



**ZACH KLEIN**  
COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

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Contact: Meredith Tucker, 614.965.0203  
Email: [mctucker@columbus.gov](mailto:mctucker@columbus.gov)

# Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein Announces New Bail Reform Initiative

*Prosecution policy change for bond recommendations part of larger focus on instituting criminal justice reforms*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that he has instituted a new prosecution policy intended to promote public safety, prioritize jail space for violent offenders awaiting trial, save taxpayer money, and reduce the amount of time individuals spend in jail while awaiting trial for non-violent misdemeanor offenses. It is part of City Attorney Klein’s broader effort to comprehensively address fundamental inefficiencies and inequalities in the criminal justice system.

Effective immediately and absent unique circumstances, city prosecutors will affirmatively request and advocate for recognizance bonds for all non-violent offenders appearing in arraignment court. Commonly known as ROR – or “release on own recognizance” – bonds, a recognizance bond allows individuals to be released from jail following their arraignment hearing without having to post cash for a bail bond. The judges presiding over arraignment court ultimately decide bond conditions, but generally take into account the prosecution’s recommendation.

Among the issues this new policy change is intended to address is the basic fact that individuals who are indigent and cannot afford to post bail have to remain in jail while waiting for trial, while others charged with the same offenses, but who have the financial ability to make bail, are able to go free. Generally, individuals charged with these types of non-violent misdemeanors likely will not be sentenced to jail once convicted—creating an imbalance in the criminal justice system that may keep impoverished people incarcerated before they are convicted solely because they cannot afford to pay a bail bond.

**“Since becoming City Attorney, I have challenged myself and my team to find ways to modernize our processes and procedures in our effort to make the criminal justice system more efficient, equitable, and fair,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. “This bail reform initiative is one of several new policies we have spent a great deal of time analyzing and developing, and I’m excited to begin implementing more of our reforms soon.”**

The city prosecutor’s office will NOT be recommending recognizance bonds for cases involving violent crimes, sex offenses and OVIs.

Violent crimes include:

- Domestic violence
- Assault
- Intimate partner violence
- Menacing
- Stalking
- Violation of protection order
- Columbus City Code weapons under disability
- Child endangering

Sex offenses include:

- Public indecency
- Sexual imposition
- Unlawful sexual conduct with a minor
- Voyeurism

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