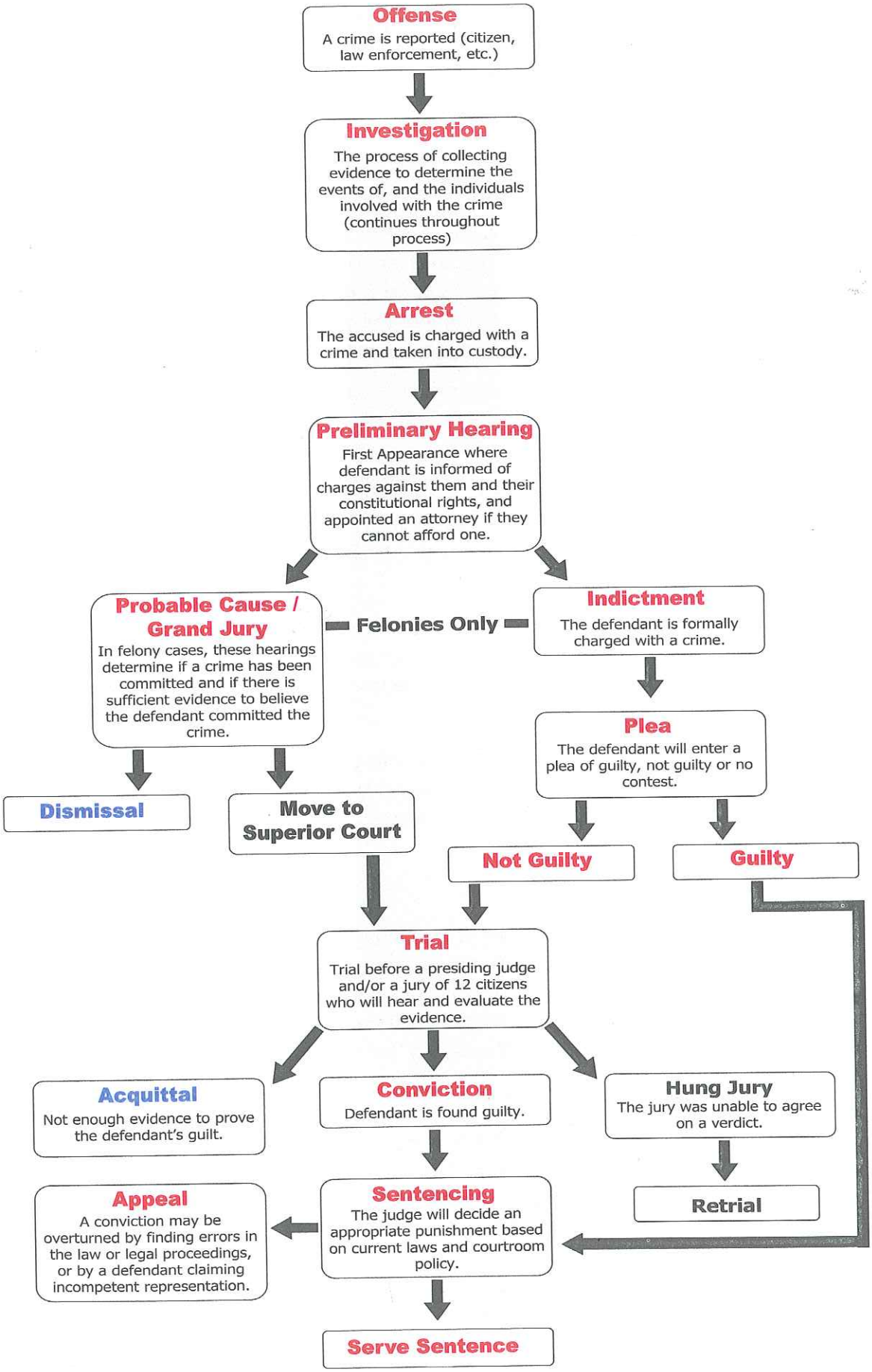
Offense
A crime is reported (citizen, law enforcement, etc.)
Investigation
The process of collecting evidence to determine the events of, and the individuals involved with the crime (continues throughout process)
Arrest
The accused is charged with a crime and taken into custody.
Preliminary Hearing
First Appearance where defendant is informed of charges against them and their constitutional rights, and appointed an attorney if they cannot afford one.
Probable Cause / Grand Jury
In felony cases, these hearings determine if a crime has been committed and if there is sufficient evidence to believe the defendant committed the crime.
Felonies Only
Indictment
The defendant is formally charged with a crime.
Plea
The defendant will enter a plea of guilty, not guilty or no contest.
Dismissal
Move to Superior Court
Not Guilty
Guilty
Trial
Trial before a presiding judge and/or a jury of 12 citizens who will hear and evaluate the evidence.
Acquittal
Not enough evidence to prove the defendant's guilt.
Conviction
Defendant is found guilty.
Hung Jury
The jury was unable to agree on a verdict.
Retrial
Appeal
A conviction may be overturned by finding errors in the law or legal proceedings, or by a defendant claiming incompetent representation.
Sentencing
The judge will decide an appropriate punishment based on current laws and courtroom policy.
Serve Sentence