

Guidelines for the Conduct of In-person Court Proceedings and Courthouse Office appointments

Due to the Coronavirus/Covid-19 Pandemic and the resulting Public Health Emergency declared by Governor Kemp for the State of Georgia in various recent orders, the Judges of the Superior Courts of the Pataula Judicial Circuit adopted the following Guidelines for the conduct of in-person criminal, civil and accountability court proceedings. These guidelines will also be used for office visits. These Guidelines shall remain in effect until further order of the Court.

GUIDELINES

- 1. Persons entering the courthouse shall be subject to screening by court official or staff at each office, which shall include a body temperature scan and asking certain health-related questions. The following persons shall not be admitted into any office.**
 - A. Persons who have been diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19;**
 - B. Persons who have within the last 30 days had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;**
 - C. Persons with a temperature of more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit;**
 - D. Persons who are experiencing, or have within the last 30 days experienced, respiratory illness including shortness of breath, persistent cough, or sore throat;**
 - E. Persons who have been asked to quarantine by any healthcare provider or persons who reside with someone who has been asked to quarantine by a healthcare provider.**
- 2. Persons who are not admitted into the courthouse for any of the above reasons shall be provided with alternative means of observing court proceedings or accessing records for any office.**
- 3. Persons entering the courthouse shall:**
 - A. be required to wear a mask that covers his or her mouth and nose;**
 - B. remain 6 feet away from other persons;**
 - C. Sit only in the seats assigned inside the courthouse.**
- 4. Persons who have been subpoenaed may be asked to remain outside of the courthouse or seated in a designated area until a court official calls you in person or over your telephone to enter. If a person who has been subpoenaed has experienced any of the conditions in Item 1 above, please notify a court official or staff member.**
- 5. If person is an older adult, at risk for severe illness, or has asthma, HIV, Liver Disease, or is pregnant or breastfeeding, or a person who is at risk for COVID-19 because of genetic predispositions, or if your health care providers have instructed you to refrain from attending gatherings of people, then you are strongly encouraged not to enter the courthouse.**
- 6. The Court may limit the number of occupants in the courthouse, interior areas, and courtrooms based upon their size.**
- 7. The Court may impose other rules in addition to these Guidelines in order to promote the health and safety of the public, litigants and their lawyers, and court personnel.**