

CourtWatch MA

FIRST 100 DAYS

BMC Court Watch Tips [January 2019]

Quick Notes

- Address: 24 New Chardon St, Boston, MA 02114
- Nearby T Stops: Bowdoin (Blue), Haymarket (Orange & Green)
- The building opens at 8 AM, with the Clerk's Office opening at 8:30 AM and court beginning at 9 AM.
- Cell phones *are* permitted in the building, but may not be used in the courtroom. Eating and drinking is likewise prohibited in the courtroom itself.
- The building has a small coffee shop on the first floor, with several other stores very close by as well.
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Suggested Itinerary (if you can)

- ~8:30 AM: Go to the Clerk's office on the 6th floor, and ask to see the "Daily List". It will likely be out on the counter. Take notes on the cases scheduled in Courtroom 17, and take photographs for later reference.
- You might also consider pre-filling forms with this information, though many
- 9 AM: Enter Courtroom 17, at the far end of the left hallway of the 5th floor. Listen, observe, and make notes as trained.
- ~10 AM (First recess): Return to the Clerk's office to see the "Custody List"/"Detainee Accountability Log", to get information on cases added to the list.
- 10:30 AM: Return to Courtroom 17 to continue observing.
- End of Day: After leaving the building, enter your data as soon as possible via the website.

Tips on Note-Taking

- The data will be uploaded through a form online, so you can take notes however you like. Just make sure you capture the information the online form will ask for.
- The beginning of the case number follows a predictable pattern, with the last 6 digits being the most important to catch.
 - Example: 1901CR000001: **19** Last two digits of the year, 2019 | **01** Court number (BMC Central) | **CR** Court Record | **000001** The unique case number).
- Most importantly, get the case number, and the person's name. It helps to have this ahead of time (from the Daily List), and this information can later be validated in several ways.
- Talking is not permitted, but you can silently share papers with other volunteers. Dividing duties can be a good way to be sure you have all the information.
- After leaving the courtroom, you can validate information using:
 - The Daily List in the Clerk's Office (or photos on your phone)
 - Touch-screen displays near the elevator
 - Online, at <https://www.masscourts.org/eservices/home.page.2>
- Data entry is done via the web (at <http://surveymonkey.com/r/CourtWatchMAFirst100>). The sooner it can be done, the better, as information will be fresh in your mind.

Other Notes

- Possible judges include:
 - Michael Coyn
 - Thomas C. Horgan
 - Sally Kelly
 - Debra Shoptesse
 - Elinor Sinnott
- A web search for the ADA's name, coupled with "assistant district attorney" and "Suffolk", is likely to get you the exact spelling.
- It's likely there will be many "failures to appear", which can be ignored.
- Some defendants will be appearing for multiple cases. Be sure to note all case numbers.
- Co-defendants may be called up together, which can be tricky as far as note-taking goes, so pay special attention if this occurs.
- Be sure to note which ADA is handling each case, as they may trade off frequently.
- If asked, identify yourself by name. You can state simply that you are a private citizen observer, or identify as part of Court Watch.