

**I. PURPOSE**

To assure that all courts are "opened" into session in a uniform manner, and along the lines of common law procedures.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office to make certain that all deputies are aware of the court openings and that they are done in an identical manner.

**III. PROCEDURES**

A. Openings.

1. Circuit Court - Unless otherwise directed by the presiding judge, the following court openings will be used in Circuit Court:
  - a. Initial Opening - As you enter the courtroom, preceding the judge, say, "Everyone please rise." Allow the judge to reach the bench, then say: "The Circuit Court of Fairfax County is now in session, the Honorable (insert judge's name) presiding. Please be seated and come to order."
  - b. Following a recess (except luncheon recess). As you enter the courtroom preceding the judge, say, "Please be seated and come to order."
  - c. Following the lunch recess. As you enter the courtroom, preceding the judge, say: "Everyone please rise." Allow the judge to reach the bench, then say: "This Honorable court is again in session. Please be seated and come to order."
2. General District Court - Unless otherwise directed by the presiding judge, the following court openings will be used in General District Court:
  - a. Fairfax County Courthouse - Initial Opening. As you enter the courtroom preceding the judge, say: "Everyone please rise." Allow the judge to reach the bench, then say: "The General District Court of Fairfax County is now in session, the Honorable (insert judge's name) presiding. Please be seated and come to order."
  - b. Following a recess - Same as in Circuit Court.
  - c. Fairfax City Courthouse - Initial Opening. As you enter the courtroom preceding the judge, say: "Everyone please rise." Allow the judge to reach the bench, then say: "The General District Court of Fairfax City is now in session, the Honorable (insert judge's name) presiding."
  - d. Following a recess - Same as in Circuit Court.
  - e. Towns of Herndon and Vienna - Same as opening for Fairfax County General District Courts, only adding name of town to opening. Following recess; same as in Circuit Court.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**SOP NUMBER: 701  
SUBJECT: COURT OPENINGS**

3. Juvenile-Domestic Relations Court - Initial Openings: As you enter the courtroom preceding the judge, say: "Everyone please rise." Allow the judge to reach the bench, then say, "The Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court is now in session, the Honorable (insert judge's name) presiding. Please be seated and come to order." Following recess and lunch recess, same as in Circuit Court.
4. Court of Appeals - Unless otherwise directed by the presiding judge, the following opening will be used by the Court of Appeals. "Everyone Please Rise, O'Yea, O'Yea, O'Yea, The Court of Appeals of the Commonwealth of Virginia is now in session. The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_, Presiding, and the Honorable \_\_\_\_\_, and the Honorable \_\_\_\_\_: All those having business before this Honorable Court may come forward and they shall be heard. God save the Commonwealth. Please be seated and come to order."
  - a. Following a recess - Same as in Circuit Court.
  - b. Following lunch recess - Same as in Circuit Court.
5. Grand Jury - The Grand Jury meets the third Monday of every month, and will be opened in the following manner: "Everyone please rise. The Circuit Court of Fairfax County is now in session, the Honorable \_\_\_\_\_presiding. All those having motions to make, pleas to enter, or cases to prosecute come forward and they shall be heard. God save the Commonwealth, please be seated and come to order."

*Stacey A. Kincaid*

**STACEY A. KINCAID  
SHERIFF**

**01/01/00  
DATE APPROVED**

**11/02/98  
EFFECTIVE DATE**

**Revised: July 1998, November 2010, April 2016**