

Willoughby Municipal Court



Court Rules

**WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

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**WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

ADOPTION OF LOCAL COURT RULES

RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

**IN THE WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
LAKE COUNTY, OHIO**

STATE OF OHIO)	JUDGE MARISA L. CORNACHIO
)	ADMINISTRATIVE / PRESIDING JUDGE
)	SS:
)	ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
)	ADOPTION OF WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
COUNTY OF LAKE)	LOCAL COURT RULES

It is ordered that the following Rules be, and are adopted for the governance of the practice and procedures in the Willoughby Municipal Court effective February 1, 2018 until otherwise provided, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5(B) of the Ohio Constitution and Rule 5 of the Ohio Supreme Court Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio and have been adopted to provide for the efficient and expeditious management of business before this Court. These Rules are to be known as the Willoughby Municipal Court Rules of Practice and Procedures and may be cited as *WMC R. No.* _____.

The Clerk of Court is ordered forthwith to post this Order and the Forward to the Rules (attached hereto). The Clerk of Court is ordered to maintain a copy of these Rules on the Court's website.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Date: February 1, 2018



Judge Marisa L. Cornachio
Administrative / Presiding Judge

Attachment

Journal:	<u> C-18 </u>
Page:	<u> 033 </u>
Entered:	<u> 02/01/18 </u>

**WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

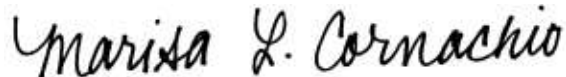
FORWARD

Willoughby Municipal court

These are the Willoughby Municipal Court's Local Rules. They are effective as of February 1, 2018. Copies of this booklet are available on the Court's website:

www.willoughbycourt.com.

These Rules have been promulgated in accordance with Rule 83 of the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 57 of the Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure and Rule 5 of the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio. These Rules should be followed when filing documents, practicing, appearing, or litigating in the Willoughby Municipal Court in addition to and in conjunction with the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure and the Ohio Rules of Criminal Procedure as applicable.



Judge Marisa L. Cornachio
Administrative / Presiding Judge

Date: February 1, 2018

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

GENERAL RULES

RULE 1.1 COURT HOURS

The Clerk of Court's office shall be generally open between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Sessions of the court shall generally be daily Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The court shall be in session at such time as the judges shall prescribe to meet special situations. These hours may be extended or diminished by Court Order. The Court is closed for all legal holidays.

RULE 1.2 DECORUM AND CONDUCT

- A. On opening of any court session, all persons in the courtroom shall stand. All persons in the courtroom shall conduct themselves with decorum and in such manner so as not to interfere with or obstruct judicial activities or proceedings. All persons appearing before the court shall appear in appropriate dress.
- B. Litigants and/or spectators are not permitted to smoke, eat or drink in the courtroom, nor shall they bring food or drink into the court building or courtroom.
- C. No person shall loiter, or conduct him or herself in an unseemly or disorderly manner, in the courtroom or in any halls, stairways, entryways or parking lots adjacent thereto, or otherwise interfere with or obstruct judicial activities or proceedings.
- D. All cell phones, pagers and other sound making devices are to be silenced while in the courtroom.
- E. The court expects that counsel shall call this rule to the attention of clients and witnesses.

RULE 1.3 PUBLIC USE OF COURTROOMS

- A. Questions of the admission of persons to a courtroom shall be the province of the judge or magistrate to whom that courtroom is assigned, within the guidelines of public access to all court proceedings, consistent with the order and dignity of the court.
- B. Public statements by counsel, court personnel, and witnesses shall be regulated by the judge or magistrate to whom the case is assigned within the guidelines of public access to court proceedings and the right of the parties to be free of improper publicity within areas protected by fundamental rights.
- C. No recording shall be made of any court proceeding without approval of the judge or magistrate conducting the proceeding. All such recording must conform to the guidelines set forth in Ohio Rules of Superintendence for Ohio Courts.

Requests for permission to broadcast, record, photograph or televise in the courtroom shall be in writing to the judge to whom the case is assigned as far in advance as reasonably practical, but no later than one-half (1/2) hour prior to the courtroom session to be broadcast or photographed unless otherwise permitted by the trial judge. The written order of the judge in these matters, pursuant to Sup.R. 12, shall be made part of the record of proceedings.

RULE 1.4 OMISSION OF PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS PRIOR TO SUBMISSION OR FILING

- A. When submitting a case document to court or filing a case document with a clerk of court, a party to a judicial action or proceeding shall omit personal identifiers from the document**

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B. When personal identifiers are omitted from a case document submitted to a court or filed with a clerk of court pursuant to Rule 1.4(A), the party shall submit or file that information on a separate form. The court or clerk may provide a standard form for parties to use. Redacted or omitted personal identifiers shall be provided to the court or clerk upon request or a party to the judicial action or proceeding upon motion.

C. The responsibility for omitting personal identifiers from a case document submitted to a court or filed with a clerk of court pursuant to Rule 1.4(A) shall rest solely with the party. The court or clerk is not required to review the case document to confirm that the party has omitted personal identifiers, and shall not refuse to accept or file the document on that basis.

RULE 1.5 COURT SECURITY

All visitors of the Willoughby Municipal Court shall follow the directives of Willoughby Municipal Court Security Personnel in the event of an emergency situation or security incident.

RULE 1.6 APPEARANCE AND WITHDRAWAL OF COUNSEL

- A. **APPEARANCE**: Attorneys practicing before this court (except for pro se litigants) shall designate their capacity as trial counsel on all pleadings, motions, petitions, etc. filed in this court. All such documents shall bear, in addition to the signature of trial counsel, counsel's name, email address, office address and zip code, office telephone number, as well as the number of counsel's Ohio Supreme Court Certificate of Registration, as provided by Ohio Gov. Bar R. VI, § 4. A law firm shall not be designated as trial counsel. Upon the entry of appearance of counsel, all journal entries, court documents, court orders and trial assignments shall be served upon the designated counsel at the email address that the attorney provides Willoughby Municipal Court.
- B. **PRO HAC VICE**: An attorney who is not admitted to practice law in the State of Ohio may not appear on behalf of another individual or entity in court without the permission of the judge or magistrate. The motion for permission shall be in writing and shall attach a copy of the Certificate of Pro Hac Vice Registration obtained from the Ohio Supreme Court. It shall certify that the attorney is admitted to practice law in the highest court of another state or in the District of Columbia and that the attorney is not a resident of this state. The request must be cosigned by an attorney admitted to the practice of law in this state and registered under the Rule VI of the Rules for the Government of the Bar of Ohio. If the judge or magistrate grants the applicant's motion for permission to appear pro hac vice, the applicant must file a Notice of Permission to Appear Pro Hac Vice and a copy of the order granting permission with the Office of Attorney Services at the Ohio Supreme Court within 30 days.
- C. **WITHDRAWAL**: Once an appearance is made, an attorney may withdraw from a case only with leave of court. Withdrawal shall be permitted only by written motion filed with the court. The motion shall include (1) the specific reasons for requesting withdrawal, (2) the name and address of a substitute attorney, if any, and (3) proof of notification to the opposing attorney and to the client. Said motion shall be filed at least seven (7) days prior to the next scheduled hearing.

RULE 1.7 COURT APPOINTED COUNSEL

No attorney shall be appointed to represent an indigent person unless his/her name appears on the Court Appointed Counsel List.

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- A. APPLICATION: The attorney must submit a written application to the Administrative Judge. Said application must include the attorney's name, email address, business address, Ohio Attorney Registration Number, and whether the attorney is in good standing with the Ohio Supreme Court. The application shall also include any special areas of expertise, such as language fluency or mental health law specialization. Upon ascertaining that the attorney is in good standing with the Ohio Supreme Court, the attorney's name shall be placed on the Court Appointment List. Said list will be reviewed by the judges on a quarterly basis.
- B. FELONY LIST: Those attorneys on the current court approved Court Appointment List for representing defendants in felony cases in Lake County Common Pleas Court pursuant to Common Pleas Court Local Rule ____ are eligible and may apply to be placed on this court's Felony Court Appointment List.
- C. REMOVAL: The court may decline to accept any application for inclusion on any list, or may remove the name of any attorney from the list.

RULE 1.8 MAGISTRATES

The judges shall appoint magistrates who may hear cases by reference, and in accordance with Traffic Rule 14, Criminal Rule 19, Civil Rule 53, and Rules of Superintendence Rule 19. The Willoughby Court full time magistrate is a salaried employee whose hours and compensation are set by the judge of the court.

Magistrates shall file their reports and recommendations with the Clerk within fifteen (15) days after conclusion of the trial or hearing before them, except in rare and unusual cases in which the complexity of the facts or of the law requires additional time for consideration by the magistrate, in which case the magistrate shall file an interim report setting forth the reasons for the delay. In cases where such report is filed with the Clerk, the magistrate shall file the completed reports and recommendations not later than thirty (30) days after conclusion of the trial or hearing, unless the court, by Order, approves an extension of time.

RULE 1.9 ASSIGNMENT OF CASES TO JUDGE(S)

- A. Civil cases shall be assigned to the judge when an answer is filed or when a motion, other than one for default judgment, is filed. Criminal cases shall be assigned when a plea of not guilty is entered.
 - 1. Particular Session: The arraignment session shall be the only designated particular session. The following subject categories shall be disposed of by the judge assigned to the arraignment session:
 - a. Civil cases in which a Motion for Default Judgment is filed, and where there has not been an answer or other responsive pleading or motion filed;
 - b. Initial appearance in criminal and traffic cases;
 - c. Criminal and traffic cases in which a plea of guilty or no contest is entered at arraignment;
 - d. Preliminary hearings in criminal cases;
 - e. Small Claims cases;
 - f. Forcible Entry and Detainer cases in which the right to trial by jury is either waived or not demanded;

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g. The judge/magistrate may also rule on motions before the court at the arraignment session.

2. Assignment of re-filed cases: In any instance where a previously filed and dismissed case is re-filed, that case shall be reassigned to the judge.

B. All cases heard before a visiting judge remain on the docket of the individual judge who was last assigned until final disposition unless otherwise ordered by the administrative judge.

RULE 1.10 PRIORITY OF SCHEDULING

A. Actions shall be scheduled for trial in their numerical order so far as possible, except that the following matters shall have priority for trial:

1. Cases on trial which have gone over from the preceding day.
2. Cases which the court may advance for trial.
3. Cases involving the liberty of a person.
4. Cases for wages.
5. Cases for replevin.
6. Cases for attachment.

B. Pursuant to Sup. R. 36(C)(2) of the Rules of Superintendence for Ohio Courts, the following types of cases shall immediately be assigned to the judge upon the filing of the required motions:

1. Cases involving attachment or garnishment before judgment.
2. Cases involving immediate seizure in a replevin action.

C. Priority of normal assignment shall be as follows (subject to ORC § 2945.71):

1. Criminal/traffic jury trials;
2. Criminal/traffic bench trials;
3. ALS appeals, BMV Administrative Appeals, and/or Alternative Motions for Limited Driving Privileges;
4. Civil jury trials;
5. Civil bench trials;
6. Pre-trials – criminal/traffic and civil;
7. Motions (with request for oral hearing).

RULE 1.11 COURT COSTS

The schedules of court costs for criminal/traffic cases as well as for civil/small claims cases are set by administrative order. The schedules are available at the Clerk of Court's office and are posted on the Court's website at www.willoughbycourt.com.

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RULE 1.12 MOTIONS

All motions shall be in writing and timely filed and served on all appropriate parties in accordance with Ohio Rules and Statutes. At the discretion of the court or as required by law, motions may be set for oral hearing.

RULE 1.13 JURY DEMAND

- A. Any party desiring a jury trial in a civil case must demand the same in accordance with Rule 38 of the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure. Any party desiring a jury trial in a criminal/traffic case shall demand the same in accordance with Criminal Rule 23. The jury demand must be in writing either by separate instrument or by prominent endorsement in the caption of a pleading. The jury demand must be filed in compliance with the time frame set forth in the applicable Rule.
- B. The party demanding the jury in a civil case shall pay the Jury Demand Civil Cost at the time the demand is made and the Jury Deposit Civil Cost no later than noon on the date prior to the trial. The cost requirement may be waived upon the presentation of evidence, which establishes the indigency of the party demanding the jury, and upon approval of the judge. There is no prepayment of jury costs in criminal/traffic cases.
- C. Each party shall file, seven (7) full days in advance of trial, a complete set of instructions suitable for charging the jury in the captioned matter. Parties shall file a trial brief seven (7) full days in advance of trial.
- D. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in a jury waiver or other appropriate sanctions.

RULE 1.14 CONTINUANCE FOR TRIAL OR HEARING

No case assigned for trial or hearing may be continued except on written motion and for good cause shown. Such motion shall be filed with the court not less than seven (7) business days prior to the date of the trial or hearing in civil cases and two (2) business days prior to the date of trial or hearing in criminal/traffic cases. In the case of unforeseen emergency, this time requirement may be waived. The moving party is required to first discuss the continuance with all opposing counsel, or opposing parties if there is no counsel, indicate whether the other party is opposed to or in agreement to the continuance, and state the reason for the continuance. If counsel is alleging a conflicting trial date as the reason for continuance, the conflicting trial notice must be attached to the notice. Counsel must also set forth at least two (2) other alternative dates for trial, agreeable to the court and all parties in the case.

RULE 1.15 RECUSAL OF JUDGE

- A. Should the judge recuse himself or herself from hearing any individually assigned case, said judge shall cause a Journal Entry to be made setting forth the recusal and the reasons therefore. The case shall thereafter be referred to another court or to a visiting judge.
- B. ILLNESS, ETC.: In the event of the protracted illness of a judge, or the unduly prolonged time for trial of a case(s) assigned to a judge, the administrative judge may order reassignment of case(s) assigned to such judge to a visiting judge,
- C. GENERAL: A judge appointed or elected to succeed another shall have the cases assigned to his or her predecessor. When there is a transfer of a case, the case file and the other records shall be changed to reflect the reassignment to the transferee judge.

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RULE 1.16.1 FAX FILING

A. **APPLICABILITY** - These rules apply to all proceedings in the Willoughby Municipal Court.

ORIGINAL FILINGS

1. **The Court shall accept fax filings, filings by mail or filings personally presented at court by an attorney.**
2. A document filed by fax shall be accepted as the effective original filing. The person making a fax filing need not file any source document (original record) with the Clerk of Court but must, however, maintain in his/her records and have available for production on request by the court the source document filed by fax, with original signatures as otherwise required under the applicable rules, together with the source copy of the facsimile cover sheet used for the subject filing.
3. The source document filed by fax shall be maintained by the person making the filing until the case is closed and all opportunities for post judgment relief are exhausted.

C. **DEFINITIONS** – As used in these rules, unless the context requires otherwise:

1. A “**facsimile transmission**” means the transmission of a source document by a facsimile machine that encodes a document into optical or electrical signals, transmits and reconstructs the signals to print a duplicate of the source document at the receiving end.
2. A “**facsimile machine**” means a machine that can send and receive a facsimile transmission.
3. “**Fax**” is an abbreviation for “facsimile” and refers, as indicated by the context, to facsimile transmission or to a document so transmitted.

FAX COVER PAGE

1. The person filing a document by fax shall also include a cover page containing all of the following information:
 - a. name of the court
 - b. name, title, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of person filing the fax document;
 - c. title of the case;
 - d. case number;
 - e. title of the document being filed (e.g., Defendant Johns’ Answer to Amended Complaint; Plaintiff Smith’s Response to Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss; Plaintiff Smith’s Notice of Filing Exhibit “G” to Plaintiff Smith’s Response to Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss);
 - f. name of the judge to whom the case is assigned, if any;
 - g. date of fax transmission;
 - h. indication of the number of pages included in the transmission, including the cover page;
 - i. if applicable, a statement explaining how costs are being submitted
2. If a document is sent by fax to the clerk without the cover page information listed above, the clerk may do either of the following:

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- a. enter the document in the case docket and file the document;
- b. deposit the document in a file of failed faxed documents with a notation of the reason for the failure (omission of cover page). The document shall **not** be considered filed with the clerk.

E. FAILED FAX SUBMISSION - The Clerk of Court is not required to send any form of notice to the sending party of a failed fax filing. However, if practicable, the Clerk of Court may inform the sending party of a failed fax filing.

F. SIGNATURE

1. A party who wishes to file a signed source document by fax shall either:
 - a. Fax a copy of the signed source document; or
 - b. Fax a copy of the document without the signature but with the notation “/s/” followed by the name of the signing person where the signature appears in the signed source document.
2. A party who files a signed document by fax represents that the physically signed source document is in his/her possession or control.
3. Any document signed electronically or by stamp of the signature of the judge shall be considered an original signature and have full force and effect of the signature of the judge

G. EXHIBITS

1. Each exhibit to a facsimile produced document that cannot be accurately transmitted via facsimile transmission for any reason must be replaced by an insert page describing the exhibit and why it is missing. Unless the court otherwise orders, the missing exhibit shall be filed with the court, as a separate document, not later than five (5) court days following the filing of the facsimile or email document. Failure to file the missing exhibits as required by this paragraph may result in the court striking the document and/or exhibit.
2. Any exhibit filed in this manner shall be attached to a cover sheet containing the caption of the case which sets forth the name of the court, title of the case, the case number, name of the judge and the title of the exhibit being filed (e.g., Plaintiff Willoughby’s Notice of Filing Exhibit ‘G’ to Plaintiff Willoughby’s Response to Defendant’s Motion to Dismiss), and shall be signed and served in conformance with the rules governing the signing and service of pleadings in this court.

H. TIME OF FILING

1. Subject to the provisions of these rules, all documents sent by fax and accepted by the clerk shall be considered filed with the clerk of court as of the date and time the clerk time-stamps the document received as opposed to the date and time of the fax transmission. The office of the clerk of court will be deemed open to receive facsimile transmission of documents on the same days and at the same time the court is regularly open for business. Therefore, a fax filing received after the court closes on a given business day will be deemed filed with the clerk of court as of the opening of the next

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business day. On a fax filing, at least one page of any document received by the clerk will be automatically imprinted with the date and time of receipt. The date and time imprinted on the document will determine the time the filing was received, provided the document is deemed accepted by the clerk.

2. If received after 4:30 PM, that filing would be considered filed as of the following day the court is open for business.
3. Fax filings may NOT be sent directly to the court for filing but may only be transmitted directly through the facsimile equipment operated by the clerk of court.
4. The clerk of court may, but need not, acknowledge receipt of a facsimile transmission.
5. The risks of transmitting a document by fax to the clerk of court shall be borne entirely by the sending party. Anyone using facsimile filing is urged to verify receipt of such filing by the clerk of court through whatever technological means are available.

I. FEES AND COSTS

1. No document filed by facsimile that requires a filing fee at the time of filing shall be accepted by the clerk for filing until court cost and fees have been paid by a credit or debit card (VISA, Discover, or MasterCard). The forms necessary for the authorization of payment by credit card shall be available at the Clerk's Office during normal business hours and are accessible online at www.willoughbycourt.com. Documents tendered to the clerk without payment of court cost and fees, or with incomplete information on the charge authorization or request, or which do not conform to applicable rules will not be filed.
2. A one dollar (\$1.00) per page facsimile fee shall be assessed for facsimile filings.

J. LENGTH OF DOCUMENT – Facsimile or email (when available-check with court)) filings shall not exceed 10 pages in length.

K. SERVICE COPIES - The filer may transmit service copies by facsimile or email to the opposing party and the certificate of service should reflect the mode of service.

RULE 1.16.2 EFILING

THIS SECTION IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK AND RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE

RULE 1.17 SERVICE OF PROCESS

The Clerk of the Willoughby Municipal Court shall accept service of process methods as outlined in Civil Rule 4.1 which methods shall include “virtual” service of process.

The Clerk may choose to utilize service by eCertified mail. This advanced postal technology does not modify Civil Rule 4.1(A)(1)(a) *Service by United States certified or express mail*, but merely provides for advanced electronic and website technology in the sending of certified mail and receipt of confirmation utilizing the court's website to show to whom the mail was delivered, the date of delivery, and address where delivered, all in accordance with the now-existing Civil Rules.

The Clerk may also choose to utilize service of process methods as outlined in Civil Rule 4.1(A)(1)(b) *Service by commercial carrier service* using the specific service that the Clerk deems most effective for the purpose. Advanced technology may also allow the provision for advanced electronic and website technology in the use of a commercial carrier service and receipt of

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confirmation utilizing the court's website to show to whom the mail was delivered, the date of delivery, and address where delivered, all in accordance with the now-existing Civil Rules.

All service of process of complaints or other documents served with virtual services of process are subject to review and/or challenge as further outlined in Civil Rule 4.1, with confirmation of service of process data being made available through this Clerk's Office.

RULE 1.18 COURT RECORD RECORDING AND TRANSCRIPTS

A. **RECORD OF PROCEEDING**: All traffic and criminal proceedings shall be recorded as required by the Ohio Rules of Criminal and Civil Procedure. Civil trials, hearings and other proceedings are also recorded.

A party in any case may have a court reporter present to record the proceedings. No fees for court reporters will be taxed as cost or otherwise paid by anyone other than the party providing the court reporter unless that party makes a timely motion prior to trial or hearing for the appointment of an official court reporter and requests in advance that such fees be taxed as costs. See Civil Rule 54(D) and ORC §1901.33. The responsibility of arranging for the attendance of a court reporter shall rest with the attorney and/or party desiring the same.

B. **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDING**: All requests for transcripts of any court proceeding shall be in writing and directed to the judge or magistrate who heard the case. If movant or movant's counsel wants a particular reporting firm appointed to transcribe a recording, a motion seeking such appointment must be made. The court will then contact the appointed reporter with a specific date and time to come to court to transcribe the recording or obtain the record of the proceeding for transcription. If a reporting firm is not specified by movant or movant's counsel, or is not acceptable to the court, then the court will issue an entry appointing a court reporter and the transcription is then obtained from the official court reporter at movant's costs. The official court reporter must pay a court cost for the CD recording.

All transcripts shall be completed within a reasonable time which shall be thirty (30) days, and the request should allow for that thirty (30) day preparation time.

All transcriptions must be filed with the court immediately upon completion.

C. **COPY OF RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**: All requests for copies of a CD recording shall follow the Ohio Supreme Court's Rules of Superintendence, Rule 11(D) that states: "*(D) Inspection of electronically recorded transcripts of proceedings. A party may request a copy of an electronically recorded transcript of proceedings, or a portion of the transcript. The court may permit a party to view or hear the transcript of proceedings on file with the court.*"

RULE 1.19 PUBLIC RECORD REQUESTS

Court records are presumed open to public access. Public record requests will be fulfilled in full compliance with the Ohio Rules of Superintendence, the Ohio Revised Code and any other applicable rules or statutes. Any public record request that seeks information in electronic format will be delivered in PDF format, if possible, or by any means the court may choose or is capable of providing. This insures the integrity and authenticity of the data received from the Willoughby Municipal Court.

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RULE 1.20 JURY MANAGEMENT PLAN

See **APPENDIX A, JURY MANAGEMENT PLAN**, on Page 26

RULE 1.21 COURT RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION

Pursuant to the Ohio Rules of Court, Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio, Rule 26 (C) and (D), all Willoughby Municipal Court case records filed after January 1, 2006, will be retained in electronic media format, as much as practicable, including text and digital images, as an alternative to a paper record.

Paper media may be destroyed after it is imaged and saved to the electronic case record in accordance with division (D) of Rule 26.

Audio records of courtroom proceedings shall be kept for a period of five (5) years.

RULE 1.22 FRIVOLOUS ACTIONS AND VEXATIOUS LITIGATORS

- A. If the Court, *sua sponte* or on motion by a party, determines that an action is frivolous or is filed for delay, harassment or any other improper purpose, it may impose, on the person who signed the complaint or action, a represented party or both, appropriate sanctions. The sanctions may include an award to the opposing party of reasonable expenses, reasonable attorney fees, costs or any other sanction the court deems just. An action shall be considered frivolous if it is not reasonably well-grounded in fact or warranted by existing law or a good faith argument for the extension, modification or reversal of existing law.
- B. If a party habitually, persistently and without reasonable cause engages in frivolous conduct under section (A) of this rule, the court may, *sua sponte* or on the motion by a party, find the party to be a vexatious litigator. If the court determines that a party is a vexatious litigator under this rule, the court may impose filing restrictions on the party. The restrictions may include prohibiting the party from instituting legal proceedings in the court without first obtaining leave or any other restriction the court considers just.

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RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

CRIMINAL / TRAFFIC CASE MANAGEMENT

RULE 2.1 DIVERSION PROGRAMS

- A. **THE DIVERSION PROGRAM:** The Diversion Program (DP) is for certain non-violent misdemeanor offenses, committed by first-time offenders. Upon successful completion of the program, charges are dismissed and the records in the case are sealed from public inspection. The defendant shall pay the court costs associated with the dismissal. If the defendant fails to successfully complete the diversion program, the defendant shall be found guilty of all charges and the court shall proceed to sentencing. A hearing shall be scheduled at which the court determines whether the defendant has successfully completed the program.

At pretrial/trial, if the prosecutor determines that the defendant is a candidate for the program, the prosecutor may make a motion that the defendant be admitted to the program. The defendant enters the DP by entering a Guilty plea. The defendant shall sign a program agreement. The court will hold its findings in abeyance.

No one may enter the DP without the consent of the judge/magistrate. The factors that the court will consider are whether the defendant was cooperative with the law enforcement officer(s) making the arrest, whether the incident is a non-violent offense, whether there is evidence of remorse on the part of the defendant, the defendant's prior criminal/traffic record, whether there are any criminal cases or alcohol related traffic offenses pending against the defendant at the present time and any other factor that the court deems relevant. The court may also decline to admit a defendant into the program if, at the court appearance, it is found the defendant has an active arrest warrant.

While enrolled in the program, all participants must remain law abiding and have no further criminal offenses or alcohol related traffic offenses. Individuals may be ordered to abstain from alcohol/drugs of abuse, be subject to random alcohol/drug screening, obtain a G.E.D. or high school diploma if applicable, obtain employment, complete community work service and/or comply with any additional appropriate terms. In cases where victim restitution is applicable, the court shall order the defendant to pay restitution. There is a diversion fee for the program. Participants may be ordered to complete an educational instruction program at their own expense.

- B. **THE DRIVING UNDER SUSPENSION DIVERSION PROGRAM:** The Driving Under Suspension Diversion Program (LDP) is designed to assist drivers who are under suspension to restore their valid driving privileges. The Diversion Program Coordinator shall review the DUS cases presented before the court. The LEADS Printout shall be reviewed to determine the eligibility of the defendant. Program eligibility shall be determined using criteria established by the court. **A defendant may not participate in the LDP if the charge is driving under an OVI/ALS suspension or if there was an accident.**

A DUS checklist form shall be completed by the Diversion Program Coordinator. The checklist shall identify the specific problems the defendant has with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) and the specific tasks and financial costs necessary to restore driving privileges. In addition, all other pending or unpaid traffic matters will be identified on this form.

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Defendant's ability to participate may be determined at arraignment or following a prosecutor's pre-trial conference with the defendant/defense counsel.

1. If eligible, defendants will be asked if they wish to participate in the program.
2. The defendant shall enter a Guilty plea to the DUS Charge and any accompanying charges.
3. Defendants shall sign a program agreement.
4. The court shall hold its findings in abeyance.
5. A Journal Entry shall reflect assignment to the program.
6. The case shall be continued on the court's docket for a reasonable period of time.
7. The checklist shall be reviewed and the defendant advised on the tasks and financial costs necessary to obtain valid driving status, including, but not limited to, obtaining auto insurance.
8. Upon defendant's return to court on the LDP hearing date, the court will issue a finding on the original plea based on whether defendant has a valid driver's license and insurance. If the defendant has a valid license and insurance, the DUS will be amended to a failure to display charge and all accompanying traffic charges will be dismissed at the defendant's cost. Insurance issues may be resolved pursuant to ORC §4509.101(D).
9. Participants of the LDP will be required to pay a diversion fee, a mandatory fine relative to the licensing offense, plus all court costs associated with their case(s).
10. Any program violation will result in termination of the referral, the court entering a finding of guilty on the original pleas and proceeding to sentencing.

RULE NO. 2.2 ARRAIGNMENT

The Clerk of Willoughby Municipal Court shall require the filing of a written complaint or uniform traffic ticket before placing an individual's name on the traffic / criminal docket.

- A. Plea by Personal Appearance: The defendant, either on his own behalf or by and through counsel, may enter one of the following pleas at arraignment:
1. Guilty,
 2. Not guilty
 3. No contest, or
 4. Not guilty by reason of insanity (except in traffic cases where a not guilty plea by reason of insanity is not applicable).
- B. Not Guilty Plea by letter: A defendant may enter a plea of not guilty by letter prior to defendant's scheduled arraignment provided that the letter is sent by retained or court appointed counsel. The letter shall include counsel's name, email address, office address and zip code, office telephone number, and counsel's Ohio Supreme Court Certificate of Registration Number. The letter shall demand or waive the defendant's right to a speedy trial, demand or waive the defendant's right to a jury trial if the offense is one that provides a right to a jury trial and indicate if the defendant is willing to have his case heard by a magistrate. If right to a speedy trial is not addressed, the court will presume that a right to speedy trial is not waived and schedule accordingly. If right to a jury trial is not addressed, that right is waived pursuant to Ohio Rule of Criminal Procedure 23.

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

- C. Request for continuance: Defendant may request a reasonable continuance of initial arraignment by filing a written motion or defendant may appear in court at arraignment to request a continuance.

RULE NO. 2.3 WAIVERS FOR VIOLATION OF CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND OHIO REVISED CODE

Pursuant to the requirements of Criminal Rule 4.1(E), and Traffic Rule 13, the court has established a waiver schedule by administrative order. The schedule is available at the counter in the Clerk's Office and on the court's website at www.willoughbycourt.com.

RULE NO. 2.4 BAIL BOND SCHEDULE

- A. BOND SCHEDULE: In lieu of bond set by a judge or magistrate, the clerk and/or arresting police authority are authorized to release a person charged with a misdemeanor criminal / traffic offense based on the Bail Bond Schedule established by administrative order. The schedule is available at the counter in the Clerk's Office and on the court's website at www.willoughbycourt.com.
- B. FELONY CASES: Bond in felony cases shall be set by the judge. The judge may refer the setting of the bond in felony cases to a magistrate.

In all issues regarding the setting of bond, the court considers risk assessment factors to include, but which are not limited to the nature of the offense, prior criminal history, previous convictions, previous failures to appear and any and all other considerations the court may assess in determining whether bond will be required to ensure the appearance of the defendant and to limit pre-trial detention of those who may be at low risk of re-offending or not appearing for court hearing.

RULE 2.5 USE OF ELECTRONICALLY PRODUCED TICKET (eTICKETING)

The use and filing of a ticket that is produced by a computer or other electronic means is hereby authorized in the Willoughby Municipal Court. The electronically produced ticket shall conform in all substantive respects to the Ohio Uniform Traffic Ticket. If an electronically produced ticket is issued at the scene of an alleged offense, the issuing officer shall provide the defendant with a paper copy of the ticket.

**WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT
RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

CIVIL / SMALL CLAIMS MANAGEMENT

RULE NO. 3.1 CIVIL CASE MANAGEMENT

- A. Costs: No action, proceeding, motion or other document shall be accepted for filing by the clerk of court unless there first shall be deposited the sum of not less than the amount specified in the civil costs section as security costs, unless otherwise ordered by the court or otherwise exempted by law. The schedule of court costs in the civil division is set by administrative order. The schedule is available at the clerk of court's office or at the court's web site. Those persons unable to post the required security for costs may be excused from the same upon filing of an appropriate affidavit, when approved by the judge assigned to the case.
- B. Summons: The summons shall be served in accordance with the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure. In the event there is a failure of service, the clerk of court shall notify counsel immediately. If counsel/pro se litigant fails to obtain service of the summons and complaint within 6 months from the date the case has been filed and the party on whose behalf such service was required cannot show good cause why such service was not made, the action shall be dismissed as to that defendant without prejudice upon the court's own initiative with notice to such party or upon motion.
- C. Assignment of cases: If an answer or motion, other than one for default judgment, is filed, the clerk of court shall immediately forward the file to the judicial staff for random lot assignment.

RULE NO. 3.2 JOINDER AND SEPARATION OF CASES

- A. Motions for joinder, consolidation and separation of civil cases shall be addressed to the administrative judge. The clerk of court shall be provided with a sufficient number of copies of any motion filed in accordance with this rule to include a copy in each file affected by the motion. Failure to comply with this provision will result in such partial filing being stricken.
- B. If joinder or consolidation is permitted, all cases so joined will be assigned or transferred to the judge holding the case with the lowest case number.
- C. If separation is permitted, the originally assigned judge shall retain the case bearing the lowest case number.

RULE NO. 3.3 PLEADINGS AND MOTIONS

- A. Upon assignment of a civil case to an individual judge, pleadings, motions and other pertinent documents shall be filed with the clerk of court.
- B. All motions must be in writing, on 8 1/2 x 11 paper, with no backing, and served on opposing counsel / pro se litigant. All motions must be accompanied by a written memorandum containing argument and citations.
- C. Motions and responses must be filed within the time guidelines set forth in the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure.
- D. Motions shall be ruled on without a hearing unless otherwise requested in writing, and at the court's discretion.

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Motions for Summary Judgment

Unless otherwise ordered by the court, Motions for Summary Judgment shall be decided on the briefs and other attachments without oral arguments. The adverse party shall file a brief in opposition within fourteen (14) days after service of the motion.

Motions other than for Summary Judgment

Each party opposing a motion other than Motion for Summary Judgment shall serve and file a brief in opposition within seven (7) days of service of said Motion, unless a longer time period is provided in the Ohio Rules of Civil Procedure.

RULE NO. 3.4 PRE-TRIAL CONFERENCES

- A. The judge/magistrate may schedule a pre-trial conference the purpose of which is to narrow and clarify issues, agree to stipulations, set a case management schedule, and attempt to reach settlement.
- B. Attorneys and/or pro se litigants are required to appear at scheduled pre-trial conferences and failure to appear may result in sanctions. Counsel attending a pre-trial conference must have complete authority to stipulate to items of evidence and admissions, and must have full settlement authority or have the client present at the pre-trial.

RULE NO. 3.5 JOURNAL ENTRIES

All motions submitted to the court shall be accompanied by journal entries,

RULE NO. 3.6 DEFAULT JUDGMENTS

In all cases in which default judgment is available to a party by reason of failure of defendant to answer or appear, the motion for default judgment must be filed within 90 days from the time that plaintiff has notice of such default. Failure to file a motion for default shall result in dismissal of the complaint for want of prosecution. Proof of damages must be submitted to the court by affidavit or testimony. For cases based on an account, the account statement must be submitted, along with proof by affidavit or testimony that no subsequent payments have been made on the account. It is the responsibility of counsel to prepare a proposed journal entry.

RULE NO. 3.7 FORCIBLE ENTRY AND DETAINER

- A. COMPLAINT - A complaint in Forcible Entry and Detainer shall be filed and shall contain a reason for the eviction, a copy of the notice under R.C.1923.04, and a copy of the written instrument upon which the claim is founded. When the plaintiff is a corporation, the complaint must be signed and prosecuted by an attorney. Noncompliance with this rule may result in dismissal of the complaint.
- B. TRIAL - There shall be no "Answer Day" or "Call Day" as the term is used in other civil cases, and the trial date shall be set forth in the summons. Defendant shall be served at least seven (7) days prior to the date set for trial. Motions shall be heard at the trial, unless the assigned judge or magistrate directs otherwise.
- C. CONTINUANCE - A continuance may be granted as provided in R.C. 1923.08.
- D. ENFORCEMENT OF FIRST CAUSE JUDGMENT – WRITS AND MOVE-OUTS

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

1. If judgment is for plaintiff on the first cause (possession), unless otherwise ordered by the court, the plaintiff may immediately purchase a Writ of Restitution and schedule a move-out with the bailiff.
2. Writs must be timely purchased. Timely purchase is determined according to the following:
 - a. Within thirty (30) days of the date of the judgment, unless the judgment orders otherwise.
 - b. Where the judgment is more than thirty (30) days old, but less than sixty (60) days old, plaintiff must file a Motion for Leave to Purchase a Writ and serve a copy of the motion on the defendant(s). The court may schedule a hearing on the motion or decide the motion on the filings of the parties. Upon the granting of the motion, plaintiff may purchase a writ and schedule a move-out.
3. Writs must be executed upon (the scheduled move-out must occur) within fifteen (15) business days of issuance by the clerk's office. If a move-out is stayed or canceled, and more than fifteen (15) business days pass between the date the writ issued and the new move-out date, the plaintiff must purchase a new writ.

E. SCHEDULING THE MOVE-OUT - In order to arrange for the physical removal of the defendant and their belongings, the following must occur:

1. Plaintiff must purchase a writ of restitution from the clerk;
2. Plaintiff must call the judge's bailiff to schedule the move-out within five (5) days of the purchase of the Writ.
3. Upon presentation of the receipt, the bailiff shall schedule a move-out date and inform the plaintiff of the scheduled date.

F. MOVE-OUTS

1. Every move-out scheduled by the court pursuant to a Writ of Restitution shall be supervised by the bailiff. The actual physical move-out of defendant's belongings shall be conducted by the movers hired by the plaintiff.
2. On the scheduled date and hour, the bailiff shall meet the plaintiff, or his/her agent, at the premises. The bailiff shall enter the premises and remove all inhabitants not lawfully entitled to possession. The movers shall then conduct the actual physical move-out and secure any items are required under the law.
3. The court recommends that plaintiffs inspect the premises prior to scheduling the move-out date. On the scheduled move-out date, if the volume or nature of the contents of the premises is such that removal of the contents would create a health or safety hazard, the move-out may be canceled. Thereafter, a new move-out date may be set in conjunction with a special waste collection as scheduled by the plaintiff. Although the costs of special waste collections are initially borne by plaintiff, plaintiff may plead such costs as damages.

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RULE NO. 3.8 CHANGE OF VENUE CERTIFICATION OR PROCEEDINGS

- A. **COURT AS TRANSFEROR**: The clerk shall not transfer any case pursuant to venue change in application of Civil Rule 3(C) until all costs are paid, and, in addition, a check made payable to the transferee court in the sum sufficient to secure its costs is deposited with the clerk to accompany the file upon transfer. It shall be the responsibility of the plaintiff's attorney to ascertain the filing cost in the transferee court. Failure to comply with this rule within fourteen (14) days from the date of entry as to change of venue may form the basis for dismissal of the action.
- B. **COURT AS TRANSFEREE**: The clerk shall not file and docket any case transferred to this court pursuant to venue change in application of Civil Rule 3(C) until a sum sufficient to secure costs has been deposited. Failure to comply with this rule within fourteen (14) days from receipt of the file from the transferor court may form the basis for returning the file to the transferor court.
- C. **CERTIFICATION TO COMMON PLEAS COURT**: It shall be the responsibility of any party filing a counterclaim, crossclaim or third-party complaint exceeding the monetary jurisdiction of the court to also file a motion to certify the case to the Court of Common Pleas. The motion shall be accompanied by a check or money order made payable to the Court of Common Pleas, in a sum of not less than the amount specified as security costs for that court. Failure to comply within thirty (30) days of the filing of such counterclaim, crossclaim or third-party complaint shall be grounds for dismissal under Civil Rule 41(B).

RULE NO. 3.9 TRANSFER OF JUDGMENT

Pursuant to provisions of R.C.2329.02, the clerk of court shall accept for filing, a Certificate of Judgment or a Transcript of the Proceedings of the original court which shall be docketed and numbered as if originally filed in this court and the clerk shall notify the original court by mail that such transfer has been made.

RULE NO. 3.10 SMALL CLAIMS

- A. **COMPLAINT** - A small claims action is commenced by filing a small claims complaint pursuant to R.C. 1925.04. The clerk of court shall accept claims for filing and shall not provide legal advice. A defendant is not required to file an answer or a statement of defense. A timely counterclaim or crossclaim may be filed. All pleadings will be construed to accomplish substantial justice. Should the defendant fail to appear for the hearing, a judgment may be entered.
- B. **CONTINUANCES** - No case scheduled for trial, hearing or mediation may be continued except on written motion and for good cause shown. Such motion shall be filed with the court not less than seven (7) calendar days prior to the hearing, trial or mediation. In the case of unforeseen emergency, this time requirement may be waived.
- C. **MOTIONS TO TRANSFER TO THE CIVIL DOCKET** - Unless good cause is shown, a motion to transfer to the regular docket shall accompany all timely, written counterclaims and crossclaims in excess of \$6,000.00 (or the jurisdictional limit) and shall be transferred to the regular docket. After transfer, the defending party shall have 28 days from judicial assignment, to move or plead. A motion to transfer (without a counterclaim or crossclaim in excess of \$6,000.00) must be filed seven days before trial and may be transferred to the regular docket. A jury demand shall not be allowed in a case filed in the Small Claims Division unless accompanied by a

WILLOUGHBY MUNICIPAL COURT RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

proper and timely motion to transfer to the regular docket. The movant must comply with Local Rule 29_regarding jury demands and all required fees and deposits must have been paid.

RULE NO. 3.11 TRUSTEESHIP

In order to enter into a trusteeship pursuant to R.C. 2329.70, an applicant must be qualified by having received a demand for garnishment of personal earnings.

At the time of application, the applicant shall submit to the court a legal fifteen (15) day notice received from a creditor listed in his application within thirty (30) days prior to filing of trusteeship application.

At the time of application, the debtor shall disclose to the clerk his or her pay day, and whether it is weekly, bi-weekly, semi-monthly or monthly. At the time of filing, the debtor must pay the filing fee. At every pay day after the trusteeship is established, the debtor shall appear and show his or her pay stub to a deputy clerk, as trustee, and make payment in accordance with R.C. 2329.70 in an amount equal to 17.5% of the debtors gross earnings less deductions allowed by law. Failure to make regular payments as set forth above will be cause for termination of the trusteeship.

The Court shall cause notice to be forwarded to each creditor by certified mail with request to verify the account with election to participate or not to participate in the trusteeship. Failure to elect within ten (10) days after receipt of notice shall cause trustee to declare creditor a participant in the trusteeship under R.C. 2329.71. The election to participate shall constitute a waiver of all interest, penalties, and late charges as may be provided in the security agreement, or any other indebtedness.

If the debtor desires to make payments to creditors out of exempt pay, such payments may be made as follows:

1. Paying direct to any secured creditor (holder of mortgage on any property) such amounts as desired, provided payment of the amount required has been made to the Clerk, as trustee, but only if such creditor is not listed as a creditor in the schedule, or such creditor has refused to participate in the trusteeship, or an agreement has been filed with and approved by the court.
2. Making payment of such amount to the Clerk for distribution to the creditors. In no event shall the debtor make any payment directly to a listed creditor who is participating in proceeds of the trusteeship without approval of the court.

Any payment made in violation of this rule shall be grounds for termination of the trusteeship and the Clerk, on final distribution, shall omit the amount of such preferred creditor in calculating the distribution.

The Clerk, as Trustee, shall deduct two percent (2%) of amount collected as a poundage fee which shall be forwarded to the City of Willoughby monthly.

In the event a debtor fails to make any scheduled payment within ten (10) days after the payment is due, the Clerk shall forward a letter by ordinary mail to the debtor at the address listed by the debtor, requiring the debtor to appear at a date not less than five (5) days nor more than ten (10) days from the date of the letter to show cause why the trusteeship shall not be terminated. If the debtor appears, hearing may be had before a Judge or Magistrate at debtor's request. If the debtor fails to appear, the Clerk shall forthwith prepare an entry terminating the trusteeship for cause.

The Clerk shall not be required to make distribution to creditors more often than once every ninety (90) days except that she shall disburse all funds including a the two percent (2%) fee to the City of Willoughby, at the end of the month in which the termination of any trusteeship occurs.

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RULES OF PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES**

RULE NO. 3.12 CIVIL PETITION IN RE: APEAL OF DOG DESIGNATION AS NUISANCE DOG, DANGEROUS DOG OR VICIOUS DOG

The filing of a civil petition to contest the designation of a dog as nuisance, dangerous, or a vicious dog shall require a filing fee of \$115.00 (which shall include \$10 CIF; \$10 General Special Projects Fee; and Legal Aid Society funding per the Ohio Revised Code). The petition shall be categorized as CVH. The court shall consider these matters upon the filing of a written petition by the dog's owner requesting a hearing. Notice of hearing shall then be provided to the owner, the designating agency, and the prosecuting attorney for the city or village where the dog's owner resides. The petition shall be filed in the municipal court that has territorial jurisdiction over the residence of the dog's owner, keeper or harborer.