up on time for court. If your name is called before you arrive, the judge may decide to default you or even issue an arrest warrant. You certainly will have to wait until the end of the court call to have your case heard. Check your ticket carefully for the time and date of your first appearance. Also check the address of where you must appear. If you are charged with a criminal offense, even if you were arrested in Carbondale, you must travel to the Jackson County Courthouse in Murphysboro (between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets on Walnut which is the main street of the City of Murphysboro). The entry door is on Walnut, although the wheelchair access door is on the street behind the Courthouse. Parking is free in Murphysboro, but on busy court days, it may be difficult to find parking close to the Courthouse, so allow enough time to find parking and get to your courtroom. Inside the Courthouse, you must go through a security check similar to an airport check-point. The bailiffs will help you find your courtroom.

Court in Carbondale (for local ordinances such as underage possession of alcohol, shoplifting, failure to maintain property, and most traffic tickets) is in the basement of Carbondale City Hall, 200 S. Illinois Avenue. There is plenty of parking, but be sure to have a couple of quarters to feed your meter.

### ***Courtroom Demeanor:***

It is very important for you and your witnesses to remain quiet while you are waiting for your case to be called. If the judge is disturbed while conducting court business, the offending audience members may be lectured or even ordered removed from the courtroom. Always address the judge as "Your Honor." Try to stay calm and speak loud enough for the judge and prosecutor to hear you when your case is up. It is usual for the judge and sometimes, the prosecutor to explain the procedures of the court and your rights before any cases are called—listen carefully and make sure you understand how you want to proceed before you enter a guilty plea or ask for a trial.

***PAY YOUR FINE!!***

***Paying your Fine:***

If you are found guilty or plead guilty in a criminal or local ordinance violation, you may be ordered to pay a fine and court costs. Often court costs are as much as the fine. If you cannot pay the fine and costs at the time your case is finished, you may request time to pay from the judge. Usually, you will be granted more time, but you will be given a return date to come back to court if you have not paid the fine and costs in full. *If you have not been able to pay the fine and costs by the date you are given, it is very important that you show up in court to request additional time on the date the court assigns.* You may be found in contempt if you fail to appear and have not paid your fine and you may be arrested. It will be very hard for you to get additional time to pay if you do not show up on your return date. The judge will be more likely to allow you additional time, if you can show you've made a good faith effort to pay by regularly paying what you can towards what you owe. You can pay your fine and costs at the Circuit Clerk's Office either in the Jackson County Courthouse (687-7300) or in the branch office in Carbondale City Hall (549-5302). The branch office is only open Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. The Courthouse Circuit Clerk's Office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m.



*Compliments of  
SIU Students' Legal Assistance Office  
Third Floor, Student Center  
618-536-6677*