

# Appearing in Court:

## Strategies for Justice System Professionals

1

Provide a visual schedule of the court day at least a day in advance to the individual with autism.



2

Give specific guidance on what to wear to court.



3

Practice addressing the judge.



4

If possible, walk through the courtroom to give the individual a visual to help prepare for the court appearance.



5

Give the individual warning about the metal detectors and wands.



6

Prepare all court personnel about the individual's autism diagnosis (Judge, District Attorney, Public Defender, Victim Witness Advocate, Stenographer, Bailiff) and try to make the courtroom "sensory friendly" (dim lights, minimize noise).



7

Allow extra processing time for questions and testimony from the individual due to language difficulties and remind all staff to avoid vague and abstract language.



8

Explain to all court staff, especially to the victim, his/her family, and the victim advocate, that expressing empathy may be difficult.



9

Prepare individual for the various dispositions that could happen at the hearing.

