

STATE OF ALABAMA     )     IN THE CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT COURTS  
 ESCAMBIA COUNTY     )     OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ALABAMA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

The Circuit and District courts of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit continue to monitor the available information concerning the current Covid-19 Pandemic. At this time Escambia County, AL is now classified by state health authorities as a "very high risk county".

Therefore, this Order shall be effective as of August 9, 2021 in the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit. As of that date all persons entering a courtroom for a large docket will be required to wear an appropriate face covering or "mask". A large docket is defined as any docket where more than one case is set at a given time. The courts will continue the current practice of making same available in both courtrooms. Parties and attorneys are encouraged to bring their own masks as availability of same to the courts is limited. The judges shall continue to have discretion to require masks in individual hearings. Attorneys and parties should expect a higher likelihood that masks will be required of all persons in proceedings in courtroom #2 given its smaller size.

If an attorney becomes aware that his or her client or witness in a case set for an in-person hearing is positive for Covid-19, or has Covid symptoms, or has been directly exposed in the previous fourteen days, that attorney is required to report same to the court having jurisdiction over that case as well as opposing counsel and/or pro se party(ies) as soon as possible. Counsel shall not wait until the day of the hearing to report same.

Social distancing shall continue to be observed and followed by all persons in a courtroom in this circuit. This order applies to all attorneys, parties, witnesses, law enforcement and employees of all agencies.

Any person disobeying or defying any order related to the pandemic in this circuit is subject to the contempt powers of the courts. Such act will be considered by the court involved as a possible direct act of contempt and appropriate punishment will be considered. All persons are specifically ORDERED to only sit in a chair or seat as designated by marking or made available. Anyone removing tape from a chair in a courtroom intended to insure social distancing will immediately be required to show cause why he/she should not be held in direct contempt of court.

Attorneys in cases set for hearing shall exchange exhibits prior to arriving in court on the day of hearing. Attorneys shall have marked for identification any exhibit(s) prior to a hearing. Prior to approaching a witness or transferring exhibits, counsel shall seek permission from the Court.

Nothing in this Order terminates any provision of any prior order in this circuit directed to the Covid-19 Pandemic. All prior administrative orders entered in this circuit in response to the pandemic remain in full force and effect.

This the 9th day of August 2021.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 JEFFREY A. WHITE  
 PRESIDING CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

**Filed**  
 AUG 09 2021

John Robert Fountain  
 Circuit Clerk  
 Escambia County, AL

STATE OF ALABAMA     )     IN THE CIRCUIT AND DISTRICT COURTS  
 ESCAMBIA COUNTY     )     OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF ALABAMA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has currently classified Escambia County as a "very high risk county" for the spread of Covid-19. The seven (7) day average for new cases of Covid-19 in Escambia County has rapidly increased, and stands at 21.14 as of this date.

The Circuit Court of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit had previously set a docket styled "Status Call-Civil Docket (Oct. Term) to be called on Wednesday, August 11, 2021 beginning at 9:00 a.m. Based on the current status of the pandemic specific to Escambia County the Circuit Court for the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit makes the following order.

The status docket referenced above will NOT BE CALLED as scheduled. Instead the parties in all cases set for that docket should file with the Court a status report simply indicating whether, in that party's opinion, a specific case is ready to be set for trial or not on the October 2021 jury term. The Court will then decide what cases shall be set for trial in the October term of court set for October 18 – 22, 2021.

This Order should not be misinterpreted to mean definitively that jury trials will be held in said jury term. The status of that jury term, as well as jury trials in general in the state of Alabama, remains in question due to the pandemic. At this time the Circuit courts of this state are not allowed to summon potential jurors for court by Order of the Supreme Court of Alabama. Parties to cases set for trial in the October 2021 jury term of court should be aware of any and all orders entered by the Circuit Court of the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit concerning same.

This the 9 day of August, 2021.

  
 •• JEFFREY A. WHITE  
 PRESIDING CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

**Filed**

AUG 09 2021

John Robert Fountain  
 Circuit Clerk  
 Escambia County, AL