



# NEWS RELEASE

TWENTY-SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF MISSOURI  
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

DEC. 21, 2022  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **St. Louis Circuit Court to expand bail hearings to two courtrooms**

ST. LOUIS – On Jan. 3, 2023, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit Court will begin holding detention hearings in criminal cases in two courtrooms instead of one.

The circuit also will suspend the use of videoconferencing for such hearings, requiring detainees appear in person to provide better access to legal representation and community services.

The expansion closes Division 16B, a courtroom that has been used solely for such hearings since 2019 as the Missouri Supreme Court enacted new pretrial rules for state courts. Using two courtrooms (Division 25 and 26) in the Carnahan Courthouse:

- **Enables detainees to have face-to-face meetings with lawyers before seeing a judge for the first time.**
- **Gives indigent defendants the chance to review public defender applications with pretrial services staff to avoid errors and delays in obtaining legal representation.**
- **Allows pretrial services to check with community providers ahead of time to explore available alternatives to detention.**
- **Ensures confined defendants are physically present for all bail hearings.**
- **Offers more consistency by having only two judges, Associate Circuit Judges Lynne Perkins and Rochelle Woodiest, preside over the hearings. The change also eliminates the need for a larger rotation of judges from the circuit.**

All other practices for first and second court appearances remain the same. Per Missouri Supreme Court rules, judges must consider a variety of factors in determining conditions of release – including less restrictive means of ensuring someone comes to court, ability to pay bail, risk of flight and potential threat to public safety.

The first docket of 48-hour and 7-day hearings is set for 1 p.m. Jan. 3 in Division 25. Defendants will have up to an hour beforehand to meet with lawyers first.

Contact me with questions.

Joel Currier  
chief communications officer  
22nd Judicial Circuit  
desk: 314-622-5685  
cell: 314-602-8869