

Pretrial Services Department

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Pretrial Supervision? Pretrial Supervision is a non-financial supervised release program where the defendant is assigned to an Officer who enforces all conditions ordered by the court.

What does a defendant need to do after being released to Pretrial Supervision? A defendant must report in person to his or her assigned Pretrial Services Officer at 2000 Main Street, Suite 101 Fort Myers, FL 33901

What happens if a defendant fails to report after being released on Pretrial Supervision? A warrant may be issued for a defendant who fails to report to his or her assigned Officer.

What steps are necessary to be appointed the Public Defender? A defendant must complete an affidavit in person and be found indigent for appointment of counsel.

Is there a fee assessed when applying for the services of the Public Defender? There is a \$40 application fee to be paid within 7 days to the Clerk of the Court on the 2nd floor of the Justice Center/Courthouse.

How will I know who my Public Defender is? The defendant may call the Public Defender's Office to inquire at (239) 335-2911.

How can I find out more about Pretrial Supervision, screening for the Public Defender or how to refer someone for the Felony Drug Court or Mental Health Court programs? When you call our main line at (239) 533-1730, you will be directed to the appropriate unit.

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**PRETRIAL
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

LEE COUNTY



20th Judicial Circuit of Florida
Administrative Office of the Courts

Mission Statement:

◇ The mission of Pretrial Services is to provide the highest quality services to the Courts by effectively monitoring each criminal case from arrest to disposition. Information is provided to assist with the judicial decision to release or detain at the earliest feasible opportunity.

Intake & Investigation Unit:

- * Interviews defendants booked into the Lee County Jail around the clock
- * Collects & verifies current demographic information
- * Performs needs assessments & makes appropriate referrals for diversion programs
- * Investigates criminal history records
- * Performs risk assessments
- * Determines indigence for appointment of counsel
- * Conducts on-going classification
- * Presents information to the First Appearance Judge, thereby assisting in a more informed pretrial release decision
- * Conducts jail management functions

Case Management & Supervision Unit:

All defendants released on Pretrial Supervision are monitored and supervised by Pretrial Officers. Defendants must report regularly and follow conditions of the Court. The cases are followed from arrest to disposition, unless their Pretrial Supervision is revoked for non-compliance or new law violations.

Pretrial Officers also assist the courts by monitoring cases at each stage as they move through the Judicial system in an effort to ensure the most timely disposition of cases. Case events are tracked and caseload status updates are provided to the court. This includes pending caseload data, age of pending caseloads and any delayed cases.

Key goals are to reduce the number of docket soundings, reduce pending cases, increase dispositions against filings and improve early disposition rates. The fundamental premise is that “It’s the courts responsibility to supervise the progress of each case from filing to disposition, regardless of disposition type”.

Diversion Unit Programs:

Felony Drug Court Program-

The goal of the Felony Drug Court Program is to break the cycle of addiction, reduce the rate of recidivism, improve life management skills and restore the individual to be a productive member of society. To be eligible, defendants must be charged with a non-violent felony, must not have a history of violence, not be charged with crimes carrying minimum mandatory sentences and be deemed appropriate from a substance abuse standpoint.

Mental Health Court Program-

The Mental Health Court Program represents an effort to identify and address the unique needs of people living with a mental illness who enter into the criminal justice system. The goal is to provide alternatives to incarceration when legally permitted and reduce time to process charges through the system. Mental health treatment is provided, the quality of life and well being of individuals is improved and the chance of recidivism is reduced through education. Defendants must have a severe and chronic mental illness, enter the program voluntarily and actively engage in treatment.

Misdemeanor Pretrial Diversion-

The Diversion program provides an opportunity for individuals having little or no criminal history to resolve their cases outside of court by completing specified conditions set forth by the State Attorney’s Office. If successful, the cases are dismissed and no further court proceedings are required. Cases are chosen on a case-by-case basis and typically take 90 days to complete the program.