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March 26, 2019

TO: Williamson County Criminal Defense Bar
IN RE: Important Changes to Requesting Criminal Discovery in the County Attorney's Office

The County Attorney's Office and the District Attorney's Office have been working on a new electronic discovery platform called DEMS (Digital Evidence Management System). This system is an internet-based discovery portal for defense attorneys to request, access, and download documents and videos on cases prosecuted in Williamson County. We are happy to announce this project is nearing completion, and we are ready to begin Stage One of implementation in the County Attorney's Office. **SEE IMPORTANT TIMELINES BELOW.**

Please help us move in a positive direction with this project. Stage One requires you to create an account that you will use at this time to request County Attorney (only) discovery. You will be able to do this outline through the County Attorney website. This is an effort to work out any glitches or problems with the account creation and log-in before the full implementation of DEMS. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

STAGE ONE TIMELINES:

- **Immediately:** you can follow the attached instructions to create your account and obtain your log-in.
- **Starting April 1-7th:** You can start requesting discovery online through the County Attorney website. You may request discovery from the County Attorney's Office through this new method beginning April 1st or continue to use the current method throughout this week, both will be honored. New options for picking up video/digital evidence will be available starting April 1. Please see below for details.
- **Starting April 8th:** The current method of requesting discovery will not be processed.

STAGE ONE DISCOVERY:

- Unfortunately, during "testing," Stage One discovery will not be available for digital download. Our paper discovery will still be sent via email and videos/digital media will still be copied to disks with some slight changes noted below.
- **Appointed Attorneys & Video/Digital Evidence:**
 - Your video/digital media will be available for pickup at the Justice Center Information Desk (with Vergie) located on the first floor of the Justice Center by the Bailiff's station beginning April 1, 2019. This is an effort to make picking up discovery more convenient while we complete the DEMS project.

- **Retained Attorneys & Video/Digital Evidence:**

- When you submit your discovery requests through this Stage One Discovery Request Portal, you will be prompted to pay the \$10.00 discovery fee online as part of the form submission.
- We are hopeful that all fees associated with discovery will be removed once the full version of DEMS is implemented.
- You will have an option to receive your video/digital evidence in one of two manners:
 - Option One: your video/digital media will be available for pickup at the Justice Center Information Desk (with Vergie) located on the first floor of the Justice Center by the Bailiff's station beginning April 1, 2019. This is an effort to make picking up discovery more convenient while we complete and implement the full digital aspect of the DEMS project.
 - Option Two: for all requests made through the Discovery Request Portal you will have the option to have the video/digital evidence mailed to you via USPS at no additional charge.

- **Discovery Fees:**

- There is no discovery fee associated with court-appointed cases, motions to revoke probation, or hot check cases.

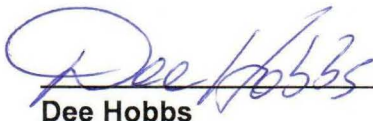
Upon full implementation of DEMS (i.e. Stage Two), you will be able to access your discovery materials via a portal where you will be able to view and download all discovery materials for each of your cases. Other features will include email notification when items are added to your cases and an automated log that will be printed out and filed with the case at disposition. We hope to implement Stage Two sometime this summer.

What about the District Attorney's Office?

Stage One only applies to County Attorney cases. Please continue to follow the current discovery process for any cases you have with the DA's Office. However, once Stage Two goes into effect, all discovery will be handled the same way for both CA and DA cases using the account you created in Stage One.

Thank you for your assistance with this Stage One process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Evidence and Discovery Division via e-mail at discovery@wilco.org or by phone at (512) 943-1111.

Respectfully submitted,



Dee Hobbs
County Attorney