

EASTERN COLUMBIA COUNTY JOINT MUNICIPAL COURT

641 S Main Street, P.O. Box 96
Fall River, WI 53932
Phone: 920 484-6320
Fax: 920 484-6321
clerk@eccjmc.com

William M. Breunig
Municipal Judge

Karen S. Schmitt
Judicial Assistant

COURT LOCATION

Eastern Columbia County Joint Municipal Court is a multi-jurisdictional court serving the City of Columbus, Village of Fall River, Village of Rio, Village of Randolph, Village of Pardeeville, Village of Cambria, Village of Poynette, Village of Dane, City of Lodi, and the Townships of Columbus and Dekorra. The physical office for the Court Clerk is 641 S Main Street, Fall River, Wisconsin, however, the Judge and Clerk travel to Poynette, 106 S Main Street, once a month for initial appearances and trials. PLEASE NOTE: All payments should be made to P.O. Box 96, Fall River, WI 53932.

COURT CONDUCT

This is a court of law and the rules of proper decorum and evidence will be followed. Please remain quiet while court is in session and give others the courtesies to be heard and present their case. **PERSONS WHO FAIL TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN AN ORDERLY MANNER MAY BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT.**

INITIAL APPEARANCE

At the initial appearance, the defendant may enter a plea of guilty, no contest or not guilty. Only a plea of guilty or no contest will be heard at the initial appearance. A plea of no contest is similar to a plea of guilty, however, the no contest plea cannot be used against you should a matter arise out of a civil action. Upon a finding of guilty, a forfeiture plus costs may be imposed, as well as other sanctions against your driving privileges. Forfeitures are payable immediately, however you may request an extension of 60 days if you cannot pay on your court date. If the defendant enters a not guilty plea, the case is set for a pretrial conference at a later date and the defendant is released.

NOT GUILTY PLEAS

A Not Guilty Plea should be entered in writing **prior** to your initial appearance date. You may mail, email or fax the not guilty plea. The Clerk will **NOT** accept a plea of not guilty over the phone. Not guilty pleas are **not** heard on the date of your initial appearance. You are scheduled for a pretrial conference with the Village/City Attorney at a later date. Generally, all pretrial conferences will be telephonic, with the exception of those defendants who received a citation in

Fall River. The pretrial conferences for Fall River require a meeting with the Attorney for Fall River.

BENCH TRIALS

If you do not resolve the matter with the Village/City Attorney at your pretrial conference, you will be scheduled for a bench trial before the Honorable William Breunig. At the trial, the Village/City Attorney will be present along with witnesses. You should also have your witnesses present at that time and any other documentation that you may need to present your case. Please be prepared. You may retain an attorney at your own expense. The Court will not provide you with an attorney. If your case does go to trial and the Judge finds you guilty, you have the right to appeal your case to the County Circuit Court within 20 days of your municipal trial date. All appeals must be filed in writing with this Court. If you fail to meet this time limit, you have lost your right to appeal. If you appeal to Circuit Court, you have the right to a 6-person jury trial, upon payment of appropriate fees.

TRIAL PROCEDURE

The trial procedure is as follows: the prosecution will produce its witnesses to testify as to the facts and circumstances surrounding your case. You or your lawyer will be permitted to cross examine each witness. This means that you will be only allowed to ask questions. This is not the time to state your case. When the prosecution has completed its case, you and your witnesses will be given the opportunity to testify and will be subjected to cross-examination by the prosecution. After all the evidence has been presented, the prosecution and defense will be given an opportunity to summarize their respective cases to the Court. The Judge will then determine your innocence or guilt. If the Judge finds you guilty, he will impose a penalty. If necessary, you may have up to 60 day to pay the penalty.

PAYMENTS/FAILURE TO PAY SUSPENSIONS

Payments may be mailed, paid online, dropped in the drop box outside the Fall River Village Hall (641 S Main Street), or made in person to the Clerk during business hours. If you are suspended for failure to pay, the Clerk will NOT immediately give you a receipt to take to the Department of Motor Vehicles to reinstate. It will be faxed or electronically transmitted to DOT by the Clerk. The time frame to reinstate your license is 24 to 48 hours after the Clerk notifies DOT that you have paid your citation. You can also pay online or mail your payment to: Eastern Columbia County Court, P.O. Box 96, Fall River, WI 53932. Online payments can be made at www.govpaynow.com. You will need the pay location code of 6569. There is a 3.5% service fee when using the online payment service.