Basic Criminal Justice Flow

Court mails summons to all complainants, witnesses and victims

Citizen calls 911

Assigned prosecutor contacts the victim(s) and witness(es) to discuss the case.

Citizen files complaint with Commissioner

Trial or Hearing Date is set

In felony cases, a preliminary hearing in District Court, or a Grand Jury Proceeding in Circuit Court is held to determine if there was sufficient probable cause for the arrest. If the judge rules that there was, the case is scheduled for arraignment and then for trial at Circuit Court. If not, the charges are dismissed.

District Court
Misdemeanor /
Traffic Crimes

| Crime Reported to Police | → | Police Make Arrest | → | Court Commissioner | → | Case Preparation | → | Incarceration Jail or State Prison | → | Parole and Probation | → | Out of System |

Circuit Court
Felony Crimes

Defendant appears before the Commissioner

Bench Trial to determine guilt or innocence

Judge or Parole Commission assignees supervision in the community by the State after being released from incarceration, or may receive in lieu of being incarcerated

Defendant can request case to be heard in front of a jury in Circuit Court

Three Possible Outcomes
(Recognizance) - released with summons to report to court on trial date
(Bail) - Pay monetary amount to be released until court date
(No Bail) - Held in jail until the court date

Complainant cases are heard before a judge

Jury Trial to determine guilt or innocence