

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the City of Gilmer Municipal Court

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the building housing the court, the **Gilmer Municipal Court** will implement the following protective measures:

General

1. The judge will 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. The judge will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The Presiding Judge will maintain regular communication with the local health authority, COVID-19 Task Force and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with the conditions in the city.
4. The judge will begin hearing non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than June 10, 2020.

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. The Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: the judge and court staff will self-monitor for symptoms. Personnel have been instructed to not report to court and notify their supervisors immediately if they experience symptoms described in item 2 below. During the work day, should any personnel begin experiencing the described symptoms, they will notify their supervisors immediately so they can be allowed to leave the court building.
2. The judge or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6°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. The judge and court staff will be required to practice social distancing and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.
4. Protective Measures: Judge and court staff will wear facial masks and will be provided individual sanitizers and will be social distancing during any court proceedings from each other and from the public.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building. Dockets will be scheduled in thirty minute increments with a maximum of ten cases per docket. If the capacity of the courtroom reaches ten individuals, then parties and/or

their attorney must provide a phone number when checking in with the Bailiff and then must wait in their car or outside court building until they are called by the Bailiff.

Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over age 65 and/or 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 judge will include information on orders setting hearings, docket notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the courts' websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building (a copy of which is attached).
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by being heard in a virtual hearing, by individual appointment, or by being eligible for a continuance to a later date, not exceeding 30 days and re-evaluate at that time.

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 6 feet.
2. Each restroom has been evaluated to determine the appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity has been posted on each restroom door.
3. Public common areas, including break rooms and snack rooms, have been closed to the public.

Gallery

4. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of the courtroom has been determined and posted. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
5. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. Seating is limited to every other row.

Well

6. The courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, and clerk, bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed near the entrance to the building and the entrance to the courtroom, on each witness stand, and at each counsel tables.

2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and in the hallways.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" (in English and Spanish) has been posted in multiple locations of the court building.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the court staff and/or bailiff, first who have contact with the individual, 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 must follow the instructions of the bailiff or court staff.
2. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the first member of court staff who has contact with the individual, will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 99.6°F will be refused admittance to the court building.
3. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including face coverings, hand sanitizer, disposable gloves and tissues.

Face Coverings

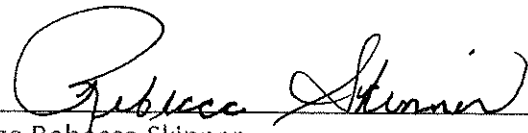
1. All individuals entering the court building for court hearings will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have face coverings, a disposable face mask will be provided.

Cleaning

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

In developing the operation plan, I consulted with the local COVID-19 Task Force, which includes the local health authority, and mayor, signatures of which is attached to this plan I will ensure that all court staffs in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan

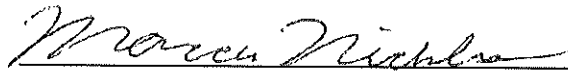
Date: June 6, 2020



Judge Rebecca Skinner
Presiding Judge
City of Gilmer



Mayor Tim Marshall
City of Gilmer



COVID-19 Task Force/Local Health Authority

NOTICE TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

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 whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy may contact the Court and have their case continued until all Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and the Court of Criminal Appeals have expired.