

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Johnson County Judiciary Guinn Justice Center and Justice of the Peace Offices¹

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, Judges and other individuals entering the Guinn Justice Center and other buildings housing Johnson County Justice of the Peace Courts, the following protective measures are implemented:

GENERAL

1. All Judges shall 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 shall use reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The Local Administrative District Judge will maintain regular communication with the Local Health Authority and County Judge and adjust this operating plan as necessary.
4. The COVID-19 Coronavirus Disease Epi Curve Report published by the Texas Health and Human Services Epidemiology Program for Public Health Region 2/3, Johnson County, will be closely monitored as updates are issued. The County Judge, Administrative Judge, and County Health Official will scrutinize any fluctuation in the numbers on the report as to levels of COVID-19 in Johnson County and consider adjustments to the Operating Plan to protect the health and safety of all parties impacted under the Plan as well as all residents of Johnson County as more information becomes available.
5. Judges may begin non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than June 1, 2020 consistent with this plan if proceeding remotely is impractical.

JUDGE AND COURT STAFF HEALTH

1. Judges and court staff may work remotely and telework as directed by the Judge of their Court.
2. Judges, court staff and all employees shall have daily temperature checks upon entering the court building. Staff and employees with any symptom of COVID-19, or who learn they have had close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19, will NOT ENTER THE GUINN JUSTICE CENTER OR OTHER JOHNSON COUNTY COURTS, and will alert the Judge of their Court or supervisor who will then immediately alert the Local Administrative Judge.

¹ This Operating Plan addresses the Guinn Justice Center specifically, for ease of reference. Johnson County Justice of the Peace Offices and Courts are in different buildings and shall adopt and/or adapt these procedures as reasonably feasible for their location.

3. Judges and court staff shall practice social distancing, practice the recommended hygiene safety measures for COVID-19, and have face coverings available at their desk or in their office.

SCHEDULING

1. All Civil and Domestic hearings shall continue to be held via ZOOM or Telephonic hearing at this time to the extent practical. TRO's and Protective Orders may be heard via ZOOM; however, individuals ordered to appear, who have not retained counsel, may be allowed to appear in person if the Judge finds that it is not feasible for them to participate remotely.
2. Judges may allow attorneys and individuals to appear in person, as necessary for specific proceedings. Courtroom attendance shall be kept to the minimum number the Judge needs to hear a case. Contested hearings that require in person attendance of more than 20 people shall not be held without first coordinating with other Courts/Offices to minimize the total building occupancy load.
3. Courts will coordinate any in-person Criminal hearings so that multiple courts will not have large criminal dockets on the same day or at the same time. A "Zoom room" has been set up at the Johnson County Jail: remote hearings will continue to be conducted as directed by the Judge of each Court, to further reduce transport of inmates and keep the number of individuals in the Guinn Justice Center to a minimum. A second "Zoom Room" has been set up in the Central Jury Room.
4. Jury Trials are currently prohibited by the Office of Court Administration. Procedures and guidelines for Jury trials will be addressed after additional recommendations are received from the OCA and a Johnson County Plan can be put in place.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

1. A list of health conditions that indicate an individual may be at an enhanced risk within the vulnerable COVID-19 population will be prepared and posted on the Johnson County Courts website, on the bulletin boards, and inside each Courtroom. A copy of the list of conditions will be attached to hearing notices, with a phone number to call if accommodations (including remote access via telephone or video conference) are needed.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the Guinn Justice Center shall maintain social distancing of at least six feet.
2. Elevators at the Guinn – all parties who are physically able shall be encouraged to use the stairs. A maximum of three individuals will be allowed on an elevator at one time and each person shall be encouraged to wear a mask while on the elevator. Family members residing

at the same household may ride the elevator together in numbers greater than three. These guidelines shall be posted at all public and employee elevators.

3. Public restrooms and employee restrooms in the Guinn allow for social distancing by design. A Social Distancing reminder sign and hygiene safety measures will be posted outside and inside all public restrooms at the Guinn.
4. The "break room" at the Guinn will be closed to the Public. Employees may use the break room to access the shared refrigerator and sink (kitchen facilities). One half of the chairs in the break room will be removed to reduce the dining capacity by 50 percent.

GALLERY & WELL

1. There are seven identical courtrooms at the Guinn Building. Each courtroom is designed to hold 72 people in the gallery and 25 in front of the bar. While this plan is in effect the maximum occupancy of each courtroom will be limited to 20 in the gallery and 10 in front of the bar for non jury hearings. Appropriate signs will be posted at each courtroom door.
2. Each judge shall monitor the courtroom to enforce appropriate social distancing, whether by skipping rows and/or limiting the number of individuals by row. Family members of the same household may be seated together as practical to further maximize social distancing in the gallery.
3. Social Distancing in the Courtroom applies to counsel table, witness stand, Judge's bench, clerk, court reporter and bailiff seating and has been arranged to meet COVID-19 social distancing recommendations for safety. There will be no hearings at the bench. Attorneys or pro se parties shall present their case from the Plaintiff and Defense tables. The witness stand adjacent to the Judge's bench shall not be utilized or occupied. Witnesses called to testify shall be seated in the jury box, center seat, back row to allow adequate social distancing from the Judge and the Court Reporter.
4. Jury Trial procedures and guidelines will be addressed after additional recommendations are received from the OCA and a Johnson County Plan can be put in place.

HYGIENE

1. Hand sanitizer will be kept on hand to the full extent available in the supply chain. Hand sanitizer, tissues, and lined trash receptacles will be placed at the main public entrance to the Guinn, inside public restrooms, in each courtroom along the gallery rows, and at various locations throughout the Guinn as available in the supply chain.
2. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in multiple locations in the Guinn Justice Center.

SCREENING

Public Entrance

1. All individuals entering the Guinn Justice Center through the public entrance will be met by security and required to review a written checklist (both English and Spanish) of symptoms common to COVID-19 as provided by the Johnson County health officer.
2. Individuals will be asked, but not required, to write their name and driver's license number or ID number and check any symptoms they are currently experiencing including fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, rash, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and sore throat, and indicate whether they have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals will also be asked to indicate whether they have an underlying health condition that may indicate they fall within the COVID 19 vulnerable population.
3. All individuals will have their temperature taken with a non-contact infrared thermometer and the temperature reading will be written on the questionnaire.
4. Individuals (1) indicating "yes" as to a current symptom or condition, or (2) with a temperature higher than 99.6 will be directed to return to their car and call 817-202-4000 extension 1122 for further questioning and information gathering. This information will be relayed to the presiding Judge of the Court to which they seek access. Should the individual be seeking services from the District Clerk, County Clerk, District Attorney or County Attorney, the elected official of that office will be notified.
5. Individuals known to be COVID-19 symptomatic and those with temperature readings over 99.6 will not be allowed in the Guinn Justice Center. However, arrangements or accommodations will be made to proceed in a manner that will protect the individual and minimize any possible transmission of COVID-19.
6. Personal Protective Equipment including masks and gloves will be provided for staff screeners at the Guinn.
7. Clipboards used for questionnaires will be disinfected after each use with spray disinfectant as available in the supply chain.
8. Questionnaires will be kept for 30 days, in case they are needed for tracking purposes. A copy of the questionnaire is attached for reference.

Inmates

9. Inmates being transported from the jail to the Guinn shall be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and have their temperature taken prior to transport. Any inmate with a temperature higher than 99.6, or known to be COVID-19 symptomatic, will not be transported and the appropriate court will be notified by phone.
10. All inmates shall wear a facemask at all times while at the Guinn Justice Center.

FACE COVERINGS

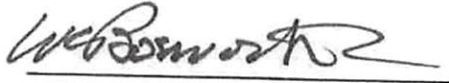
1. All individuals entering the Guinn Justice Center shall be asked and encouraged, to wear face coverings and will be encouraged to bring their face coverings with them. The Guinn Justice Center will supply disposable facemasks to the public as the supply chain allows. Judges will set any additional facemask requirements within their Courtrooms.

CLEANING

1. The Guinn Justice Center will be continuously cleaned by staff assigned to each floor. Common areas will be cleaned at least once every eight (8) hours. Court and staff offices will be cleaned at least once every twenty-four (24) hours. Additional cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will occur throughout the business day. Currently the HVAC system is being sanitized on a regular basis with ultraviolet light. Additional cleaning contractors will be used to deep clean the Courts Building. Each judge will make additional cleaning requests as needed depending on the number of individuals in their courtroom.
2. Johnson County will provide cleaning supplies, as available in the supply chain. Should additional cleaning staff be required, Judges will make the request to the Administrative Judge, who will notify Public Works of the requested additions. Johnson County shall make appropriate personal protective equipment available to cleaning staff.
3. Johnson County has ordered an electrostatic sprayer and tabs for use in cleaning all offices, restrooms, breakrooms, and public areas. The electrostatic sprayer and tabs are on order and will be utilized as the supply chain allows.

This plan was prepared with guidance from the Office of Court Administration and is generally consistent with Executive Order GA-23, which was based upon the recommendations of Texas Department of State Health Services Commissioner Dr. John Hellerstedt as well as advice from Dr. Anthony Fauci and Dr. Deborah Birx. As contained in GA-23, this plan recommends that all persons should follow the health protocols recommended by DSHS, including recommendations to reduce occupancy of buildings, practice social distancing, practice safe hygiene, and wear face coverings when possible. This plan has been created with input from Judge Sydney Hewlett, 18th District Court; Judge Wayne Bridewell, 249th District Court; Judge Robert Mayfield, County Court-at-Law No. 1; and Judge Steve McClure, County Court-at-Law No. 2. This plan has been approved by County Judge Roger Harmon and Dr. Robert H. Shaw, Chief Health Official for Johnson County.

Approved:



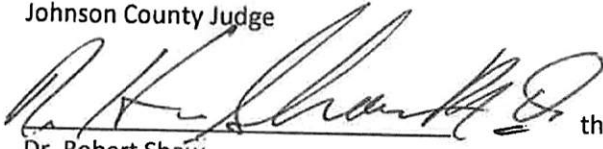
William C. Bosworth, Jr.
Johnson County Local Administrative Judge
Judge 413th Judicial District Court

this 20 day of May, 2020.



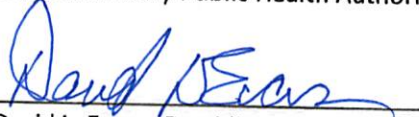
Roger Harmon
Johnson County Judge

this 20 day of May, 2020.



Dr. Robert Shaw
Johnson County Public Health Authority

this 20 day of May, 2020.



David L. Evans, Presiding Judge
Eighth Administrative Judicial Region of Texas

this 25th day of May, 2020.

**COVID-19 Operating Plan, Johnson County Judiciary
Checklist of Symptoms and Conditions**

Name _____ Temperature _____

Identifying info (driver's license, ID Card number) Phone Number

Please place an "X" beside any symptom experienced in the last 14 days:

_____ Fever

_____ Cough

_____ Shortness of breath

_____ Difficulty breathing

_____ Rash

_____ Nausea

_____ Vomiting

_____ Diarrhea

_____ Sore throat

_____ **Have you been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19?**

Please place an "X" beside any underlying health conditions:

_____ High Blood Pressure

_____ COPD

_____ Diabetes

_____ Obesity

_____ Asthma

_____ Compromised Immune System

See reverse for Spanish

COVID-19 Operating Plan, Johnson County Judiciary
Lista de verificación de síntomas y condiciones

Nombre _____ Temperatura _____

Información identificativa (licencia de conducir or ID) número de teléfono

Coloque una "X" junto a cualquier síntoma experimentado en los últimos 14 días:

_____ Fiebre

_____ tos

_____ dificultad para respirar

_____ respiración dificultosa

_____ erupción

_____ Náusea

_____ Vómitos

_____ Diarrea

_____ dolor de garganta

_____ ha estado en contacto cercano con una persona que se le confiesa tener COVID-19?

Coloque una "X" junto a cualquier condición de salud subyacentes:

_____ Hipertensión

_____ EPOC

_____ Diabetes

_____ Obesidad

_____ Asma

_____ Sistema inmunitario comprometido