

# RIGHTS AND OPTIONS

## **Plead "No Contest" or Guilty**

If you plead Guilty, you admit to having done the act charged, and you are waiving your right to a Trial. You may also plead "No Contest", which has the same outcomes but you do not have to admit fault or guilt. This may be helpful for any civic case involving this matter.

## **What will happen next?**

The Judge will enter a conviction, which will go on your criminal record. You may be ordered to pay a fine and court costs. You may also be eligible to request Deferred Disposition or another alternative that, if completed successfully, will lead to your case being dismissed. Discuss alternatives with the Judge, Prosecutor, or your Lawyer.

## **What does this mean for my rights?**

If you choose to plead Guilty or No Contest, you are waiving your right to a trial. The criminal conviction may affect your housing, job, licenses, or immigration. Talk with a Lawyer to learn more about these possible consequences.

## **Plead of "Not Guilty"**

You deny guilt of the violation in which you were accused, and the state must prove its charge beyond a reasonable doubt.

## **What will happen next?**

Your case will be scheduled for a trial date. Before Trial, you may choose to discuss your case with the Prosecutor and explore alternative resolutions. If your case will proceed to Trial, please inform the Court whether you want a Trial by Jury or Judge. At your Jury Trial, a Judge or Jury will hear the evidence to determine your Guilt or Innocence.

## **What does it mean for my rights?**

If you are acquitted or found Not Guilty at trial, you will not have a record or owe payment to the court.

If you are ultimately found Guilty at trial, the court will explain your consequences and any payments owed.

**\*The fine schedule is not an indication of what you owe. If you have received a citation, you do not owe anything at this time. Defendants that do not wish to appear in court, may choose to send in the amount from the schedule with the knowledge that it is an amount acceptable by the court.**

**\*If you enter a plea in open court, the Judge must assess your ability to pay at the time of sentencing.**

**\*If you have an inability to pay a judgement in full, the judge may provide you with an alternative means of discharge such as a payment schedule or community service.**

**You have many rights as a defendant in Municipal court:**

1. You are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond reasonable doubt.
2. You have the right to remain silent and to refuse to testify without consequence.
3. You have the right to retain a lawyer.
4. You may also represent yourself (as pro se defendant).
5. You have the right to plead Guilty, Not Guilty, or No Contest.
6. You have the right to receive a copy of the complaint before trial as well as other information the State has about your case (called discovery).

**Your rights during Trial:**

1. You have the right to a Jury Trial or Trial before a Judge.
2. You have the right to hear all testimony introduced against you.
3. You have the right to cross examine witnesses who testify against you.
4. You have the right to testify on your own behalf or refuse without consequences.
5. You have the right to subpoena and call witnesses to testify on your behalf.
6. You have the right to appeal within 20 days of any conviction.