

May 25, 2020

CITY OF MELISSA MUNICIPAL COURT

JUDGE DAVID P. MOORE, PRESIDING

TENURE: YEAR 28

MELISSA, TEXAS

COVID-19 OPERATING PLAN FOR THE CITY OF MELISSA MUNICIPAL COURT

RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF LITIGANTS, ATTORNEYS, VISITORS, COURT STAFF, JUDGES AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS ENTERING THE BUILDING HOUSING THE COURT ROOM, THE COURT OF THE CITY OF MELISSA WILL IMPLEMENT THE FOLLOWING PROTECTIVE MEASURES.

GENERAL:

1. THE JUDGE(S) 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. THE JUDGE(S) 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, MAYOR AND CITY MANAGER AND ADJUST THIS OPERATING PLAN AS NECESSARY WITH CONDITIONS IN THE CITY.
4. THE JUDGE WILL BEGIN SETTING NON-ESSENTIAL IN-PERSON PROCEEDINGS NO SOONER THAN JUNE 1, 2020.

JUDGE AND COURT STAFF HEALTH:

1. JUDGES AND COURT STAFF WHO CAN PERFORM THE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THEIR JOB REMOTELY HAVE/WILL TELEWORK WHEN POSSIBLE.
2. JUDGE AND COURT STAFF MONITORING REQUIREMENTS: ALL STAFF WILL SELF MONITOR AND WILL IMMEDIATELY REPORT ANY SYMPTOMS (ATTACHED AND RECOGNIZED) TO HIS/HER SUPERVISOR.
3. JUDGES OR COURT STAFF WHO FEEL FEVERISH OR HAVE MEASURED TEMPERATURES EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN 99.6 F (DEGREE), OR WITH NEW OR WORSENING SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 SUCH AS COUGH, SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR DIFFICULTY BREATHING, 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(S) AND COURT STAFF WILL BE REQUIRED TO WEAR FACE COVERINGS, PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING, HYGENE AND CDC GUIDELINES.

SCHEDULING:

1. THE JUDGE HAS WORKED WITH THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR TO LIMIT DOCKETS. THE VOLUME IN TEXAS MUNICIPAL COURTS IS SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER THAN OTHER TYPES OF COURTS.
2. THE COURT WILL LIMIT THE COURT ROOM TO 10 DEFENDANTS AT A TIME-WITH THE 6 FOOT DISTINCING RULE IN PLACE AND FOLLOWED. OUR LEAD BAILIFF BEVERLY STEVENS IS AN EXPERIANCED FORMER COLLIN COUNTY DEPUTY. THE REMAINING DEFENDANTS IN THE LOBBY AREA WILL BE SPACED WITH MARKINGS ON THE GROUND.
3. AS WE ESTABLISH SCHEDULES, WE CAN/WILL SUBMIT TO THE PRESIDING REGIONAL JUDGE WHELESS AND COUNTY HEALTH OFFICIAL TAYLOR.

VUNERABLE POPULATIONS:

1. INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE OVER 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 BY CHEMOTHERAPY FOR CANCER OR OTHER CONDITIONS REQUIRING SUCH THERAPY ARE CONSIDERED TO BE VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.
2. THE JUDGE(S) WILL INCLUDE INFORMATION ON ORDERS SETTING HEARINGS, DOCKET NOTICES, AND OTHER NOTICES OR COMMUNICATIONS NOTIFYING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE VULNERABLE POPULATIONS OF THE ABILITY TO CONTACT THE COURT TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS VULNERABLE INDIVIDUAL AND RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS. A NOTICE WITH THIS INFORMATION WILL BE POSTED ON THE BCOURTS WEBSITE AND IN CONSPICUOUS LOCATIONS AROUND THE COURT AND BUILDING. THE NOTICE WILL PHOTOGRAPHED AND SENT TO THE REGIONAL PRESIDING JUDGE WHELESS AND HEALTH AUTHORITY TAYLOR, PRIOR TO ANY LIVE DOCKETS.
3. VULNERABLE POPULATIONS WHO ARE SCHEDULED FOR COURT WILL BE ACCOMODATED BY RESETTING THEIR HEARING UNTIL AFTER THE PANDEMIC HAS SUBSIDED OR CONDUCT THEIR HEARING VIA ZOOM OR SIMILAR MEANS REMOTELY.
4. JUDGE MOORE WILL CONTINUE HIS PLAN OF JUSTICE WITH MERCY.

SOCIAL DISTANCING:

1. THE COURT WILL NOT CONDUCT JURY TRIAL UNTIL AUGUST 2020 AT THE EARLIEST AND ONLY IF GUIDELINES ARE CONSISTANT WITH PANDEMIC SAFETY AS DESCRIBED. THE JUDGE WILL CONTACT THE REGIONAL PRESIDING JUDGE AND HEALTH AUTHORITY IF ANY CHANGES IN THE PANDEMIC OCCUR, SUCH AS A SURGE OR THE PANDEMIC CHANGES. WE WILL STOP LIVE DOCKETS AS SUCH AND CONTACT THE REGIOANL PRESIDING JUDGE AND HEALTH AUTHORITY.
2. ALL PERSONS NOT FROM SAME HOUSEHOLD WHO ARE PERMITTED IN THE COURT ROOM MUST MAINTAIN THE 6 FOOT SOCIAL DISTANCING AT ALL TIMES.
3. THE COURTROOM IS ON LEVEL ONE. NO ANTICIPATED ELEVATOR USE OF DEFENDANTS IS ADVISED. OUR BAILIFFS WILL MONITOR SUCH. NO MORE THAN TWO PERSONS ON AN ELEVATOR, IF OCCURRENCE FROM SAME HOUSEHOLD OR NOT.
4. EACH RESTROOM WILL BE/HAS BEEN EVALUATED TO DETERMINE THE APPROPRIATE CAPACITY TO ENSURE SOCIAL DISTANCING, THE MAXIMUM CAPACITY WILL BE POSTED FOR PANDEMIC TIMES, A PHOTO TO REGIONAL PRESIDING JUDGE AND HEALTH AUTHORITY IF REQUESTED.
5. PUBLIC COMMON AREAS, INCLUDING BREAK ROOMS AND SNACK ROOMS DO NOT EXIST AND WOULD BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AT THIS TIME.

GALLERY:

6. THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERSONS PERMITTED IN THE GALLERY OF THE COURTROOM WILL BE POSTED AND DETERMINED. THIS WILL BE MONITORED BY STAFF. MELISSA COURT DOES NOT REALLY OFFER SUCH SPECTATOR SEATING.
7. THE SEATING WILL BE SPACED AND DISTANCED BY ROW.

FINALLY:

ATTACHED IS THE HYGENE, SCREENING, FACE COVERING AND CLEANING NEEDS THAT THE MELISSA MUNICIPAL COURT WILL ADHERE TO DURING THE PANDEMIC.

EQUALLY ARE THE NOTICES OUR COURT PLANS TO DISPLAY.

AN ORIGIANL MEMO FROM JUDGE DAVID MOORE, ON PLEXIGLAS THAT WE HAVE INSTALLED AND AN INFRARED TEMPRATURE GUAGE THAT HAS BEEN ORDERED.

I APPRECIATE THE REGIONAL PRESIDING DISTRICT JUDGE AND HEALTH AUTHORITY FOR THEIR TIME AND CONSIDERATION TO MY PLAN AND THEIR TIME AND ENERGY DURING THIS UNPRECEDENTED TIME.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME REGARDING ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS.

I WILL FORWARD THIS PLAN TO OUR MAYOR REED GREER AND CITY MANAGER JASON LITTLE.

MY COURT ADMINISTRATOR AT MELISSA IS LORIE LAMBERT. (972) 838-2034.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building near the elevators.
2. Tissues have been placed in the courtroom.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in multiple locations on each floor of the court building.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, court security staff 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 these questions will be refused admittance to the court building and receive accommodations, such as resetting their proceeding.
2. Inmates being transported from the jail to the court building will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and have their temperature taken prior to transport. Inmates with symptoms or a temperature equal to or above 99.6°F will not be transported to the court building.
3. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including facial coverings and gloves.

Face Coverings

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

Cleaning

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every six hours.
2. Court building cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
3. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

Other

Staff will adhere to all social distancing requirements and will be spread out to meet all guidelines. Red tape has been placed every six feet in our lobby to maintain public social distancing, and seating will be removed from the courtroom waiting areas to provide separation. Additionally, seating in the courtroom will be assigned in order to meet social distancing guidelines.

SINCERELY,



JUDGE DAVID P. MOORE

PRESIDING MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE

JUDICIAL DISTRICTS: COLLIN-DENTON COUNTY

