



***FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PHILADELPHIA COURT OF COMMON PLEAS***

Tuesday, December 20, 2022

**TRIAL DIVISION – CRIMINAL  
NOTICE TO THE BAR**

**END OF CASE ACCELERATED RESOLUTION PROGRAM AND  
THE INTRODUCTION OF 2023 MAJOR FELONY PROGRAM CASE  
PROCESSING PROCEDURES**

**General Statement**

In response to changed pandemic circumstances, the Custody Accelerated Resolution Program (“CARP”) will end on December 30, 2022. The program, as designed, accelerated the resolution of cases in the Major Felony Program (“Major Program”) and ran from July 6, 2021, through December 30, 2022. The dissolution of CARP necessitates the revisioning of the case processing procedures in the Major Program. Please see the attached judicial organization chart and Frequently Asked Questions guide for additional details.

Honorable Lisette Shirdan-Harris  
Administrative Judge  
Trial Division

Honorable Lucretia C. Clemons  
Supervising Judge  
Trial Division – Criminal



**First Judicial District of Pennsylvania  
Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia  
Trial Division - Criminal Judicial Assignment Chart  
Effective: January 3, 2023**

**HON. LISETTE SHIRDAN-HARRIS, ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE**

**Darlene V. Miller  
Deputy Court Administrator**

**HON. LUCRETIA CLEMONS, SUPERVISING JUDGE**

**HOMICIDE PROGRAM**

**HON. LILLIAN HARRIS RANSOM  
TEAM LEADER**

**HOMICIDE CALENDAR ROOM  
Hon. Lillian Harris Ransom  
CR 504**

Hon. Barbara McDermott  
CR 507

Hon. Charles Ehrlich  
CR 607

Hon. Diana Anhalt  
CR 807

Hon. J. Scott O'Keefe  
CR 907

Hon. Glenn Bronson  
CR 1007

Hon. Rose Defino-Nastasi  
CR 1107

**MAJOR PROGRAM**

**HON. DONNA WOELPPER  
TEAM LEADER**

**MAJOR CALENDAR ROOM  
HON. Monica Gibbs  
CR 801**

**Major Jury**

Hon. Stephanie Sawyer  
CR 701

Hon. Christopher Hall  
CR 702

Hon. Giovanni Campbell  
CR 708

Hon. Jennifer Schultz  
CR 901

Hon. Tracy Brandeis Roman  
CR 908

Hon. Anthony Kyriakakis  
CR 1008

Hon. Deborah Cianfrani  
CR 1108

**Major Hybrid**

Hon. Nicholas Kamau  
CR 808

Hon. Donna Woelpper  
CR 902

Hon. Roxanne Covington  
CR 1002

Hon. Shanese Johnson  
CR 1101

**LIST / WAIVER PROGRAM**

**HON. Anthony Kyriakakis  
TEAM LEADER**

Hon. Tamika Washington  
CR 604

Hon. Kenneth Joel  
CR 704

Hon. Mark Moore  
CR 804

Hon. Michele Hanglely  
CR 904

**SMART PROGRAM**

**HON. Zachary Shaffer  
TEAM LEADER  
Majors  
CR 905**

Hon. Craig Levin  
CR 605

Hon. Rayford Means  
CR 705

Hon. Crystal Bryant Powell  
FVSA / IP  
CR 1005

**SPECIALITY PROGRAMS**

**Mental Health Court  
Hon. Lillian Harris Ransom  
CR 504**

**NSJ Program  
Hon. Frank Palumbo  
CR 505**

**Motion Court  
Hon. John Padova  
CR 805**

**NFS Program  
Hon. Diana Anhalt  
CR 807**

**PCRA  
Hon. Scott DiClaudio  
CR 1001**

# **First Judicial District of Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia Trial Division – Criminal**

## **2023 Major Felony Program Case Processing Procedures and Dissolution Of Case Accelerated Resolution Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



### **WHAT WAS THE CASE ACCELERATED RESOLUTION PROGRAM AND WHY WAS IT CREATED?**

The Pandemic Working Group of the Criminal Trial Division was formed in April 2021 to make recommendations for the creation and/or revision of pandemic related protocols. One of the recommendations of the Pandemic Working Group was to create a streamlined process for the resolution of cases in the Major Felony Program (“Major Program”). The Case Accelerated Resolution Program (“CARP”) was a pilot program that ran from July 6, 2021, to December 30, 2022. The program was designed to accelerate the resolution of cases in the Major Program.

### **HOW WILL THINGS CHANGE ONCE CARP ENDS? PLEASE EXPLAIN THE 2023 MAJOR FELONY PROGRAM CASE PROCESSING PROCEDURES.**

Once CARP ends, the Major Program will transition to new case processing procedures that will combine some of the benefits of CARP with pre-pandemic features.

### **HOW DOES THE “NEW NORMAL” WORK?**

Effective January 3, 2023, the judges assigned to the Major Felony Program will be reassigned to jury and hybrid rooms. Please see the January 3, 2023 Judicial Assignment Chart. Judge Zachary Shaffer is assigned as Major SMART room judge in courtroom 905. Judge Monica Gibbs is assigned as Major Calendar room judge in courtroom 801.

Each case will follow the jury or non-jury track. Judges in the hybrid rooms will conduct non-jury trials and will also have up to two weeks per month that they hear jury trials spun from the Major Calendar room. Judges in the jury rooms are focused on jury trials and the associated motions.

### **WILL MAJOR PROGRAM CASES STILL PROCEED FROM ARRAIGNMENT TO A SMART ROOM?**

Major Program cases, excluding FVSA (Family Violence and Sexual Assault) cases and NFS (Non-fatal Shooting) cases, will be listed for a scheduling conference in the Major SMART room from arraignment. FVSA cases will continue to be directed to SMART room 1005. NFS cases will continue to proceed directly from arraignment to the NFS calendar room.

Mandatory discovery should be provided to the defendant prior to the first listing of the case in the SMART room. Defense counsel may request a continuance up to and including three listings of the case in the SMART room in an effort to resolve the matter. Defense counsel must provide the courtroom staff in the SMART room with at least 48 hours' notice if the defendant needs to be transported to court from custody.

If discovery remains incomplete at the third listing in the SMART room, the matter will be spun to the Major Calendar room for jury trial or a scheduling conference in a hybrid room for a non-jury trial. The SMART room will note any missing discovery on the record and in the court docket. Defense counsel **MUST** inform the court if the defendant or defense witnesses are limited English participants. Interpreters **MUST** be ordered at the scheduling conference.

### **WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR A NON-JURY TRIAL?**

If a case cannot be resolved in the SMART room and it is a non-jury trial, then it will be spun for a scheduling conference before a judge assigned to a hybrid room. The non-jury trial date will be scheduled consistent with the availability of the Court, parties, and witnesses.

### **DOES MY CLIENT NEED TO COME TO COURT FOR A SCHEDULING CONFERENCE OR IF THE MATTER IS JUST BEING CONTINUED?**

The answer to this question rests firmly within the discretion of each judge. Please contact the judge in advance if you are unsure of his or her policy.

## **WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR A JURY TRIAL?**

If a case cannot be resolved in the SMART room and it is a jury trial, then the case will be given a Wednesday trial readiness conference date and a Monday trial date in the Major Calendar room consistent with the availability of the Court, parties, and witnesses. If all parties are ready at the Wednesday trial readiness conference, then jury selection will begin the next week. The parties should be prepared to pick a jury any day of the week that the case is listed for jury trial. Counsel will be attached for the entire week of trial and advised to arrive promptly in courtroom 801 at 9:00 a.m. for all hearings and trial dates.

All pretrial motions, other than motions in limine, must be filed at least thirty (30) days before the trial date. Any timely filed pretrial motions will be heard on a date between the trial readiness conference and the trial date by a judge assigned to a jury room. If either party would prefer to have pretrial motions for a jury trial heard before the trial readiness date, the party **MUST** request that the SMART room schedule the motion. The request must be made on or before the date that the SMART room schedules the jury trial.

Motions in limine must be filed at least seven (7) days before the trial date. Motions in limine will be heard by the trial judge before or after jury selection depending on the nature of the motion.

On the first day of the week, jury trials will be assigned to a judge and heard in that judge's assigned courtroom. Juries are usually selected Monday through Thursday with occasional Friday selections.

Defendants will be transported to court for jury trials and motions but will not be brought to court for trial readiness conferences unless requested in advance.

## **WHAT IF I NEED A CONTINUANCE?**

A continuance request will not be entertained unless the request is made in writing no less than two (2) weeks prior to the trial date. Continuance requests made at the bar of the court before jury selection will not be granted absent extraordinary circumstances.

## **HOW MANY JURY TRIALS ARE BEING HELD EACH WEEK?**

We currently have no limitation on the number of jury trials scheduled per week.

## **WHICH JURY TRIALS GET PRIORITY?**

Homicide cases have first priority. The Major program jury judges will then be assigned ready cases, with priority generally given to the oldest custody cases. If a case has special

circumstances, such as an ill witness, child complainant, or witness about to leave for military duty, the case may be prioritized.

### **WHAT ABOUT JURY DEMANDS?**

In the event of a jury demand in a hybrid room, the Major Calendar room judge will determine whether the jury trial moves forward that day or is given a scheduling conference date. As soon as a jury is demanded the matter will be moved to the Major Calendar room in courtroom 801.

### **DO I NEED TO WEAR A MASK?**

Masking is mandatory for all participants in jury trials. Judges may allow participants to remove their masks while speaking. Every jury deliberation room is now equipped with a HEPA air purifier to provide an additional level of mitigation against COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.

Additionally, each judge may require masking in his or her courtroom for non-jury matters at the judge's discretion.

### **ARE THERE ANY OTHER COVID RESTRICTIONS IN THE COURTROOM?**

No. COVID-positive individuals are not allowed in the building, but otherwise there are no specific restrictions.

### **WHEN ARE WE GOING BACK TO MAJOR PROGRAM JUDGES ALL HAVING THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL CALENDAR?**

The calendar room system is vastly more efficient at resolving Major Program matters. There are currently no plans to change, but this may be reevaluated once the total number of cases awaiting trial is reduced.

### **WILL THE COURT CONTINUE TO UTILIZE ZOOM AND OTHER FORMS OF ADVANCED COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY?**

Judges may permit the use of Zoom and other forms of advance communication technology ("ACT") in accordance with the Rules of Criminal Procedures.

### **WHAT IF THERE'S ANOTHER LARGE SURGE OF COVID-19 OR ANOTHER DISEASE?**

Court leadership will continue to monitor the pandemic and any guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and the Philadelphia Health Department.