



THE CITY OF FORT STOCKTON, TEXAS MUNICIPAL COURT

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Fort Stockton Municipal Court in Pecos County Judiciary

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the court lobby, the court of **FORT STOCKTON** will implement the following protective measures:

General

1. Judge 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 regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. Judge will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The presiding judge of the municipal court will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the city.
4. Judge will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than June 8, 2020.

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judge and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: Feeling sick shelter in place and self-monitor.
3. Judge or clerk 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.
4. Judge, clerk, and bailiff will be required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
5. Protective Measures: Wear face mask when dealing with the public and practice social distance.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Not more than (5) defendants will be schedule for docket/arraignments. Magistration, (15.17) and protective orders will be conducted at the Pecos County Jail courtroom practicing all protective measures. Bench trials will be set every (30) minutes between cases.

Jury trials will not be set until receiving further guidance from the Office of Court Administration.

Vulnerable Populations

1. 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.
2. 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. The court will work with the vulnerable population by contacting them by email or phone to reduce exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

Social Distancing

1. No more than two (2) individuals will be permitted in the lobby. A sign-up sheet will be placed in the lobby to assist in contact tracing and mapping.
2. Signs in spanish and english will be posted on the front door of the building to inform persons to maintain adequate social distancing of at least six (6) feet and wear protective mouth covering.

Council Chambers/Courtroom

3. The maximum number of person permitted in the Council Chambers/courtroom will depend on the allowed capacity at the time, 25%, 50%, etc. The maximum capacity of the Council Chambers/courtroom will be monitored and enforced by the courtroom bailiff.
4. The Council Chambers/courtroom will be marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating arrangement. Seating will be limited to every other row.
5. The Council Chambers/courtroom, counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, and clerk seating will be arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 (six) feet between each space.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrance to the court lobby.
2. Tissues will be placed in the court lobby, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, and on the judges' bench.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in the court lobby in spanish and english language.




Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court lobby and or council chambers/court room will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.

Cleaning

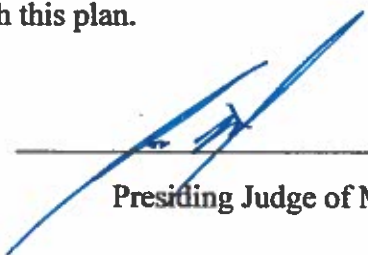
1. Cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned daily.
2. Cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this corona virus.
3. Bailiff will sanitize seats when transition occurs within the courtroom between hearing and recess.

Other

Public Health Official		date	5-30-20
City Manager		date	5-30-20
Mayor		date	6-11-20

I consulted with the local health authority and mayor/City Manager documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the Fort Stockton Municipal Court will conduct proceedings consistent with this plan.

Date: 05/19/2020



Presiding Judge of Municipal Court