

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER FOR ALL FELONY CASES

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Judicial Council set a goal to eliminate the pending caseload of Major Criminal cases (the “Backlog”) in the state’s district courts by June 30, 2023. Anoka County has not met this goal;

WHEREAS, the Anoka County District Court is committed to resolving the Backlog by the Minnesota Supreme Court’s new deadline of June 30, 2024;

WHEREAS, there are currently 1,639 pending felony cases open in Anoka County, with a felony backlog of 519 cases;

WHEREAS, the Statewide felony backlog is 1,294. Anoka’s felony backlog comprises 40% of the Statewide felony backlog;

WHEREAS, approximately 347 open felony cases have been pending more than 365 days;

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. § 631.021, provides that 97% of all criminal cases must be disposed of within 180 days;

WHEREAS, the Anoka judges have a duty to allocate resources, and lead the Courts in a manner that promotes access to justice and provides for a just, effective, and expeditious resolution of disputes;

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. Except as detailed below, effective September 18, 2023, all felony hearings will temporarily be handled by Judges Walker Jasper, Larson, Street, Davis, Brown and Saterbak.
 - a. All felony Pre-Trial and Jury Trial dates scheduled on or after 9/18/23 shall be reassigned to one of the above-listed judges;
 - b. Previously scheduled sentencings will remain with the judge that took the plea and will NOT be reassigned;
 - c. Cases blocked by Court Admin to a particular judge will NOT be reassigned;
 - d. Contested matters heard before 9/18/23 and taken under advisement will remain with the judge that handled the contested matter and will NOT be reassigned (but once the UA order is issued, the matter will be heard by one of the above-listed judges); and
 - e. Cases assigned to treatment courts will NOT be reassigned.

2. **Effective immediately, all** requests for continuances in felony cases **must** be in writing, providing the reason(s) for the request and filed in MNCIS **at least three (3) business days prior** to the hearing.
3. The attorney trying the case must appear in person at the pre-trial.
4. It is the expectation of the bench that the Anoka County Attorney's Office shall subpoena critical witnesses, including victims, to appear at the pre-trial.
5. It is also the expectation of the bench that the Anoka County Attorney's Office will provide defense counsel with their best offer at least 3 days prior to the pre-trial.
6. Defendants appearing on the bail calendar for warrants issued based upon non-appearance at pre-trial or jury trial shall immediately be re-scheduled for pre-trial and jury trial.
7. **All** attorneys **shall** be on time for all calendars. If a calendar starts at 8:30, all attorneys are expected to be prepared and in the courtroom at 8:30.
8. Non-departure cases can be sentenced by any of the 6 felony judges. Judges agree to honor a plea agreement but retain the right to impose something different if the defendant failed to comply with terms of the plea agreement.
9. This order is effective on September 18, 2023 and shall remain in effect through June 30, 2024.

SO ORDERED.

HON. KRISTIN C. LARSON
Chair, Anoka District Court Bench