

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Gun Barrel City Municipal Court

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, or other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of THE CITY OF GUN BARREL CITY will implement the following protective measures:

General

1. 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 regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. All judges will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The local administrative judge will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and county judge and adjust this operating plan as necessary as accordingly.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than June 5, 2020.

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judges and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring requirements: each person will monitor their own health and not go near other court personnel if ill.
3. 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 a 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. Judges and court staff will be required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
5. Protective measures: the Court has a window to divide when court starts non-essential in-person proceedings.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building:
 - a. There will be appointments scheduled or teleconferencing will be an option.
 - b. There will be only one (1) person allowed in the lobby at the courtroom window at a time, with exceptions such as juveniles attending with a parent/guardian as well as attorneys.
 - c. There will be no jury trials scheduled until after August, 2020.

Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over the age of 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. 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 court's website and in conspicuous locations around court building.
3. The court will provide accommodations by setting specific times for only the individual to be seen and a sanitized area to meet. The sanitized area will be sanitized between each defendant.

Social Distancing

1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the court building will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet.
2. No more than two individuals from the same household will be permitted in the lobby.
3. Each restroom has been evaluated to determine appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity has been posted on each restroom door.
4. Public common areas, including breakrooms and snack rooms, have been closed to the public.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer station has been placed at the courtroom door (which is entry into the front lobby).
2. Tissues have been placed at the entry of the courtroom lobby and at the court window.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted on multiple locations of the court's building.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, an appointed person will ask the individuals if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals who indicate yes to any of those questions will be refused admittance to the court building.
2. Staff who are screening individuals will be provided personal protective equipment, including a mask.

Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face coverings at all times.

2. Disposable masks will be provided as long as supplies are available.

Cleaning

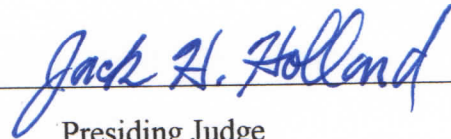
1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every 24 hours.
2. Court staff will clean and sanitize counters, surfaces, glass partitions, door handles, and chairs after each individual appointment.
3. Court staff will clean the court window hourly.

Other

1. Bailiffs and Court staff will continuously monitor and ensure all persons entering the building courtroom wear a face covering and abide by the 6 feet social distancing requirement.
2. Gloves, anti-bacterial spray, and alcohol wipes are available for Court staff use.

In developing the plan, I consulted with the City's local health authority and the City Mayor documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure the judges of the courtroom in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with this plan.

Date: June 12, 2020



Presiding Judge

Gun Barrel City Municipal Court