

# Plea Information

## **Plea options for the City of Lone Oak Municipal Court:**

- **Plea of Guilty**

By a plea of guilty, you admit that you committed the act charged, that the act is prohibited by law, and that you have no defense for your act. Before entering your plea of guilty, you should understand the following:

1. The State has the burden of proving its case against you. The law does not require you to prove anything. You have the right to hear the State's evidence and to require it to prove its case against you.
2. If you were involved in a traffic accident at the time of the alleged offense, your plea of guilty could be used later in a civil suit for damages as an admission that you were at fault or were the party responsible for the accident.

- **Plea of "Nolo Contendere"**

A plea of "nolo contendere" means you do not contest the State's charge against you. You will be found guilty upon a plea of "nolo contendere", but it is not an admission by you that you are guilty. Also, a plea of "nolo contendere" or "no contest" cannot be used against you in a civil suit for damages as can a plea of guilty.

A plea of guilty or "nolo contendere" and a waiver of Jury trial may be entered in writing by mail before the trial date. You should be prepared to pay your fine upon entering a plea of guilty or "nolo contendere."

- **Plea of Not Guilty**

A plea of not guilty means that you are informing the Court that you deny guilt in this case, and that the State must prove what it has charged against you. You have a right to a Pre-trial. In the pre-trial you will speak directly with the City Prosecutor to try and resolve your case. If you and the prosecutor cannot reach an agreement, then a trial will be set for you.

If you plead not guilty, you have the right to a trial by Judge or Jury. You will need to decide whether to employ a lawyer to represent you at trial. You may defend yourself, but no one except a lawyer may represent you.

If you defend yourself, please be advised that the Lone Oak Municipal Court is not a Court of Record. All proceedings will be conducted according to the rules of criminal procedure and the rules of evidence. If you choose to represent yourself, you must be prepared. The court staff, bailiff, prosecuting attorney or Judge cannot act as your attorney by providing legal advice or legal assistance in the presentation of your case.