



**Shaunathan C. Bell  
Ninth Judicial Circuit**

**DeKalb County Courthouse  
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Fort Payne, Alabama 35967  
(256) 845-8545**

**Cherokee County Courthouse  
100 Main Street  
Centre, Alabama 35960  
(256) 927-5452**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**TO: The Local Media**  
**FROM: Presiding Circuit Judge Shaunathan Bell**  
**DATE: May 12, 2022**

Circuit Judges Shaunathan Bell, Jeremy Taylor, and Andrew Hairston obtained and delivered 2 new laptop computers to DeKalb County Sheriff Nick Welden for use at the DeKalb County Detention Center. Sheriff Welden's Office and the Courts communicate daily on a variety of issues ranging from warrants to be executed, pleadings to be served, inmates to be transported, hearings that need to be conducted, and numerous other matters.

Pursuant to the United States Constitution, every person that is arrested on a warrant must appear in front of a judge and/or magistrate within 72 hours of that arrest. The Sheriff's Office houses both Federal and State inmates, and it must allow each of these individuals to appear in front of the appropriate judge, meet personnel from Court Referral, and allow interviews from probation offices. Many of these hearings and interviews can be conducted remotely with the use of technology. Remote hearings save the Sheriff's Office from the cost of transporting the individuals, reduces safety concerns, and saves the need for extra manpower. It also allows the Court to conduct hearings more efficiently.

Remote hearings have been occurring between the Sheriff's Office and Courts for years, but the increasing number of cases has caused the need for more technology. The Judges are proud to help meet this need by providing the new technology needed.

These computers will allow multiple courts and agencies to conduct hearings and or interviews simultaneously. This will allow the constitutional process to operate more efficiently.