

TITLE 15

PROCEDURE IN CRIMINAL ACTIONS IN JUSTICE COURTS

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Chapter 156

2017 EDITION

Proceedings and Judgment in Criminal Actions

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**JUSTICE COURTS; GENERAL
PROVISIONS AND PROCEEDINGS
PRIOR TO JUDGMENT THEREIN**

156.010 Criminal procedure statutes govern generally. A criminal action in a justice court is commenced and proceeded in to final determination, and the judgment therein enforced, in the manner provided in the criminal procedure statutes, except as otherwise specifically provided by statute. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §329]

156.020 Filing complaint as commencement of action. In a justice court, a criminal action is commenced by the filing of the complaint therein, verified by the oath of the person commencing the action, who is thereafter known as the complainant. [Amended by 1959 c.426 §4]

156.030 Form and sufficiency of complaint. The form of the complaint and the sufficiency thereof shall be as provided in ORS 133.007 and 133.015. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §330]

156.040 Security for costs. Before filing or receiving the complaint in a criminal action, the justice may require the complainant to give security for costs and disbursements in the amount authorized in civil actions; and not otherwise. [Amended by 1959 c.426 §5]

156.050 Warrant of arrest; authority. The authority of a justice of the peace to issue a warrant of arrest shall be as provided in ORS 133.110. [Amended by 1969 c.244 §4; 1983 c.661 §13; 1999 c.1051 §131]

156.060 Issuance, requisites and execution of warrant of arrest. A warrant of arrest in a criminal action in a justice court is issued, directed and executed in all respects as the warrant mentioned in ORS 133.140. [Amended by 1977 c.746 §12]

156.070 Reading complaint to defendant; defendant to plead. When the defendant is brought before the justice, the complaint shall be read to the defendant and the defendant shall plead thereto.

156.080 Defendant's plea; refusal to plead. The defendant may plead the same pleas as upon an indictment. The plea shall be oral and entered in the docket. If the defendant refuses to plead, the justice shall enter the fact, together with the plea of not guilty, on behalf of the defendant.

156.090 Action to be tried within one day unless continued. When the defendant is brought before the justice upon the warrant of arrest, the action shall be tried within one day thereafter, unless continued for cause.

156.100 Change of place of trial. Change of place of trial in criminal actions in justice courts is in all manners and re-

spects governed as provided in ORS 131.305 to 131.415. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §331]

156.110 Trial by court or jury. Upon a plea of not guilty, if the defendant does not then demand a trial by jury, the justice shall proceed to try the issue. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §332]

156.120 Injured person must appear or be subpoenaed. No judgment of conviction or acquittal can be given in a criminal action in a justice court unless the person injured appears or is subpoenaed to attend the trial as a witness.

156.130 Demand for and selection of jury. If a trial by jury is demanded, a jury shall be selected and summoned as in a civil action in a justice court. Each party may take challenges for cause and two peremptory challenges, except that when the jury is selected in the manner provided in ORS 54.060 to 54.160, as to any juror so selected, neither party may take a peremptory challenge.

156.140 Rendition and entry of verdict on docket. When the jury has agreed upon a verdict, it shall deliver the same to the justice publicly, who shall enter it in the docket of the justice.

156.150 [Repealed by 1979 c.447 §4]

156.160 Jury trial without prepayment of trial fee; payment after judgment. In a criminal action in a justice court, prepayment of the trial fee is not a prerequisite to having a jury trial. If a jury trial is demanded and judgment is against the defendant, the fee shall be allowed and taxed in favor of the state as other disbursements in ordinary cases.

**JUDGMENT AND EXECUTION IN
JUSTICE COURTS**

156.210 Judgment on plea of guilty, no contest or on conviction. When the defendant pleads guilty, no contest, or is convicted, either by the justice or the jury, the justice shall give judgment thereon for such punishment as may be prescribed by law for the crime. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §333]

156.220 Judgment imposing monetary obligation; requirements. Except as provided in ORS 18.048 (3) and (4), any judgment rendered by a justice court on an offense that imposes a monetary obligation must contain the separate section required by ORS 18.048 (1). [1973 c.836 §334; 1999 c.788 §39; 2003 c.576 §97; 2005 c.568 §29a]

156.230 Money judgments; enforcement. Money judgments rendered by the court may be enforced in the manner provided by ORS 52.600. [Amended by 1993 c.223 §5; 1999 c.788 §40]

156.240 Judgment entry or certified copy as evidence. An entry of judgment or a certified copy of the judgment is conclusive evidence of the facts stated therein. [Amended by 1999 c.788 §41]

156.250 [1991 c.67 §32; repealed by 1999 c.788 §42]

156.260 [Repealed by 1999 c.788 §42]

156.270 Discharge of defendant upon finding the defendant not guilty. When the defendant is found not guilty by the justice or a jury, the defendant shall be immediately discharged.

156.280 Entry that prosecution was malicious or without probable cause. When the defendant is found not guilty, if it appears that the prosecution was malicious or without probable cause, the justice shall make an entry to that effect in the docket of the justice.

156.290 Judgment against complainant for costs and disbursements. Upon making the entry prescribed in ORS 156.280, the justice shall give judgment against the complainant for the costs and disbursements of the action and require the complainant to pay the same or give satisfactory security therefor, by a written undertaking with one or more sureties, to pay the same to the justice within 30 days from the date of the judgment. [Amended by 1959 c.426 §6]

156.300 Enforcement of judgment against complainant. If the complainant does not pay the judgment, or give the required security therefor, it may be enforced against the complainant in all respects as a judgment for a fine in a criminal action; but if the complainant gives the required security, the judgment may be enforced at the expiration of the 30 days against the complainant and the sureties of the complainant in the undertaking in all respects as a judgment for money in a civil action. [Amended by 1959 c.426 §7]

156.310 Payment of fine and costs by defendant. If the fine and costs, or any part thereof, are paid before commitment, they shall be paid to the justice. Thereafter they shall be paid to the officer in whose custody the defendant is at the time of the payment, which officer shall immediately pay the same to the justice.

156.315 Assignment of judgment to Department of Revenue. (1) A justice court may assign a judgment in a criminal action, as described in ORS 137.118 (1) to (5), to the Collections Unit in the Department of Revenue for the following purposes:

(a) To determine whether refunds or other sums are owed to the debtor by the department; and

(b) To deduct the amount of the debt from any refunds or other sums owed to the debtor by the department.

(2) If the Collections Unit determines that refunds or other sums are owed to the debtor, the department shall deduct the amount of the debt from any refunds or other sums owed to the debtor by the department. After also deducting costs of its actions under this section, the department shall remit the amount deducted from refunds or other sums owed to the debtor to the justice court that assigned the judgment.

(3) A debtor whose account is assigned to the Department of Revenue for setoff under this section is entitled to the notice required by ORS 293.250 (3)(d). [2003 c.375 §2; 2015 c.766 §11; 2017 c.746 §23]

Note: The amendments to 156.315 by section 23, chapter 746, Oregon Laws 2017, become operative July 1, 2018. See section 24, chapter 746, Oregon Laws 2017. The text that is operative until July 1, 2018, is set forth for the user's convenience.

156.315. (1) A justice court may assign a judgment in a criminal action, as described in ORS 137.118 (1) to (5), to the Collections Unit in the Department of Revenue for the following purposes:

(a) To determine whether refunds or other sums are owed to the debtor by the department; and

(b) To deduct the amount of the debt from any refunds or other sums owed to the debtor by the department.

(2) If the Collections Unit determines that refunds or other sums are owed to the debtor, the department shall deduct the amount of the debt from any refunds or other sums owed to the debtor by the department. After also deducting costs of its actions under this section, the department shall remit the amount deducted from refunds or other sums owed to the debtor to the justice court that assigned the judgment.

(3) A debtor whose account is assigned to the Department of Revenue for setoff under this section is entitled to the notice required by ORS 293.250 (3)(e) and to the opportunity for payment in ORS 293.250 (3)(d).

156.320 [1971 c.423 §3; repealed by 1973 c.836 §358]

RELEASE OR COMMITMENT

156.410 Release of defendant before trial. At any time before the commencement of the trial, the justice shall release the defendant under the procedures set forth in ORS 135.230 to 135.290. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §335]

156.420 [Repealed by 1973 c.836 §358]

156.430 [Repealed by 1973 c.836 §358]

156.440 Commitment of defendant. If the defendant is not released from custody as provided in ORS 135.230 to 135.290 when brought before the justice upon the warrant of arrest, the defendant shall be continued in

the custody of the officer or, if the court is held in the vicinity of the county jail, committed to jail, to answer the action, as the justice may direct. [Amended by 1973 c.836 §336]

156.450 Form of commitment. The commitment shall be signed by the justice with the name of office of the justice and may be substantially as follows:

JUSTICE COURT FOR
THE DISTRICT OF _____
State of Oregon, County of _____
IN THE NAME OF
THE STATE OF OREGON

To the sheriff of the county aforesaid:

An order having this day been made by me that A. B. be committed for trial in a criminal action against A. B. for the crime of (designating it generally), you hereby are commanded to receive A. B. into your custody and detain A. B. accordingly or until A. B. is otherwise legally discharged.

Dated at _____, this ____ day of _____, 2____.
C. D., Justice of the Peace

156.460 How commitment is executed. When committed, the defendant shall be delivered to the custody of the proper officer by any peace officer to whom the justice may deliver the commitment, first indorsing thereon, substantially, as follows: "I hereby authorize and command E. F. to deliver this commitment, together with the defendant therein named, to the custody of the sheriff of the County of _____."

**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS
RELATING TO JUSTICE COURTS**

156.510 Proceeding when crime is not within jurisdiction of justice court. If in the course of the trial it appears to the justice that the defendant has committed a

crime not within the jurisdiction of a justice court, the justice shall dismiss the action, state in the entry the reasons therefor, hold the defendant upon the warrant of arrest and proceed to examine the charge as upon an information of the commission of crime.

156.520 Function of district attorney in justice court. The district attorney may prosecute an action and if requested by the court shall prosecute an action in a justice court and attend an examination before a magistrate, either in person or by someone appointed by the district attorney for that purpose, and in any case the district attorney shall control the proceedings on behalf of the state. [Amended by 1981 c.863 §1]

156.530 Disposition of money paid on judgment. (1) Any money paid to the justice court upon a judgment in a criminal action shall first be applied to the costs of the action. The remainder shall be paid by the justice court to the treasurer of the county, to be appropriated as provided by law.

(2) Money paid pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be delivered by the justice court to the treasurer not later than the last day of the month immediately following the month in which the money is collected. [Amended by 2003 c.687 §6]

156.610 [Amended by 1969 c.619 §14; repealed by 1977 c.876 §9 (46.800 enacted in lieu of 156.610)]

156.620 [Amended by 1973 c.836 §337; repealed by 1977 c.876 §9 (46.800 enacted in lieu of 156.620)]

156.630 [Repealed by 1975 c.611 §24]

156.640 [Amended by 1965 c.510 §23; repealed by 1977 c.876 §9 (46.800 enacted in lieu of 156.640)]

156.650 [1959 c.559 §1; 1971 c.186 §1; repealed by 1977 c.876 §9 (46.800 enacted in lieu of 156.650)]

CONCURRENT JURISDICTION

156.705 Jurisdiction over offenses against animals. Justices of the peace shall have concurrent jurisdiction over all offenses committed under ORS 167.315 to 167.333 and 167.340. [Formerly 770.260; 1985 c.662 §14; 1999 c.788 §48]

