

ECTOR COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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DENN WHALEN
JUDGE, 70TH DISTRICT COURT

December 28, 2020

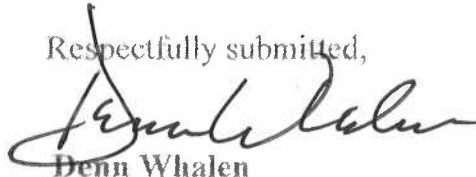
Dear Judge Rucker,

Please consider this our request for re-certification of the previously approved COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Ector County Judiciary dated May 27, 2020. All felony proceedings, including, but not limited to pleas, probation revocations, bond hearings, arraignments, etc., shall be conducted remotely by zoom or some similar video conferencing or teleconferencing platform. In the event a defendant or other court participant is unable to successfully participate in a remote proceeding for a reason beyond the judge's control, for example due to lack of access to technology or because of a party's disability, the judge may permit that participant to appear in person in a courtroom, while the other participants appear remotely. In all criminal matters, defense counsel will be provided secure and private rooms in the courthouse to conduct hearings remotely with their clients that are large enough to maintain adequate social distancing and be compliant with the safeguards set forth in the Twenty-Ninth Emergency Order, the most recent Guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration, and the COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Ector County Judiciary. There are no criminal jury trials set at the present time.

All family law proceedings are currently being conducted remotely by video conference, such process being compliant with the latest Emergency Order, OCA Guidance, and Local Operating Plan. All other hearings of whatever kind or character shall be conducted remotely with the very limited exceptions set forth in the latest Emergency Order and OCA Guidance.

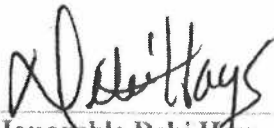
A copy of this request for recertification has been provided to all Ector County Judges (District Courts, County Courts, Justice Courts, and Associate Courts). I represent that the Judges of the Ector County Courts affected by the Operating Plan and this request for recertification will conduct court operations and proceedings consistent with the representations made herein. By their signatures below, the undersigned approve of this request for recertification.

Respectfully submitted,

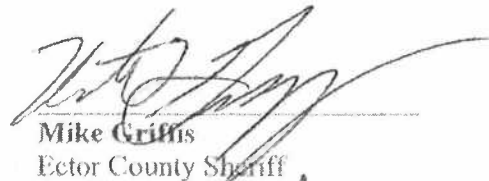


Denn Whalen

Presiding Judge, 70th District Court
Local Administrative Judge
Ector County



Honorable Debi Hays
Ector County Judge



Mike Griffin
Ector County Sheriff



Brandy Garcia
Director-Ector County Health Dept.



Dr. B.A. Jinadu
Ector County Health Authority