

**77<sup>th</sup> District Court**  
**Criminal/Traffic Division**

**CRIMINAL**

Criminal cases, for persons 18 years or older, begin in the District Court whether it is a felony or misdemeanor charge. The first court date issued is an arraignment date, given on an appearance ticket, on a bond sheet or a summons in the mail.

**Arraignments:** When given an arraignment date, report to Mecosta County Courthouse, District Court, to check in. Arraignments begin at 9 am, but you may start checking in at 8:45 am. At arraignment, the court explains the charges, advises your rights, and possible consequences if convicted. At this time, if you are charged with a charge that has the possibility of jail, you will be asked if you want to petition for a court-appointed attorney to represent you moving forward. There will be a reimbursement ordered of a minimum of \$250.

**\*\*\*Please note:**

- ALL misdemeanor tickets are appearance tickets. You **MUST** appear on the date/time given on the ticket or you may be sent a letter stating that you need to call a phone number instead of appearing, for an arraignment/pretrial. Neither can be rescheduled unless you have an emergency that was approved by the court.
- Pursuant to MCR. 1.110, all fines, costs and other financial obligations imposed by the court **MUST** be paid at the time of sentencing.

**Video Arraignments:** Anyone in custody at the county jail will be arraigned by an Interactive video system, referred to as polycom. The arraignments are usually conducted between 3pm and 4:30pm, **IF** the court has the paperwork. If you wish to observe an arraignment, you will need to download the ZOOM app. Then “join” the meeting using meeting ID number 631-240-4701. Follow the prompts. You will need to contact the court as to the time of the arraignment.

**Bonds:** Bonds are held until adjudication of a case, whether it be sentencing or dismissal. Bonds posted by a defendant are applied to fines and costs at sentencing. If a bond is posted by a third-party depositor, that person would need to be at the defendant’s sentencing date or write a letter to the court prior to the sentencing to request the money be returned. It will be returned less the 10% for bond costs. Otherwise, the money will be applied. If a defendant fails to appear for a court date, or violates bond conditions in any way, the bond will be forfeited.

## TRAFFIC

Most all traffic issues and civil infractions are handled in the District Court.

**Civil Infractions:** There are 3 options on how to handle a civil infraction.

- **Admit Responsibility**- the ticket must be paid between 5-14 days from the date it was issued. Contact the court for the amount due and due date. You may pay with cash, money order (made payable to the 77<sup>th</sup> District Court) or credit card. NO personal checks will be accepted. If the ticket is not paid within 14 days, there will be a \$10 default judgment fee added on. If not paid at this point, after approximately 30 more days, the State of Michigan may suspend your license, adding on a \$45 reinstatement fee. After that, a one-time 20% late fee will be accrued. The license will remain suspended until paid in full.
- **Admit Responsibility with explanation**: - the explanation must be submitted in writing between 5-14 days from the date it was issued. The Magistrate will review the letter and a response will be mailed with either a responsible or not responsible judgment.
- **Deny Responsibility**- defendant must sign the area on the back of the ticket that says, "deny responsibility." There is no line there, just sign over the entire paragraph. This will be scheduled for an informal hearing between the Defendant, the Magistrate, and the Officer. They will have any radar readings, witnesses, or video they may have. Or you may specify to have a formal hearing. This is a hearing between the Prosecutor, the Defendant, and the Judge. Please provide the court with a valid mailing address to ensure receipt of the hearing notice, as well as a phone number.

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: THE COURT HAS NO JURISDICTION OVER THE POINTS.**

You will be found responsible or not responsible only, the court may not waive points or take under advisement.

**Accepted Methods of Payment:**

- Cash
- Money order or certified bank check made payable to “77<sup>th</sup> District Court”
- Credit Card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover) –no extra fee will be charged for using a credit card. You may call the court @ 231-592-0797 and pay with a card over the phone.

**Fines and Costs Schedule:**

There is a schedule below listing the fines and costs for some of the more commonly written tickets. Please note that if there is an accident, there will be an additional \$25 charge. Also note that if it is written in a school zone or construction zone, these fines will not apply. Contact the court for the exact amount and date due.

**Contact Hours and Contact Information:**

**Hours:** Monday- Friday 8:30am – 4:30 pm, except holidays

**Address:** 400 Elm St., Big Rapids, MI 49307

**Telephone:** (231) 592-0799

**FAX:** (231) 796-2180

FINES AND COSTS SCHEDULE	PRICE	W/ACCIDENT	WAIVABLE/ADJUSTABLE	
AVOID TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICE	\$125.00		DEFECTIVE EQUIPMENT	\$150.00
CARELESS DRIVING	\$200.00		LOUD MUFFLER	\$125.00
DROVE LEFT OF CENTER	\$125.00		NO PROOF OF INSURANCE	\$150.00
DROVE ON SIDEWALK	\$150.00		WINDOW TINT	\$150.00
DROVE WITHOUT LIGHTS	\$125.00			
DISOBEY TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICE	\$125.00			
EXPIRED PLATES/REGISTRATION	\$125.00		YOU MUST SHOW PAPER	
FAIL TO DIM LIGHTS	\$125.00		PROOF OF INSURANCE ON	
FAIL TO STOP IN A CLEAR ASSURED DISTANCE	\$125.00	\$150.00	THE VEHICLE FOR THE DATE	
FAIL TO STOP PRIVATE DRIVE/ALLEY	\$125.00	\$150.00	OF THE TICKET.	
FAIL TO YIELD-EMERGENCY VEHICLE	\$150.00			
FAIL TO YIELD-SCHOOL BUS	\$250.00			
FOLLOW TOO CLOSE	\$125.00			
ILLEGAL U-TURN	\$125.00			
IMPEDE TRAFFIC	\$125.00			
IMPROPER LANE USE	\$125.00	\$150.00		
IMPROPER PASSING	\$125.00	\$150.00		
IMPROPER TURN	\$125.00	\$150.00		
NO TURN SIGNAL	\$125.00			
OVERTAKING ON THE LEFT/RIGHT/CURVE	\$125.00			
SEAT BELT	\$65.00			
SEAT BELT-CHILD	\$100.00			
SEAT BELT- PASSENGER	\$65.00			
SPEED 1-5 FREEWAY	\$100.00			
SPEED 6-10 FREEWAY	\$110.00			
SPEED 1-10	\$120.00			
SQUEAL TIRES	\$125.00			
STOP SIGN	\$125.00	\$150.00		
TRAFFIC SIGNAL VIOLATION	\$125.00			
UNSAFE BACKING	\$125.00	\$150.00		
VIOLATION OF BASIC SPEED LAW	\$125.00	\$150.00		
WRONG WAY ON A ONE WAY	\$125.00			