

IN THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ALABAMA
ORDER ON COURTROOM AND
COURTHOUSE GENERAL PROCEDURES
TO RESUME IN-PERSON HEARINGS

After consideration with the Judges of the 2nd Judicial Circuit, County Administrators of each county, the Circuit Clerks, the Sheriffs, District Attorney and Health officials, it has been determined that the safety and welfare of all court personnel and the public would be best served by extending the suspension of in-person proceedings until June 1, 2020.

Pursuant to and authority provided by the Alabama Supreme Court in Administrative Order Number 7 entered on May 13, 2020, it is ORDERED that all Circuit Court, District Court, Juvenile Court, Municipal Court, and Probate Court in-person proceedings shall continue to be suspended until June 1, 2020, with exceptions provided by the Alabama Supreme Court, the Chief Justice or the Presiding Circuit Judge.

The Clerks Offices shall continue to operate as they were under the existing Alabama Supreme Court Order by limiting in person contact, while keeping the courts open.

The courts remain open to handle exceptions to the suspension of in-person proceedings and to continue to handle cases through video conferencing and teleconferencing.

While not to be considered as an administrative order, our judges have all agreed to work within these guidelines, to the best of our ability, in order to provide some uniformity for the attorneys and the parties.

1. Six feet of social distancing shall be observed by all members of the public, attorneys and court personnel at all times and at all locations in the courthouses and in the courtrooms.
2. Persons entering the courthouses and courtrooms may be required to wear appropriate face covering. Judges may require face coverings, but may also grant permission for removal of face coverings to anyone in his or her courtroom in each Judge's sole discretion.

3. Each Judge shall determine and post outside of his or her courtroom the maximum occupancy level for their courtrooms and adjacent meeting areas.
4. Judges are encouraged to schedule special settings over general docket calls.
5. The use of electronic document exchange for exhibits is encouraged consistent with this Court's Virtual Proceedings Order.
6. Continued use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing are encouraged for circuit, district and juvenile courts.
7. Judges are encouraged to provide public access to open court hearings by entering Orders containing videoconferencing or telephone login information.
8. COVID-19 symptomatic inmates for circuit and district court shall not be transported and any emergency issues relating to such inmate will be handled by videoconference.
9. Special consideration will be given for attorneys, parties, witnesses, and jurors that are considered vulnerable to COVID-19.
10. All Judges may secure their chambers so as to limit access.

These procedures are designed for the safety and welfare of the public, court personnel, attorneys and the judges.

NOTE: This list does not contain all procedures for all courts and some courts may have additional procedures. This list is meant to give some general guidance to the attorneys and the parties in order to prepare for court in the weeks ahead.

DONE this the 18th day of May, 2020.


Terri Bozeman Lovell
Presiding Circuit Judge