

Creating a Conference Calendar for Court Cases: Implementation Guide

Resolving cases efficiently can reduce missed court appearance and benefit court personnel, victims, and witnesses. Establishing a conference calendar for prosecutors and defenders to discuss cases can streamline or reduce hearings that require attendance from the person charged. Use this guide to implement a conference calendar in your jurisdiction.

1

Establish a team of stakeholders. Identify and include all relevant stakeholders, such as judges, prosecutors, and defenders.

2

Determine your conference calendar schedule. Consider these and other key factors:

- How regularly will prosecutors and defenders meet?
- How is the agenda for case conferences determined? For example, is it just for cases with hearings that week or month? Should it be grouped by type of case, by caseload, or some other method?
- How will prosecutors and defenders assess whether a person is needed for an upcoming court date?
- How will a person be notified if they are not required for an upcoming court date?

3

Training and pilot test. Train court personnel on the new schedule and have a plan to train new people as they come on board. You may want to test out the policy in a limited way before rolling it out to the entire jurisdiction. This can give an opportunity for staff to ask questions, troubleshoot issues, and tweak the process if needed.

4

Codify your policy. Once you develop your conference calendar, codify it according to local procedures and set a starting date. In North Carolina, this would be done by an administrative order.

5

Start using a conference calendar and adjust if needed. Get feedback from stakeholders and adjust the conference calendar as needed. Data collection can help you determine whether the change is helping, and feedback from court users and stakeholders can point to areas of improvement.