

ORIGINAL



IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DOUGLAS COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

FILED
JUN 18 2021
Willie D. Stembridge, Clerk
Superior & State Court
Douglas County, GA

FIRST REVISED ORDER REGARDING COURT PROCEDURES DUE TO
COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR THE DOUGLAS JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

WHEREAS Brian Kemp, the Governor of the State of Georgia has declared a state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic;

WHEREAS, Harold D. Melton, the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, has found a State of Judicial Emergency and has issued multiple orders directing the Chief Judge of each Superior Court in each judicial circuit to establish court policies and procedures during the pandemic to ensure public health and safety in the continued operation of all classes of courts including the provision of "comprehensive, written guidelines" that specify "who shall be admitted to the courthouse and courtroom and how public health guidance will be followed," pursuant to the authority granted this court by OCGA Sections 38-3-61 and 38-3-62 this court issues the following Order and Policy regarding procedures to be followed at the Douglas County Courthouse until further Order. This order is intended to be consistent with the Douglas County Commissioners' Return to Work Guidelines they have recently adopted.

1. No person shall be permitted entry into the Douglas County Courthouse who has tested positive for COVID-19 and has not subsequently been medically cleared or has symptoms thereof. Those symptoms are

fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking, headache, loss of sense of taste, loss of sense of smell or sore throat.

2. **Except for fully vaccinated state or county employees**, no person shall be permitted entry into the Douglas County Courthouse at any manned security station who is not wearing a protective face covering such as a surgical mask, cloth, bandanna, scarf or other covering over their nose and mouth, which must be worn at all times in courtrooms and public areas. Once any person has left a public area of the courthouse and entered the office of any government official within the building, being a visitor or staff member, it is within the discretion of that elected official or department head to require or not require face coverings and other health related procedures within those offices.
3. The Sheriff of Douglas County is directed to refuse admittance to the courthouse to persons who are unwilling to comply with these directions and document that said person was turned away on a form provided by the court if that person had court related business at that time. The Sheriff is further directed to temperature scan each person seeking entry into the courthouse and refuse admittance to anyone who has a temperature at 100.4 degrees or more.
4. All persons within public areas and courtrooms of the Douglas County Courthouse must conduct themselves to remain at least six feet "socially distant" from other persons during their time at the courthouse, and the Sheriff is directed to monitor traffic flow in and out of the courthouse and volume of persons within the public areas at all times, and if in the Sheriff or his deputy's discretion the number of persons is

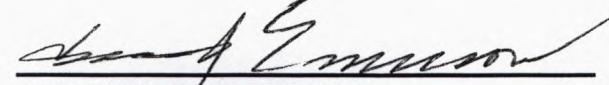
such that social distancing cannot be maintained, no further admittance will be allowed until enough persons have conducted their business and left so that social distance can be maintained.

- 5. Fully vaccinated state or county employees shall not be required to wear face coverings.**
6. The respective Judges of the Superior, State, Magistrate, Juvenile, and Probate Courts of this Circuit shall conduct all court proceedings when possible via videoconference. When it is not possible to conduct a court proceeding by videoconference, the courts have discretion to conduct in person court proceedings, but must limit the number of persons admitted to the courtroom to maintain 6 foot social distancing at all times while at the same time allowing the public to attend court. This will require each court to stagger court proceedings. All persons inside courtrooms shall be required to wear a face covering except for the judge if the judge is on the bench at a distance from the participants.
7. If any class of court plans a court day where there will be a high volume of participants, the Chief Judge of that Court will be required to obtain the approval of the Chief Judge of the Superior Court of this Judicial Circuit before doing so. It will be necessary to do this to give the other courts an opportunity to defer their proceedings to accommodate the needs of that court on that particular day, to accomplish the social distancing required by this Order.
8. The court directs all persons to wash or sanitize their hands using personal equipment or the restrooms and sanitizer stations located in

public areas upon entering the building and the court directs that the County Board of Commissioners is to ensure that these materials are available to the public in ample supply.

9. The court directs this Order to be prominently posted at all courthouse entrances; provided to all attorneys in the local bar by electronic means; posted on the Douglas County website; published prominently in the Douglas County Sentinel at the expense of Douglas County; and, this order shall be enforced by the contempt powers of the Court. It is also to be forwarded to the Administrative Office of the Courts.

SO ORDERED this June 18, 2021.



DAVID T. EMERSON
Chief Judge of Superior Court
Douglas Judicial Circuit

Cc: Tim Pounds, Douglas County Sheriff
Romona Jackson-Jones, Chairperson
Sharon Subadan, County Administrator
William H. McClain, Judge Superior Court
Cynthia C. Adams, Judge Superior Court
Eddie Barker, Chief Judge State Court
Brian Fortner, Judge State Court
Michelle Harrison, Chief Juvenile Court Judge
Talia Nurse, Judge of Juvenile Court
Susan Camp, Chief Magistrate Court Judge
Barbara Caldwell, Magistrate Court Judge
Christina Peterson, Probate Court Judge
Dalia Racine, District Attorney
Monica Myles, Chief Public Defender
Sonya Compton, Solicitor General
Annetta Stembridge, Clerk of Superior and State Courts
Tee Barnes, Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia
Cynthia Clanton, Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts of Georgia

RECORDED IN BOOK 64 PAGE 40
DATE 06-18-2021