

## **COVID-19 Operating Plan for Beaumont Municipal Court Reopening**

Recognizing the need to ensure the health of staff, officers of the court, visitors, judges and the public entering the Beaumont Municipal Courthouse, the court and staff will implement the following protective measures:

### **General**

1. All judges and staff will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the governor and the Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration for Courts regarding all court proceedings pertaining to social distancing, maximum group size and all other restrictions and precautions.
2. Judges and staff will use reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings and meetings remotely.
3. The Beaumont Office of Emergency Management will maintain regular communication with the mayor and local health authority and advise the court to adjust the operating plan as necessary considering the conditions in the community.
4. In person court proceedings will begin no sooner than June 1, 2020.

### **Judges and Staff Health**

1. Judges and staff who can perform essential functions of their job remotely will telework when feasible.
2. All judges and staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 100.0°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.
3. Judges and staff are encouraged to wear face coverings, practice social distancing and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations when in public areas of the courthouse.

### **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. The court and staff will include information in its communications regarding court settings notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive appropriate accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the court's website and in conspicuous locations around the court building.
3. If courthouse staff may be vulnerable, please report this to your department head. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by the court and staff as needed.

### 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 six feet. The court lobby and courtroom have been reconfigured and/or marked to help enforce social distancing guidelines.
2. The maximum number of persons permitted in the lobby and courtroom has been determined and posted. The maximum capacity of the lobby and courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
3. Courtroom seating will be limited to every other row and has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. In addition, the courtroom area beyond the bar has been configured to comply with social distancing guidelines.
4. Each publicly accessible bathroom has been evaluated to determine the appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity has been posted on each restroom door.
5. Break rooms are not open to the public. Only the courthouse lobby, courtroom and public restrooms are open to the public.

### Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the court entrance, at clerk windows and by public restrooms. Hand sanitizer is available to all court staff at their work stations.
2. Tissues have been placed at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and at each staff work station.
3. The Texas Department of State Health Services' "Stop the Spread of Germs" flyer has been posted in multiple locations in the courtroom and court lobby.

### Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, screening personnel 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, screening personnel 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 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 100.0°F will not be transported to the court building. To the greatest extent possible, inmates shall have hearings conducted remotely.
4. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including masks and gloves.

#### **Face Coverings**

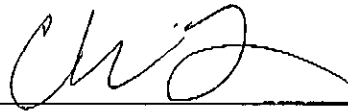
1. All individuals entering the court building are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings at all times.

#### **Cleaning**

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building during business hours so that common spaces are cleaned at least every 4 hours.
2. Judges and court staff will ensure cleaning of 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 corona virus.
4. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

I have provided a copy of this Operating Plan to all judges and court staff and have requested feedback from same. In developing this plan I have consulted with the Beaumont Office of Emergency Management which is in contact with the local health authority, the City Manager, the City Attorney and the Chief Financial Officer. I will ensure that judges and court staff covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with this plan.

Date: May 28, 2020



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Craig R. Lively, Chief Magistrate, Beaumont  
Municipal Court

*Alan Anderson* 5/29/2020