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# NC BLET Court Preparation Study Guide

## Section 1: First Visit to Court

- **Know These Locations:**
    - Parking areas for officers.
    - Bathrooms and officer gathering spots.
    - District Attorney's office for case discussions.
    - Courtroom seating and standing positions for officers.
  - **Obtain These Details:**
    - Daily court docket copies.
    - Rules and roles of court personnel.
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## Section 2: Courtroom Professionalism

- **Essential Traits:**
    - **Honesty:** Always be truthful.
    - **Impartiality:** Avoid appearing biased.
    - **Accuracy:** Stick to facts.
  - **Behaviors to Avoid:**
    - Unnecessary movements (e.g., rubbing nose, tapping feet, playing with keys).
    - Unprofessional actions (e.g., chewing gum, using your phone).
    - Distracting gestures (e.g., talking with hands, fidgeting).
  - **Key Tips:**
    - Maintain neutral facial expressions.
    - Use formal titles: "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Ms.," or "The Defendant."
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## Section 3: Types of Courts

- **District Court:**
    - Handles misdemeanors and infractions.
    - No jury; presided over by a judge.
    - Typical session: One day.
  - **Superior Court:**
    - Handles felonies and serious misdemeanors.
    - Includes a jury unless waived by the defendant.
    - Typical session: One week or longer.
  - **Juvenile Court:**
    - Handles all juvenile cases (both misdemeanors and felonies).
    - Proceedings are confidential; dockets are not public.
  - **Grand Jury:**
    - Determines if probable cause exists for an indictment.
    - Officers may testify without attorneys present.
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## Section 4: Officer Responsibilities

- **Preparation:**
    - Review all case notes thoroughly.
    - Organize materials in advance.
    - Meet with the District Attorney (DA) if necessary.
  - **Court Dates:**
    - It's the officer's responsibility to stay informed and attend all scheduled hearings.
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## Section 5: Testifying in Court

- **General Tips:**
    - Tell the truth—credibility is key.
    - Speak clearly and avoid police jargon.
    - Use specific references for distances and locations (e.g., point to objects in the courtroom).
  - **Direct Examination:**
    - Purpose: Establish the facts of the case.
    - Focus: Highlight evidence proving the charges beyond a reasonable doubt.
  - **Cross-Examination:**
    - Purpose: Bring out the whole truth, uncover omissions, and demonstrate witness biases.
    - Stay composed under questioning.
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## Section 6: Legal Concepts

- **Plea Bargaining:**
    - Agreement to reduce charges or sentences.
  - **Discovery:**
    - Exchange of case information between prosecution and defense.
  - **Motion to Suppress:**
    - Used to exclude evidence obtained illegally.
  - **Arraignment:**
    - Process of informing the defendant of charges and obtaining a plea.
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## Section 7: Trial Process

1. **Steps:**
    - Jury Selection.
    - Opening Statements.
    - Prosecution's Presentation.
    - Defense's Response.
    - State's Rebuttal.
    - Closing Arguments.
    - Jury Instructions.
    - Jury Deliberation.
    - Verdict Announcement.
    - Sentencing.
  2. **Key Facts:**
    - A jury consists of 12 members.
    - Appeals in death penalty cases go directly to the NC Supreme Court.
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## Section 8: Additional Notes

- **Court Liaison Officer Duties:**
    - Notify officers of court appearances.
    - Facilitate evidence requests and assist with DA communications.
  - **Magistrates:**
    - Handle initial bond settings and preliminary hearings.
  - **Crime Victims Rights Act:**
    - Provide victims with information within 72 hours of identification.
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