

## **COVID-19 OPERATING PLAN FOR THE CITY OF HUDSON OAKS JUDICIARY**

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, the judge and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the court of the City of Hudson Oaks will implement the following protective measures:

### **General**

1. The judge of the municipal court 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 judge of the municipal court will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and Mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the city.
4. The judge will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than August 18, 2020

### **Judge and Court Staff Health**

1. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: temperature check; self-evaluation of known symptoms listed in item 2, below.
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 wear face coverings while in the court room during in-person proceedings and as set forth below. The judge and court staff will practice social distancing and appropriate hygiene recommendations at all times.
4. Protective Measures: all court participants will wear masks and maintain 6-foot social distance and personal hygiene measures.

### **Scheduling**

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Dockets will be held with fewer than 10 defendants per docket; defendants will be allowed to check in at the customer service counter and then will return to and remain in their vehicle awaiting a text to come in.

### Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over the age of 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, asthma, obesity, and those whose immune system are compromised such as 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 remote hearing via zoom.

### 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.

#### *Gallery*

3. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of the courtroom has been determined and posted.
4. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. Seating is limited to one chair every 6 feet in the gallery.

#### *Well*

5. In the courtroom, the counsel table, witness stand, judge's bench, clerk, and 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 at the entrance to the building.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on judges' benches, and in the hallways.
3. The Department of State Health Services' "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in the court building.

### Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, **Bailiff or a clerk 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, **Bailiff 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. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including mask and gloves.

#### **Face Coverings**

1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a cloth face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.
3. Individuals who will be required to be in the court building for over 1 hour will be provided surgical masks and required to wear them while in the court building if the supply is available.

#### **Cleaning**

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean and sanitize the common area of the court building the day before court is scheduled.
2. Court clerk will sanitize the signature pad and computer used by defendants between each defendant.
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 the proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

Dr. Stephen Welch, the local health authority for Parker County, the Mayor and the City Administrator of Hudson Oaks have been consulted in the development of this plan and as to their approval. I will ensure that the judge of this court in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conducts proceedings consistent with the plan



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Paul Conner  
Judge of Municipal Court  
City of Hudson Oaks

Date: 6/30/2020

## **COVID-19 VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

**Please notify the Court the Court Administrator at least ONE WEEK PRIOR to your hearing if you meet any of the conditions below:**

- You are over the age of 65
- You have high blood pressure
- You have a chronic lung disease
- You have diabetes
- You have asthma
- You suffer from obesity
- You have a compromised immune system; such as chemotherapy for cancer or other condition requiring such therapy

If you meet any of the conditions listed above, you are considered part of the “Vulnerable Population” and are eligible to request a special accommodation for your hearing. **Please contact the court at 682-229-2461** (again at least one week prior to your hearing) to request any special accommodation; such as having your hearing via zoom. If you do not notify the Court in advance, we may not be able to accommodate your request at the time of court. We will do everything we can to accommodate your request to keep you safe from COVID-19.

What Steps have we already taken:

- We will be taking everyone’s temperature before they come into the building
- We will provide everyone with a mask if they do not have one
- After signing in, we will request a phone number and ask you to stay in your car until you are called

**COURT ADMINISTRATOR – 682-229-2461**