

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR INDIAN RIVER, MARTIN, OKEECHOBEE, AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES
STATE OF FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-07

IN RE: COVID-19 REOPENING PROCEDURES – FIRST PROTOCOLS

WHEREAS, Administrative Order 2020-06 directed all judges, magistrates and hearing officers to evaluate their caseloads and implement procedures consistent with AOSC 20-23 and Executive Order 20-112 to maximize remote work and thereby ensure the occupancy of courthouses does not exceed the Governor’s extant directives relating to large capacity public facilities,

WHEREAS, reopening the courts of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit in conformity with AOSC 20-23 *Amendment 1* will result in a greater number of persons using and occupying courthouses beginning May 30, 2020, and

WHEREAS, in order to implement the objectives of AOSC 20-23 *Amendment 1* and Executive Order 20-112 and all orders and phases anticipated to follow, the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit COVID-19 Reopening Workgroup has established the protocols set forth herein;

THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority of the Chief Judge under section 43.26, Florida Statutes, and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

- A. Effective May 30, 2020, the following protocols shall be observed in all courthouses in the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit:
 1. **Temperature Taking.** All persons entering courthouses shall have their temperature taken in a non-intrusive manner. Persons with temperatures over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be denied entry into the courthouse.
 2. **Signage; Persons Subject to Isolation or Quarantine.** Prominently displayed signage shall be placed at public entrances to all courthouses that will instruct individuals not to enter the courthouse if they have been advised by health officials to isolate or quarantine.

3. **Screening by Questionnaire.** Each person entering a courthouse shall be screened using the following questionnaire:
 - a. Have you recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19?
 - b. Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19, are you waiting for test results, or do you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19?
 - c. Have you recently traveled from somewhere outside the United States or on a cruise ship?

 4. **Social Distancing Measures.** Because the virus is thought to spread between persons who are in close contact with one another, the social distancing measures set forth below shall be followed to the maximum extent possible:
 - a. Masks. All persons entering courthouses must wear a face covering. All such persons are strongly encouraged to bring their own face covering; otherwise, a disposable mask will be provided.
 - b. Six-Foot Distancing. All persons must keep at least six feet between themselves and others, even when wearing a face covering. Court personnel should monitor the number of persons allowed into an elevator at any given time to avoid violating social distancing protocols.

 5. **Hand Sanitizing.** To the maximum extent feasible, hand sanitization stations shall be implemented at several locations throughout all courthouses. Persons entering and traversing a courthouse will be encouraged to use them.

 6. **Cleaning of Courthouses.** Counties shall continue to clean courthouses as recommended by local health officials. Bailiffs or other court personnel should also undertake responsibility to frequently and routinely wipe and disinfect surfaces in personal and courtroom work areas, door handles and other “high touch areas” (such as elevator buttons and access key pads) with disinfectant wipes or with a CDC-recommended disinfectant solution.

 7. **Physical Handling of Documents.** To the maximum extent possible, physical handling of documents is to be avoided.
- B. **Notices of Hearing.** Until further order of this Court, all notices of court hearings issued by counsel or the court should contain the following statements:

If you are a person seeking to enter the courthouse please be aware of the following requirements.

Upon entry to the courthouse your temperature will be taken in a non-intrusive manner. Persons with temperatures over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be denied entry into the courthouse. All persons entering the courthouse will be further screened by a questionnaire:

- 1. Have you recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19?**
- 2. Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19, are you waiting for test results, or do you have a cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19?**
- 3. Have you recently traveled from somewhere outside the United States or on a cruise ship?**

You will be required to wear a face covering. Please bring your own face covering if you have one. If you do not possess one, a disposable mask will be provided to you. All individuals shall observe social distancing within courthouses by maintaining the recommended minimum six-foot distance from other individuals. Frequently sanitize your hands while you are in the courthouse.

- C. Transport of Inmates.** Because of risks associated with virus transmission among inmates, judges are strongly discouraged from ordering the transport of inmates to court. However, if deemed necessary for a court proceeding, judges may bring inmates to the courtroom from the county jails. Inmates must be masked, as provided in this Administrative Order.
- D. Courtroom Decorum and Social Distancing Measures.** In order to conduct proceedings appropriately, judges shall maintain traditional individual control of courtroom proceedings. Keeping in mind the goal is reduction of disease transmission, judges should regulate the number and location of persons in their courtrooms at any time so as to facilitate the protection of individuals from COVID-19.
- E. Remote Hearings/Proceedings.** Judges are directed to continue to maximize remote work by Zoom or other electronic means to limit the number of in-person court appearances and thereby reduce the risks of COVID-19 exposure to all persons involved in court proceedings after May 30, 2020.

This Administrative Order shall remain in effect until further notice or until superseded by further order of this Court or the Florida Supreme Court.

DONE AND ORDERED at Stuart, Florida this 15th day of May, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lawrence Mirman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

LAWRENCE MIRMAN, CHIEF JUDGE