

Subject: MEDIA ADVISORY: Plea Hearing for Danny Weld-Ebanks
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Supreme Court State of Tennessee

CHIEF JUSTICE
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CORNELIA A. CLARK
SHARON G. LEE
HOLLY KIRBY
ROGER A. PAGE

401 SEVENTH AVENUE NORTH
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37219

MEDIA ADVISORY
May 21, 2020

CONTACT: Barbara Peck
Office: [615-532-6047](tel:615-532-6047)

MEDIA ADVISORY: PLEA HEARING FOR DANNY WELD-EBANKS

Nashville - A plea hearing will be held for Danny Weld-Ebanks on May 27, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. in the Montgomery County Court Center. Mr. Weld-Ebanks was indicted in September 2019 for vehicular manslaughter by recklessness for the June 14, 2019, crash at the I-40 east/I-24 east split that killed Nashvillean Matthew Kenigson, 47. Sixteenth Judicial District Judge Barry Tidwell is presiding over the case by interchange. The case was moved to Montgomery County by agreement of the parties because of covid-19 related travel restrictions set by Fort Campbell, where Mr. Weld-Ebanks is stationed. Mr. Kenigson was the spouse of Nashville General Sessions Judge Lynda Jones.

Per the Judicial Emergency declared by Supreme Court Chief Justice Jeff Bivins and the 19th Judicial District Comprehensive Plan Regarding Limited In-Person Proceedings Pursuant to Supreme Court Order Entered April 24, 2020 and approved by the Chief Justice, there is extremely limited access to the Montgomery County Court Center at this time. Mr. Weld-Ebanks' plea hearing will be an in-person hearing. At a plea hearing, the defendant typically enters a plea and if the plea is other than not guilty, the judge may issue a sentence at that time. The plea hearing will most likely last 30 to 45 minutes.

Judge Tidwell has provided two options for media wishing to cover the plea hearing. One option will be done, based on the preference of the media:

Option One: The Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts will record and live-stream the plea hearing from the courtroom. The live-stream will be available on the TN Courts YouTube page and media outlets may utilize the live-stream directly to their own sites. Raw footage, shot on a broadcast-quality camera using the frame rate desired by the majority of media, will be available approximately one hour after the end of the hearing. Additional microphones may be added, on the discretion of the judge, but is not guaranteed. The camera will be placed in the jury box to allow the most advantageous view of all involved.

Option Two: One pool media camera will be permitted to shoot from the courtroom. The pool camera must be able to live-stream directly and must allow other media outlets and the public to utilize and view the live-stream. Other news outlets utilizing the pool will not be permitted in the courtroom or the courthouse. As always under TN Supreme Court Rule 30, the media will be charged with determining the pool camera and ensuring all media outlets who request access are able to obtain the footage. Additional microphones will only be permitted at the discretion of the judge.

Print reporters wishing to cover the plea hearing should file a request to gain access to the courtroom during this judicial emergency. A very limited number of print reporters may be permitted to enter, depending on the number of family members or others directly involved who wish to attend. The maximum number of people in the courtroom is 10, not including judicial staff. If a print reporter files a request, but is not able to be

accommodated in the courtroom, he or she will be directed to the live-stream.

Rule 30 requests for television and radio and requests to attend for print media must be filed by noon on Friday, May 22. Television media should include their preference for option one or option two in their Rule 30 request. All requests should be emailed to:

Barbara Peck
Barbara.peck@tncourts.gov
(615) 440-2555

Final decisions on requests from both television and print reporters will be made by noon on Tuesday, May 26.