

# Manhattan Night Court — 100 Centre Street

## QUICK INFO

**Hours:** Mon-Fri, 5:30 PM - 1:00 AM

**Most active:** 6:00 PM - 12:30 AM

**Cost:** Free

**Seating:** Any row except the first row

**Note:** No photography inside courtroom

## GETTING THERE

**4, 5, 6** -> Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall

**J, Z** -> Chambers St

**N, R, Q, W, 6** -> Canal St

**1** -> Franklin St

*Security screening at entrance — travel light*

## WHAT YOU WILL SEE: THE 6 ELEMENTS OF EVERY ARRAIGNMENT

### STEP 1

#### Identity confirmed

The court verifies the right person is present before proceedings begin.

*Due process — 5th & 14th Amendments*

### STEP 2

#### Charges read

The judge reviews the complaint and informs the defendant of all charges.

*6th Amendment — right to be informed*

### STEP 3

#### Counsel reviewed

Legal representation confirmed. Public defender assigned if needed.

*6th Amendment — right to counsel*

### STEP 4

#### Plea entered

Defendant pleads guilty or not guilty. Not guilty triggers full protections.

*5th, 6th & 14th Amendments*

### STEP 5

#### Bail decided

Judge sets bail, releases on conditions, or remands defendant to custody.

*8th Amendment — no excessive bail*

### STEP 6

#### Next date set

Guilty -> sentencing scheduled. Not guilty -> trial or next hearing.

*6th Amendment — right to speedy trial*

## KEY AMENDMENTS AT WORK

### 5th Amendment

*"...nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself..."*

#### Right to silence

No one can be forced to testify against themselves. Defendants may remain silent throughout.

### 6th Amendment

*"...the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial...and to have the Assistance of Counsel..."*

#### Right to trial & counsel

Guarantees a speedy public trial, impartial jury, right to confront witnesses, and legal counsel.

### 8th Amendment

*"Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed..."*

#### No excessive bail

Bail cannot be unreasonably high. The Constitution does not guarantee bail will be granted.

### 14th Amendment

*"...nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law..."*

#### Due process in state courts

Extends federal constitutional protections — including the 5th Amendment — to state courts.

### HONORABLE MENTION | 4th Amendment — Probable cause / search & seizure

*"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated."*

Protects against unreasonable searches and arrests. Searches and arrests require probable cause. Applies before and during an arrest — prior to night court proceedings.

## GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Night court handles arraignments only, first appearances after arrest — not trials or sentencing hearings.

The pace is deliberate and unhurried. Plan to stay at least 90 minutes to see the full rhythm of proceedings.

What you witness reflects centuries of legal evolution. Every step protects rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights.