

Procedural Fairness: Creating a Welcoming Court

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Procedural Fairness

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People are more likely to accept decisions when they:

- Believe they were treated with dignity and **respect**
- **Understand** the process.
- Had a chance to be **heard (voice)**
- Believe the decision-making process is neutral and unbiased (**neutrality**)

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Today's Class

Physical Space

Signage

Websites

Resources for the Public

Accessibility

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Physical Space

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What should you consider when thinking about the court's physical space?

- Furniture and decorations
- Meeting the needs of the public and litigants
- Organization
- Technology
- Staff needs
- ***What else?***

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Signage

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Thank You

- Some material in this section was taken from ***Building Public Trust and Confidence Through Model Court Websites***
- Produced by the Center for Court Innovation and the Texas Municipal Court Education Center
- <https://www.tmcec.com/procedural-justice1/>

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Court signage sends
messages!

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Welcoming Messaging

- Most court staff has tons of experience and really want to help the people that come into your courts.
- Signs can help make clear that the staff are available in this way.
- Signs can help clear up any misconceptions the public may have about court and other government offices.

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What message
is being sent?

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What message
is being sent?

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What message
is being sent?

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Justice Court Locations are Varied

You might be located in a building that wasn't originally a courthouse.

You may be away from other government offices.

You might be sharing space with another court or other office.

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Sometimes This is a Good Thing!

It is the People's Court!

People might feel more comfortable away from the courthouse.

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Signs are Important!

Affordable

Set messages for your court

You have control of them

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Sign Basics

- Good design for signs
- Increase understanding
- Set the rules for your office and court
- Identify key resources
- Invite feedback

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Good Design for Signs

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Design Basics

- Consider font size and typeface
- DO NOT USE ALL CAPS!!
- Avoid handwritten signs
- Remember, the average reading level is 6th grade
- Avoid legalese
- Follow accessibility principles (*more on this coming up*)

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Additional Considerations

- Place at eye-level
- Consider your building codes
- Consider materials used: Will this information change often?
- Clean and de-clutter walls

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Increase Understanding

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What message
does each send?

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Legal Advice
vs. Legal
Information

We can help you:

- Arrange an interpreter;
- Find out where you need to go;
- Find court forms and self-help resources;

...

Please understand we cannot:

- Give personal opinions about cases;
- Research the law for you;

...

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How do you
decide
what signs
work for
your court?

It depends on your process

Things to consider:

- Do you have multiple windows/clerks?
- How busy is your office?
- What do you want everyone who comes into your office to know?
- What are common questions your clerks get?

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Consider a Sign for When You are Not There

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Set the Rules for Your Office and Court

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What are the differences here?

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All Available in
Microsoft Word



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Welcome to Judge Smith's Courtroom (Branch #3)

- Please sign in with the court officer when you arrive.
- If you have a lawyer, your case will not be called until your lawyer arrives.
- If you have a question about court procedures, please ask a court officer in between cases.

Si necesita un traductor, por favor diga su nombre y la palabra "Spanish" al agente del corte.



Restrooms are available on this floor.
Handicap accessible restrooms are located on
the __ floor.

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Identify Key Resources

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Where are you going?

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Different
Languages
Spoken

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Invite Feedback

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Questions?

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Haha, that's cute. You think people don't know to ask us questions...

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Websites

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Key Components

Helpful contact us info

Good design and accessibility

Personalized

Forms and other resources

Cyber security

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Do you want to know more?

Email Amber at a_m1814@txstate.edu for information and materials from her Website class.

Some other helpful resources are on the next few slides.

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We can't afford it??

TJCTC Fines, Fees, and Costs Deskbook

Justice Court Assistance and Technology Fund

Authorizing Statute: Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 102.0173

This fund can be used for:

- Technological enhancement and education for justice courts, as defined in Art. 102.0173(d),
- Effective September 1, 2019, technological enhancements for constables' offices that directly relate to the operation or efficiency of the justice court, and
- Effective September 1, 2019, education, benefits, and salaries for court personnel.

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Technology Fund

Items specifically authorized as technological enhancements in Art. 102.0173 include:

- (1) computer systems;
- (2) computer networks;
- (3) computer hardware;
- (4) computer software;
- (5) imaging systems;
- (6) electronic kiosks;
- (7) electronic ticket writers; and
- (8) docket management systems.

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Texas Association of Counties Resources

TAC CIRA: Technology Solutions
for Counties

[https://www.county.org/TAC-
CIRA](https://www.county.org/TAC-CIRA)

Website hosting, management,
and training in addition to other
technology services

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State Mandated Cybersecurity Training

- <https://www.county.org/Education-Training/State-Mandated-Cybersecurity-Course>
- A new state law, [HB 3834](#), effective June 14, 2019, requires all local government employees and elected officials who have access to a local government computer system or database to complete a cybersecurity training program certified by the [Texas Department of Information Resources \(DIR\)](#) at least annually.

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Resources for
the Public

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Self-Represented Litigant Packets & Forms

Stand up if you use these

How do you use them?

<https://www.tjctc.org/SRL.html>

<https://www.tjctc.org/tjctc-resources/forms.html>

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Online Resources

<https://www.tjctc.org>

<https://www.texaslawhelp.org>

<https://www.sll.texas.gov/legal-help/>

<https://www.county.org>

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Legal Requirements

Make sure to review the **Officeholding and Ethics Deskbook** starting at page 27 for legally required information that courts must share with the public.

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Reminder:

Resources and information for the public aren't helpful if people can't find them!

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Accessibility

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Why is Accessibility Important?

- Making materials easier to use and more effective for everyone.
 - Impacts many common disabilities (dyslexia, color blindness, etc.).
 - Can be better for people without disabilities too.
- Complying with federal law (ADA) & avoiding liability.

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Work in Progress

- The process of being fully accessible takes time.
- The key is having a plan and making a good faith effort to improve.

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• This is a really, super long paragraph. It just keeps going on and on and on and on. It is a really boring paragraph. You should go to the store and buy groceries. I hope the guy is there that sells the groceries. If he is tell him, "I WANT TO BUY BREAD. IT IS REALLY YUMMY. I NEED WHEAT, NOT WHITE BREAD. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING BAKED FRESH? I DON'T WANT THAT STUFF THAT STAYS GOOD FOR 10 YEARS, THAT CREEPS ME OUT. HOW ABOUT ANY CINNAMON RAISIN BREAD, BUT WITHOUT THE RAISINS? DO YOU HAVE ANY OF THAT?" Then you should go home and make toast with that bread. It is great.

Does this seem easy to read? Easy to remember?

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Let's Look at
Some Examples!

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Reminder!

These examples are not an exhaustive list of all accessibility guidelines.

Your specific needs will be determined by what materials you create and how you use them.

We will discuss this more when we share resources.

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Headings & Lists

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

**New Process:
Step 1, Step 2,
Step 3, Step 4**

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Unique Slide Titles

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| • Filing Fee | • Garnishment |
| • Notice | • Garnishment |
| • If Garnishee Answers | • Garnishment |
| • If Garnishee
Doesn't Answer | • Garnishment |

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Less is More - *text per slide*

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

For our new process we will be following the plan below.

First, we will do step 1.
Next, we will do step 2.
After that, step 3. Finally,
we will finish with step 4.

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San Serif Font

Century Gothic

Articulate

Calibri

Arial

Tahoma

5M†

Times New Roman

Bell MT

Bodoni MT

Century Schoolbook

Book Antiqua

Garamond

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San Serif Font – *in the correct size*

Century Gothic

Articulate

Calibri

Arial

Tahoma

5M†

Century Gothic

Articulate

Calibri

Arial

Tahoma

5M†

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Left Alignment (vs. Right)

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

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Left Alignment (vs. Center)

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

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Avoid All Caps

Our New Process

- Step 1
- Step 2
- Step 3
- Step 4

OUR NEW PROCESS

- STEP 1
- STEP 2
- STEP 3
- STEP 4

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Only Underline Hyperlinks

Resources:

- www.tjctc.com
- www.txcourts.com
- www.txstate.edu

Resources:

- www.tjctc.com
- www.txcourts.com
- www.txstate.edu

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Contrast

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Be Careful with Color – *Color Blindness*

- **Red-green**
 - Deuteranomaly – green looks more red
 - Protanomaly – red looks more green + less bright
- **Blue-yellow**
 - Tritanomaly – blue/green + yellow/red
 - Tritanopia – blue/green + purple/red + yellow/pink + colors look less bright
- **Complete** – can't see colors at all

<https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/color-blindness/types-color-blindness>

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Alternative Text

- Computers and screen readers can't analyze an image or many charts.
- Make sure your alt text:
 - Describes the content + function of the image
 - Is concise
 - Don't use "image of..." or "graphic of..." unless that is important
 - If decorative, use ""

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Alternative
Text in
PowerPoint

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Video Captions

- All videos should include captions or a transcript if captions are unavailable.

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Other Guidelines

Charts/Graphs

Images

Tables

Style Headings

PDFs, PowerPoint, Excel, Word, Etc.

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Practical Tip

Sometimes guidelines may conflict
with your needs or other guidelines.

Balance is important.

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Mandatory DSC – Qualifications

Art. 45.0511(u)

- If a CHILD SAFETY SEAT offense
- No 12 month limit on DSC if judge requires the defendant to attend and present proof that the defendant has successfully completed a specialized driving safety course. AND
 - Had not taken the “specialized” course in previous 12 months
 - The DEF’s DL and affidavit is required to include only previous or concurrent courses that included that training.

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SALE # 2 DOCUMENTS

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Sale # 2 Bid Sheet

Sale # 2 Sales Notice To Post

Sale # 2 Sales Notice For Publisher

Sale # 2 Constables Return

Sale # 2 Disbursement Instructions

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Accessibility Resources

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Use the Accessibility Checker

- **How-To from Microsoft**

<https://bit.ly/3Tlgdz3>



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Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

- <https://www.w3.org/WAI/>

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Local Universities

- **Example: Texas Tech University**
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/elearning/accessibility/>

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Take Training

- **Organizations like the National Center for State Courts have webinars about specific accessibility guidelines (*ex. better forms*).**
- <https://www.ncsc.org/>

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Google

- **Don't be afraid to Google
+ verify**

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Questions?

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