

**IN RE:
IN THE DISTRICT AND
COUNTY COURTS AT LAW
FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS**

**STANDING ORDER ADOPTING RULES GOVERNING THE BROADCASTING OF
MAGISTRATE COURT PROCEEDINGS**

The Fort Bend County Council of Judges hereby adopts the following Rules Governing the Broadcasting of Magistrate Court Proceedings.

The Open Courts Provision of the Texas Constitution guarantees the public the right to access and observe court proceedings. Found in Article I, Section 13 of the Texas Constitution, this provision states, "all courts shall be open, and every person for an injury done him, in his lands, goods, person or reputation, shall have remedy by due course of law." This means all court proceedings must be conducted in a public forum, and the public has the right to attend and observe court proceedings, subject to certain exceptions.

Under Tex.Code.Crim.Proc. Art. 1.24, the court must provide the public with reasonable notice of how to observe and an opportunity to observe the court proceeding unless the court determines it must close the court proceeding to protect an overriding interest, after considering less-restrictive alternatives to closure, and making findings on the record adequate to support closure.

1. **Policy.** The policy of these rules is to allow electronic media coverage of magistrate court hearings to facilitate the free flow of information to the public concerning the criminal justice system and to foster better public understanding about the administration of justice. These rules are to be construed to provide the greatest access possible while at the same time maintaining the safety, dignity, decorum and impartiality of the court proceeding.
2. **Definitions:**
 - 2.1 "Court" means the magistrate proceeding, whether in person or remote.
 - 2.2 "Judge" means the judge or magistrate who is presiding over the magistrate proceeding.
 - 2.3 "Livestreaming" means live video and audio broadcast sent over the internet without first being recorded and viewed.
 - 2.4 "Broadcasting" means disseminating or transmitting to the public through newspapers, television, radio, internet, or other means

2.5 "Virtual Attendance" means attending court remotely using technology like video or audio platforms (e.g. Webex, Zoom), rather than being physically present.

2.6 "FERPA" means Family Education Rights and Privacy Act which prohibits public disclosure of personal identifiable student information without the consent of the student or the student's parent if under age 18.

2.7 "EPO" means Emergency Protection Order which is a court-ordered measure taken to protect someone, particularly in cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, from immediate danger or harm.

3. **Livestreamed Hearings.** To watch the court as an observer, a public observer should appear at the Fort Bend County Jail Lobby at 1410 Richmond Parkway, Richmond, Texas 77469. The judge and court will not be able to see or hear the person accessing the court via livestream.

3.1 Livestream broadcast may be viewed on the television monitor located in the lobby of the Fort Bend County jail. The address is 1410 Richmond Parkway, Richmond, TX 77469.

3.2 The Magistrate Judge shall restrict live broadcasting of any proceedings where EPO or FERPA information is disclosed to ensure that sensitive information remains confidential and personal safety is preserved.

3.3 The recording of any Court proceeding, including by video or telephone, is prohibited.

4. **Virtual Hearings.**

4.1 Attorneys who wish to appear virtually must obtain prior approval from the court.

4.2 All counsel is expected to appear in business attire.


4.3 If a participant has difficulty connecting, please notify the court coordinator. If the issue persists, other arrangements will be made for the proceeding.

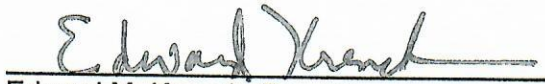
The policy and procedures set forth in this Order shall be implemented as soon as practical in coordination with Fort Bend County Officials. The above stated policy and rules shall be utilized in conjunction with well-established Constitutional Law as well as the applicable statutory law including but not limited to the Texas Penal Code and Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.


Upon its adoption, by the Council of Judges, this Order shall be recorded in the minutes of the District Courts and Statutory County Courts at Law of Fort Bend County.


This ORDER was approved by the Fort Bend County Council of Judges this 8th day of April, 2026.


Surendran K. Pattel, Presiding Judge
240th Judicial District Court

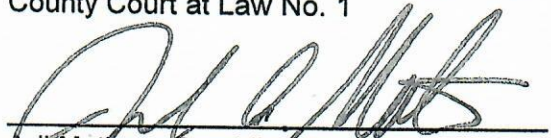

Monica Rawlins, Presiding Judge
328th Judicial District Court



Edward M. Krenek, Presiding Judge
400th Judicial District Court

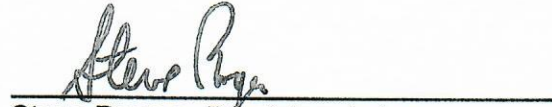

Maggie Perez-Jaramillo, Presiding Judge
458th Judicial District Court

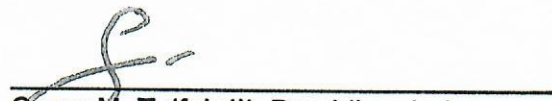

Mark H. Hanna, Presiding Judge
502nd Judicial District Court



Christopher G. Morales, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 1



Jull Mathew, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 3

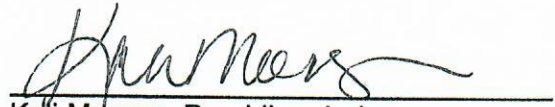

Teana V. Watson, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 5

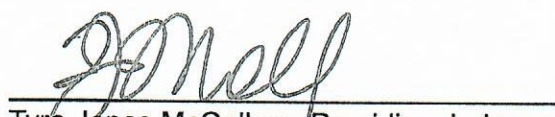

Steve Rogers, Presiding Judge
268th Judicial District Court



Oscar M. Telfair III, Presiding Judge
387th Judicial District Court

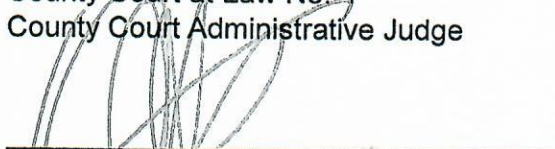

J. Christian Becerra, Presiding Judge
434th Judicial District Court
Local Administrative Judge


Richard T. Bell, Presiding Judge
501st Judicial District Court


Kali Morgan, Presiding Judge
505th Judicial District Court


Tyra Jones McCollum, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 2


Toni M. Wallace, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 4
County Court Administrative Judge


Dean A. Hrbacek, Presiding Judge
County Court at Law No. 6

FILED
CD

APR 21 2026
AT 8:10 A.M.


Beverly M. Shaw-Walk
CLERK DISTRICT COURT, FORT BEND CO., TX

COPY
ORIGINAL filed on 4/21/26
in the MISD records.
Copies NOT compared.
LAURA RICHARD, County Clerk
By RB