

Columbia County Circuit Court Notice

As you are aware, the State of Oregon is in the midst of significant budget cuts which severely affect the court's ability to meet its public mandate to uphold the law and constitution and to safeguard the state's justice system. We can no longer provide all of the services we have traditionally provided. Service to our community and to its access to the court system will be curtailed.

The Oregon Judicial Department has lost 201 permanent FTE since the 2007-09 biennium 12 % reduction. As of May 1, 2012 we will be losing an additional 51.61 FTE. This will affect the Columbia County Circuit Court as follows:

- The Columbia County Circuit Court will lose two additional employees. This comes in spite of the employee furloughs and wage freeze.
- The three circuit court judges will cut their support staff from two to one with their judicial assistant taking on the courtroom clerk duties and the docketing function being combined into one docketing clerk.
- Traffic citations will be scheduled for only two days a week: Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Defendants coming to the court for traffic arraignments at any other times may or may not be able to take care of their citations.
- The court phones will be open from 8:30 to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Closed on Fridays.
- The court will be closed on Friday except for pre scheduled restraining order appearances, stalking order appearances, in

custody arraignments, and immediate danger appearances in the morning. In addition the judges will only hear pre-arranged special appearances in their chambers in the morning. On Friday afternoons staff will be working behind closed doors trying to catch up on data entry and filing.

- Because the court is closed for filings on Friday, under ORCP 10A, “if the period so computed relates to serving a public officer or filing a document at a public office when that particular office is closed before the end of or for all of the normal work day...the period runs until the close of office hours on the next day the office is open for business.”
- Copy requests may take up to one month to process.
- Entry of judgments may take up to one month to enter.

We are very sorry we have to implement these changes which cause delay to accessing justice and threaten public safety.