

Amended COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Henderson County Judiciary

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of Henderson County, Texas will implement the following protective measures:

General

- All judges will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration.

Judge and Court Staff Health

- Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: Courthouse Security Personnel will continue screening all persons entering court buildings, including Judges and Court Staff, as set out below.
- Judges or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6°F, or with new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or having known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building and should seek medical advice.

Scheduling

- The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Judges located in the same court building will make every effort to not schedule cases on the same days as other judges and will schedule space between hearings so as to limit the number of attorneys, parties, witnesses, and spectators present at any one time.

Vulnerable Populations

- Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.
- Each judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the courts' websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building (a copy of which is attached as Exhibit "A").

- Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by being excused to the greatest extent practicable and will have hearings in which they must participate scheduled at the beginning or the end of the docket.
- Persons summoned for jury service will have enclosed with their summonses a notice containing the foregoing information and instructions for how to be excused if they are members of vulnerable populations (a copy of which is attached as Exhibit "B"). Disposable face masks will be provided to individuals desiring them.

Social Distancing

- In each courtroom, plexiglass panels have been installed between the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, and clerk, court reporter, and bailiff seating.

Hygiene

- Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building, outside of elevators on each floor, outside of each courtroom, and outside of bathrooms.
- Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and in the hallways.

Screening

- When individuals attempt to enter the court building, Courthouse Security Personnel will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 100.0° F will be refused admittance to the court building.
- Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including face shields, surgical masks, and gloves, if the supply is available.

I have conferred with all judges of courts with courtrooms in the court buildings of Henderson County regarding this Operating Plan. I will ensure that the judges of courts with courtrooms in the court buildings covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Signed on June _____, 2021.

Dan Moore, 173rd District Judge
Administrative District Judge

NOTICE

Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.

Individuals in vulnerable populations may receive accommodations by contacting the Court (903) _____ and identifying themselves as a vulnerable individual.

NOTICE

If, with two weeks before the day you are to report, you experience a temperature equal to or greater than 100° F, or YOU or A MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD show new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or have had known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19, you should seek medical advice and contact the Court at (903)_____.

Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be **vulnerable populations**. Individuals in **vulnerable populations** may receive accommodations by contacting the Court at (903) _____ and identifying themselves as a vulnerable individual.

You will be provided a disposable face mask if you wish.

EXHIBIT "B"