

## COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Click or tap here to enter text. **City Judiciary**

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of **the City of Austin** 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 presiding judge of the municipal court** will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and **mayor** and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the **city**.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than **July 6, 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. **(Insert staff schedules here)**

**Phase 1 - Job Functions require a majority in office work** – This category includes roles that require an employee to perform their primary job duties on-site, and predominately with the public to deliver services. These employees were assigned special projects or training to complete while teleworking and can return to the worksite during Phase 1. For those whose job functions require public interface in a stationary setting or between employees who are in close contact, consider placing physical barriers such as plexiglass where possible. Temperature screening of employees and individuals served should be considered at the entrance of the building. Altered work schedules can be utilized to stagger schedules and start/end times or allow for a mixture of telework and on-site work. Employees should wear a mask, wash hands often, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in their workspace.

### **Opening to the public on June 29<sup>th</sup>**

- Customer Service (partial staff)
  - Four (4) customer service windows; may increase based on demand
- ITS (partial staff)
- Administration (partial staff)

### **Modified Dockets, in-person parking hearings, and compliance office on July 6<sup>th</sup>**

- Courtroom Support (partial staff)

- Judiciary (partial staff)
- Youth Services (partial staff)
- Compliance Office (partial staff)
- Civil Administration (partial staff)
- Magistration window (partial staff)

- ✓ Dockets will be capped at 10 people per docket (5 for juvenile dockets). We will utilize holding rooms and courtroom lobby to ensure that no more than 10 people, including staff, are in the courtrooms at one time.
- ✓ No trials or administrative hearings
  - Docket schedule will be evaluated every 28 days to determine the next steps
- ✓ Plexiglass barriers will be installed on the counsel tables, clerk's station, and judge's bench in the courtrooms. Plexiglass barriers will also be installed in the compliance office, civil hearing offices, and juvenile assessment offices.
- ✓ Looking into temperature screenings of employees and the public
- ✓ Operational hours will be 8AM-5PM during the week of June 29<sup>th</sup>. Beginning July 6<sup>th</sup>, operational hours will be 8AM-7PM until further notice.

**Phase 2 - Job Functions require in office work part-time** – This category includes roles that have some ability to telework but may need to be at the worksite for certain hours or days to perform specific job duties or deliver services to the public. These employees may have teleworked in combination with working in the office and can return to the worksite during Phase 2. When possible, telework should continue to replace in-person work. For those whose job functions require public interface in a stationary setting or between employees who are in close contact, consider placing physical barriers such as plexiglass where possible. Temperature screening of employees may be done at the entrance of the building. Altered work schedules can be utilized to stagger schedules and start/end times. Employees should wear a mask, wash hands often, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in their workspace.

**Begins on July 27<sup>th</sup>**

- Collections (partial staff)
- Warrant Processing (partial staff)
- HR (partial staff)
- Accounting (partial staff)

**Job Functions allow for the majority of telework – Phase 3** – This category includes roles that can be done remotely to deliver services. These employees can begin to return to the worksite in Phase 3. As much as possible, telework should be used to replace in-person work. Employees who are currently utilizing telework should continue to telework if those employees' primary job functions can be done remotely. In office settings where desks and chairs do not allow for distancing, Departments may choose to alternate in-person and remote days for individual employees who would otherwise sit too close and consider staggered start and end times. Employees should wear a mask, wash hands often, and clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in their workspace.

**Begins on August 24<sup>th</sup>**

- Communications (partial staff)
- Caseload (partial staff)
- CMS team (partial staff)

2. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: Judges and court staff will be required to report if they are not feeling well (fever, cough, flu-like symptoms) or have had known exposure to individuals who have tested positive to COVID-19.
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 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: Staff will be provided with two washable face coverings, hand sanitizer, gloves, and disinfectant wipes.

**Scheduling**

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Modified dockets for the first 30 days:

Courtroom 1			
No more than 10 people (including staff) in the courtroom at time time			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
MITI	MITI	MITI	MITI
8:30-11:30	8:30-11:30	8:30-11:30	8:30-11:30
1:30-3:45	1:30-3:45	1:30-3:45	1:30-3:45
Virtual Docket (9am-4pm)	Virtual Docket (9am-4pm)		Virtual Docket (9am-4pm)

Courtroom 2			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
TRAD (100 total)			PTRI (20 total)
9:00 (10)			9:00 (10)
9:30 (10)			9:30 (10)
10:00 (10)			
10:30 (10)			DISDOC (15 total)
11:00 (10)			10:30 (7)
1:00 (10)			11:00 (7)
1:30 (10)			
2:00 (10)			

**TEMPLATE TO BE MODIFIED AS APPROPRIATE**

2:30 (10)			
3:00 (10)			

Courtroom 3			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
	<b>*HDSPD (10 TOTAL)</b>	<b>ENAD (60 total)</b>	<b>*NISI (20 total)</b>
	Reduced from 60	9:00 (10)	4:00 (10)
	9:30 (10)	9:30 (10)	4:30 (10)
		10:00 (10)	
		10:30 (10)	
		11:00 (10)	
		11:30 (10)	
		<b>EPTRI (20 total)</b>	
		1:30 (10)	
		2:00 (10)	
		<b>ENVR (20 total)</b>	
		3:00 (10)	
		3:30 (10)	

Courtroom 4			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<b>TRAD (70 total)</b>	<b>TRAD (100 total)</b>	<b>TRAD (100 total)</b>	<b>TRAD (100 total)</b>
	Reduced from 170	Reduced from 170	Increased by 30
9:00 (10)	9:00 (10)	9:00 (10)	9:00 (10)
9:30 (10)	9:30 (10)	9:30 (10)	9:30 (10)
10:00 (10)	10:00 (10)	10:00 (10)	10:00 (10)
10:30 (10)	10:30 (10)	10:30 (10)	10:30 (10)
11:00 (10)	11:00 (10)	11:00 (10)	11:00 (10)
1:00 (10)	1:00 (10)	1:00 (10)	1:00 (10)
1:30 (10)	1:30 (10)	1:30 (10)	1:30 (10)
<b>CMAD (45 total)</b>	2:00 (10)	2:00 (10)	2:00 (10)
2:00 (10)	2:30 (10)	2:30 (10)	2:30 (10)
2:30 (10)	3:00 (10)	3:00 (10)	3:00 (10)
3:00 (10)			
3:30 (10)	<b>ATAD (60 total)</b>	<b>CMAD (45 total)</b>	<b>ATAD (60 total)</b>
	Reduced from 75		Reduced from 75
4:00 (5)	3:30 (10)	3:30 (10)	3:30 (10)
	4:00 (10)	4:00 (10)	4:00 (10)
		4:30 (10)	

	4:30 (10)	5:00 (10)	4:30 (10)
	5:00 (10)	5:30 (5)	5:00 (10)
	5:30 (10)		5:30 (10)
	6:00 (10)		6:00 (10)

Courtroom 5			
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
	<b>REVO (60 total)</b>	<b>*HDSPD (10 total)</b>	<b>JUVE (25 total)</b>
	2:00 (10)	Reduced from 60	2:00 (5)
	3:00 (10)	9:30 (10)	2:30 (5)
	4:00 (10)		3:00 (5)
	5:00 (10)	<b>REVO (60 total)</b>	3:30 (5)
	6:00 (10)	1:00 (10)	4:00 (5)
		1:30 (10)	
		2:00 (10)	
		2:30 (10)	<b>AMAD (5 total)</b>
		3:00 (10)	4:30 (5)
		3:30 (10)	
			<b>CURFREV (10 total)</b>
		<b>*SHOWIC (40 total)</b>	5:00 (5)
		4:00 (10)	5:30 (5)
		4:30 (10)	
		5:00 (10)	
		5:30 (10)	

**Vulnerable Populations**

1. Individuals who are over age 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 courts' websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building (a copy of which is attached).
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by remote hearings or scheduled on a docket with no more than five (5) other individuals.

## **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 not from the same household will be permitted in an elevator. If more than one individual from the same household is in an elevator, no other individuals will be permitted in the elevator.
3. Each restroom has been evaluated to determine the appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity has been posted on each restroom door.
4. Public common areas, including breakrooms and snackrooms, have been closed to the public.

### *Gallery*

5. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of each courtroom has been determined and posted. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
6. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. Seating is limited to every other row.

### *Well*

7. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, and clerk, court reporter, and bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.

## **Hygiene**

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building, outside of elevators on each floor, outside of each courtroom, and outside of bathrooms.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and in the hallways.
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, **contracted security guards** 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.
2. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, **contracted security guards** will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 100.0°F will be refused admittance to the court building.
3. 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.

4. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including masks, gloves, and disinfectant wipes.

#### **Face Coverings**

1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a cloth face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.
3. Individuals who will be required to be in the court building for over 1 hour will be provided surgical masks and required to wear them while in the court building if the supply is 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 twelve (12) hours.
2. Court building cleaning staff will clean the courtrooms between every hearing, between morning and afternoon proceedings, and at the end of each day the courtroom is used.
3. Court building cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
4. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

#### **Other**

Click or tap here to enter text.

I have attempted to confer with all judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building regarding this Operating Plan. In developing the plan, I consulted with the local health authority and mayor, documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Date: 5/27/2020

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Presiding Judge of Municipal Court