BENCH TRIAL INFORMATION FOR PRO SE DEFENDANT

1. Judge will announce the case and give a general review of the trial process.
2. State/City will make opening statement. (This statement may be waived.) This statement is not testimony. You may also make an opening statement. This statement must be an overview of what you expect to show by the testimony from you or your witnesses. It is not testimony and can be waived without any effect on your case.
3. State/City will call a witness who will be placed under oath.
4. State/City will question witness.
5. You may question the witness about information just covered.
6. State/City will question witness again. (Can be omitted.)
7. You may question the witness again PROVIDING THE STATE/CITY DID SO. This procedure will be followed for each witness. The State/City will rest their case after all of their witnesses have testified.
8. You, the Defendant, will call your first witness. The witness will be placed under oath.
9. Defendant will question witness.
10. The State/City will ask questions.
11. You may ask questions again. (The Judge may ask questions for clarification.)
12. The State/City may again ask questions.
13. You still have the right to remain silent and this right cannot be held against you. IF YOU DECIDE TO TESTIFY in your own behalf, come forward and be sworn. (Remember that you will be required to answer the State/City questions.) You will generally be allowed to tell your side in story form. Keep your statements to the pertinent facts of this case which is the cause for your being in Court.
14. Defendant will testify.
15. The State/City will question you. (Only if you choose to testify in your own behalf)
16. You may add items forgotten before, if relevant.
17. The State/City may question you again. You will then rest your case after all your witnesses have testified.
18. The State/City may call additional (rebuttal) witnesses.
19. The State/City will give their initial closing statement. This statement is not testimony and may be waived by the State/City. The Court **WILL NOT** make a decision based on closing or opening statements.
20. You may give a closing statement. This is not testimony, nor is testimony allowed here. This statement is simply a conclusion of the testimony and evidence already presented. For example, your statement could be, “From the testimony given here today, I ask the Court to find me not Guilty of this charge. Thank you.”
21. The State/City will give their final closing statement.
22. The Court will make a decision.

\*\*\* **FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR TRIAL may result in a warrant for your arrest and the trial may be held in your absence.**