

CITY OF HOUSTON MUNICIPAL COURTS

PRESENTS THE SAFE HARBOR COURT

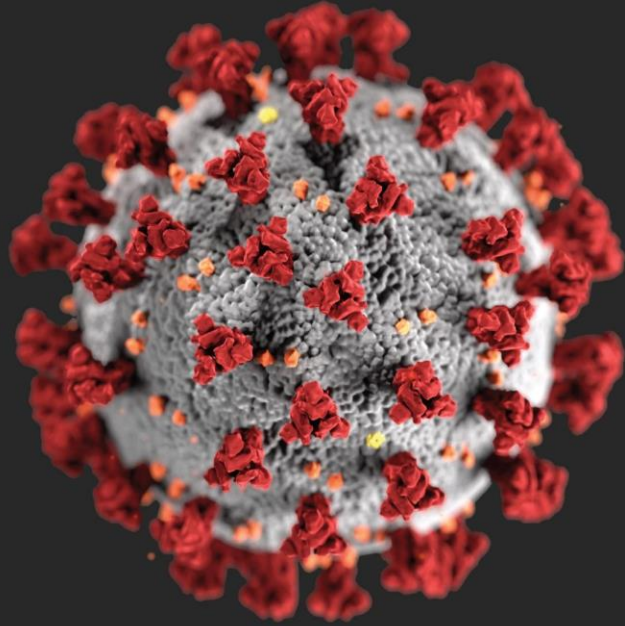
PRESENTED BY
JUDGE J. ELAINE MARSHALL
DIRECTOR AND PRESIDING JUDGE



HOW WILL THIS COURT OPERATE

- **IN CONJUNCTION WITH MAYOR TURNER'S COMPLETE COMMUNITIES & THE TASK FORCE ON POLICE REFORM**





COVID-19 RESPONSE

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WILL ASSIST DEFENDANTS DUE TO FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS,
MEDICAL ISSUES, OR ISSUES ARISING FROM COVID-19

ASSISTANCE GIVEN.....

- **WILL ASSIST DEFENDANTS IN SATISFYING JUDGMENTS ONCE THEY PRODUCED EVIDENCE OF AN INABILITY TO PAY FINES AND FEES**
- **WILL DETERMINE WHETHER THE JUDGMENT IMPOSES AN UNDUE HARDSHIP ON THE DEFENDANTS**



MY VISION

TO USE THIS COURT AS
A FOUNDATION TO
ASSIST THE CITIZENS
REGARDLESS OF YOUR
LEGAL STATUS IN THE
CITY OF HOUSTON
WHO ARE
STRUGGLING.



MY VISION



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- TO HAVE THREE JUDGES ASSIGNED TO THIS COURT ONLY
- TO MEET THE CITIZENS AND DISCUSS THEIR NEEDS IN COURT
- TO GIVE THE CITIZENS THE CONSISTENCY OF TALKING AND MAKING AGREEMENTS WITH THE SAME JUDGE (MCD HAS OVER 60 JUDGES)
- TO ALLOW THE CITIZENS A SAFE HARBOR, FREE FROM THE FEAR OF ARREST
- TO ASSIST THE CITIZENS THAT WANT TO GET THEIR LIVES BACK ON TRACK

MY VISION

we are a
Community

- AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH THE JUDGES WILL GO INTO THE COMMUNITY TO DISCUSS SAFE HARBOR OPTIONS WITH CITIZENS

MY VISION

- **GIVE CITIZENS AN OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK FREELY**
- **GIVE THE CITIZENS INFORMATION ON WHAT IS NEEDED TO BRING TO COURT**
- **TALK TO THE CITIZENS ABOUT THEIR INABILITY TO PAY**
- **INFORM THE CITIZENS OF THE COURT'S AVAILABILITY TO ASSIST**
- **RELAX THE FEARS OF BEING ARRESTED AND GET THEM TO TRUST THE JUDICIARY AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM**

COMMON VIOLATIONS

- **The Houston Municipal Courts handles a variety of cases that could be handled in the Safe Harbor Court:**
- **ALL TRAFFIC/ALL MOVING VIOLATIONS**
- **ALL CLASS C THEFTS AND PUBLIC INTOXICATION**
- **ALL FIRE CODE**
- **ALL HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE**
- **ALL DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD CASES**
DANGEROUS BUILDINGS & TRASH

STATISTICS AND PURPOSE



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- BEFORE COVID, THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 2,500 CASES THAT ENTERED DELINQUENT STATUS EACH MONTH
- MOST WERE CAPIAS PRO FINE WARRANTS
- OVER 500,000 CASES ARE IN DELINQUENT STATUS DATING BACK TO 2008

STATISTICS

SINCE STARTING THE
COURT AT THE END OF
NOVEMBER 2020, WE
HAVE PROCESSED
OVER

**1,000 CASES IN THE
SAFE HARBOR COURT**



OPERATIONS

**JUDGES WILL
HAVE A WIDE
RANGE OF
DISCRETION
WHEN
REVIEWING
CASES**

Policy

Procedure

POLICIES & PROCEDURES


- **The Judges after review of information can:**
 - **Have a reconsideration hearing once the defendant has notified the court that he is having difficulty paying the fine and costs**
 - **Let the Capias Pro Fine Stand**
 - **Order Community Service**
 - **Grant a Deferred Payment/Deferred Payment Extension**
 - **Reset the show cause A- hearing to allow more time for information**

AND

POLICIES & PROCEDURES CONTINUED


THE JUDGE CAN:

- REMIT THE FINES, COSTS AND FEES**
- REMIT FULL HARDSHIP**
- REMIT PARTIAL HARDSHIP**
- REMIT FULL INDIGENCY**
- REMIT PARTIAL INDIGENCY**



COURT
OPERATIONS

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
DOCKETS AT 4:00PM – 9:00PM
THE SAFE HARBOR COURT IS
ONLY LOCATED AT:
1400 LUBBOCK



FINAL THOUGHTS

WE ARE THE 4TH
LARGEST CITY IN
THE UNITED
STATES AND WE
ARE
ACCUSTOMED TO
LEADING THE WAY



FINAL THOUGHTS

**THIS COURT WILL HELP
TRANSITION ALL OF OUR
CITIZENS WHO ARE IN
NEED INTO A NEW
NORMAL WHERE HELP IS
AVAILABLE.**

**WE ARE IN THIS
TOGETHER.**



FINALLY

**MY VISION IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE TO
ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL OF OUR
CITIZENS REGARDLESS OF LEGAL STATUS. I
WANT THIS COURT TO HELP BRING US BACK
DESPITE THE THREAT OF COVID.**

AND THE VISION CONTINUES....



TEEN COURT



VETERANS
COURT

THANK YOU!

