Criminal Matters

The Court does not generally refer pretrial matters to a Magistrate Judge. If the Judge assigned to the case is unavailable when a defendant under indictment is arrested on the Court's bench warrant, the defendant should be brought to the Duty Magistrate Judge. The Court may allow an Alford plea or accept a nolo contendere plea. The Court always requires a presentence investigation report prior to sentencing. The Court meets with the probation officer prior to sentencing. The Court enforces a firm plea cutoff date. With Court approval counsel may be allowed to submit jury questionnaires in advance of jury selection in high profile and/or complex cases. The Court conducts the voir dire, but often allows counsel to ask follow-up questions.