



Office of the State's Attorney
MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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Practical Information when Coming to Court

This packet is designed to address common questions and concerns before trial begins. Thank you for reading it closely. Please don't hesitate to ask your Victim Advocate. When in doubt, call their general line: (618) 296-6850.

What to Wear

You do not have to wear a suit and tie but please wear appropriate clothing (no foul language on clothes, refrain from images of marijuana, showing excess skin). The jury sees you as a reflection of your loved one. If you wouldn't wear it to church, please don't wear it to court.

The courtrooms tend to get very cold after the lunch hour, so wearing layers is a good strategy.

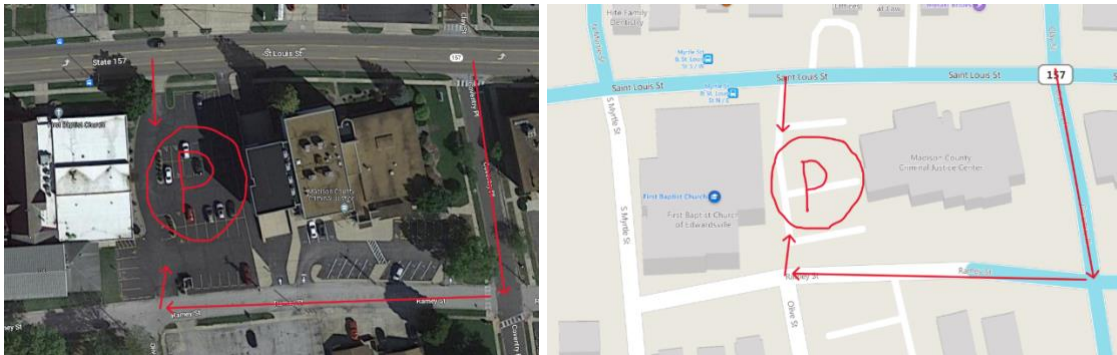
When You Arrive

The trial will take place at the Madison County Criminal Justice Center located at 509 Ramey St, Edwardsville IL 62025.

The best place to park is the parking lot of the First Baptist Church of Edwardsville, located at 534 St. Louis St, Edwardsville IL 62025, next door to the Criminal Justice Center. Parking here can minimize encounters with the family/friends of the defendant.

Parking is free and there are no time constraints. There are handicap spots directly in front of the Criminal Justice Center if needed.

Parking Map:



Being early is better than being late! It's a good idea to avoid interactions with jurors and the defendant's family. The judge will also sometimes take up motions with the attorneys before the jury arrives.

Bathrooms

Usually, the bathrooms on the floor of the courtroom are reserved for jurors only. Ask your advocate which bathroom is available for you to use.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are allowed in the courtroom. Please make sure they are turned off. A phone ringing or making noise in the middle of trial is disruptive to the jury and irritating to the judge, things we very much need to avoid.

No pictures or videos are to be taken inside the courtroom. Phones will be confiscated and you will be removed from the courtroom.

During the Trial

Appropriate Behavior

Please remain as calm and quiet as possible during the trial. Please no emotional outbursts, audible noises (sighing, muttering, etc.), eye rolling, or anything that would take the jurors' attention away from the evidence that is being presented. We don't want the jurors to be distracted and miss something important. If you feel that you can't remain quiet or calm, please exit the courtroom quietly and take a moment for yourself. You can come back in to the courtroom at the next break.

Please listen to the prosecutor and your advocate in regards to staying out of the courtroom during crime scene and autopsy photos. These are difficult to look at, and the first time viewing them is not ideally in the middle of a trial in a room full of strangers. Any emotional outburst could cause a mistrial. After the trial, you are more than welcome to view any photos.

Avoid contact with jurors at all times. We want to do everything we can to prevent a mistrial.

Lunch and Breaks

Judges will take several breaks throughout the day. Please remain in the courtroom until all of the jurors have left. This is a good time to use your assigned bathroom or stretch your legs. As always, avoid contact with jurors.

Judges will usually take a lunch break around 12pm to 1 pm. The jury will be dismissed first and instructed what time to return from lunch by. Please remain in the courtroom until the jurors have left. The judge may sometimes address matters outside the presence of the jury, so double check with your advocate before you leave for lunch to avoid missing anything. Try to be back 10-15 minutes before the jury is due back. There are many places to eat nearby, especially on North Main St in Edwardsville. McDonalds, Taco Bell, and Arby's are on Troy Rd.

Verdict

After closing arguments have been presented, the jury will begin deliberating. It's a good idea to stay in the building or close by in case they come back quickly with a verdict. You can bring a book or magazine to read while waiting. Your advocate will keep you advised of any developments. If the jury orders a meal, you will have some time to eat as well. Stick to restaurants close by if possible.

Once a verdict has been reached, please return to the courtroom as quickly as you can.

No matter what the verdict is, please remain calm and quiet until the jury has left the room.