

**NON-JURY COVID – 19 OPERATING PLAN**  
**FOR**  
**THE DALLAS COUNTY JUVENILE COURTS:**  
**HENRY WADE BUILDING**

*Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of all individuals who enter the Henry Wade Building, and a public health emergency having been declared by state and federal government officials relative to COVID-19, the Dallas County Juvenile Judiciary, in accordance with the applicable Supreme Court Emergency Orders, consistent with the Texas Office of Court Administration Guidelines, have adopted this NON-JURY COVID 19 Operating Plan and will implement the following protective measures:*

**GENERAL PLAN**

1. All judges will comply with the Emergency Orders and Instructions issued by the Texas Supreme Court. These instructions include, but are not limited to, conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration regarding social distancing, maximum group size as well as other precautions and restrictions.
2. The presiding judges for the Juvenile District Courts will maintain contact with the Local Administrative Judge and Dallas County Officials and Health Officials to adjust the plan as necessary.
3. Non-essential in-person proceedings will begin no earlier than December 1, 2020 and only after a final plan has been submitted to the Dallas County Judge/Local Health Authority and the Presiding Judge of the First Administrative Judicial Region if required by the then orders.

**JUDGE AND STAFF MONITORING**

1. The Dallas County Juvenile Court Judges and court staff will:
  - a. Self-monitor symptoms and signs of COVID-19 before reporting to work.
  - b. Stay home if he/she feels ill or has any symptoms of COVID-19.
  - c. Will report a positive test result to Health and Human Services and Human Resources ,and assist to coordinate cleaning of the areas with facilities management.
  - d. Will be required to wear face coverings as mandated by State and/or local law/ordinances and in any event when within 6ft distance of another person and/or when walking or congregating in the public hallways.
  - e. Practice social distancing and appropriate hygiene as recommended by the Dallas County public Health Department.
  - f. Use electronic documents in an effort to reduce physical transfer of paper thus reducing the potential transfer of COVID-19.

**COURT SCHEDULING**

- 1, The Dallas County Juvenile Courts will:

- a. Coordinate their daily dockets as to assist with limiting the number of persons who must physically appear in the Henry Wade Building.
- b. Only require appearances for detention hearings, disposition settings and on specific directive by the Judge.
- c. Reduce the number of occupants in the building by agreeing to incorporate and utilize as much as possible virtual proceedings in the daily court procedures.
- d. When jury trials resume, make every effort to coordinate trial schedules as to limit the number of jurors that are called to any one floor.

## **COURTROOM REQUIREMENTS**

1. Each Courtroom will:
  - a. Be equipped with appropriate PPE as requested by each Judge.
  - b. Require appropriate 6ft distancing of everyone in the Courtroom.
  - c. Require face coverings of everyone in the courtroom. Each individual judge will monitor and enforce face covering requirements in their courtrooms.
  - d. Have appropriate signage indicating the maximum capacity to ensure social distancing.
  - e. Monitor and enforce court capacity, face coverings and 6ft distance spacing. Seating in the gallery and courtroom will be marked as to indicate 6ft distancing.
  - f. Arrange seating in the well or gallery of the courtroom in such a way as to ensure social distancing of at least 6 ft.
  - g. Each courtroom has been assessed a maximum of 25% capacity, which will be administered by each sitting judge in his/her courtroom.

## **COURTHOUSE REQUIREMENTS**

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 6ft.
2. No more than 4 individuals will be permitted in an elevator.
3. All public space has been evaluated to determine the appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing. The maximum capacity will be noted with the appropriate signage.
4. All individuals entering the Henry Wade building will be required to adhere to State and/or local law/ordinances regarding wearing of face coverings. Each person is required to provide his/her own face covering.
5. Signage will be posted outside the Henry Wade Building to notify the public of:
  - a. Requirement to wear face covering.
  - b. Requirement of the 6ft distance.
  - c. Conditions that will result in a denial into the building.
6. Detention residents will be screened for COVID-19 before they are brought to a courtroom.

## **COURTHOUSE PPE AND SANITIZATION**

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at the entrance to the building, on each floor, outside of each courtroom and in other strategic place in the courthouse.
2. Trash cans will be placed strategically as to allow for proper disposal of anything that has been handled and could transmit COVID-19.
3. Signage will be posted to encourage frequent and appropriate handwashing.

4. The Henry Wade Building cleaning will be as follows:
  - a. The common areas of the building will be cleaned twice a day.
  - b. The courtroom equipment and areas used will be wiped down/sanitized after every proceeding.
  - c. Courtrooms will be cleaned at the end of every day.
  - d. Electrostatic cleaning will be performed in accordance with the Dallas County facility mandates in each courtroom and all public spaces,
  - e. Every employee will be responsible for the basic cleaning of their workspace.

**Appropriate Dallas County Officials and Health Department officials have inspected each Courtroom and approved the essentials of this Plan.**