

# **COVID-19 Operating Plan for the City of Stephenville Municipal Court City Judiciary**

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 court of **Stephenville 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 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. Judge will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings June 1, 2020

## **Judge and Court Staff Health**

1. Judge and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and court staff Monitoring Requirements: Daily temperature checks several times throughout the business day.
3. Judge or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 100.4°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.
4. Judge and court staff are encouraged to wear face coverings but are not required to do so, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
5. Protective Measures: Daily deep cleaning of all areas of the building housing the municipal court, all that enter will be assessed, temperature taken and will be asked to sanitize their hands before entering the building.

## **Scheduling**

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building:  
The window is open Monday thru Friday 8am-5pm, payments are being accepted online thru the City's website as well as by phone.

## **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 Judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets 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 in conspicuous locations around the court building (a copy of which is attached).

### **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. Restrooms are one individual at a time.
3. Public common areas, including breakrooms and snackrooms, have been closed to the public.
4. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of each courtroom has been determined and posted as you enter City Hall. 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.
6. In the courtroom, the counsel tables, 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 entrances to the building, outside of the courtroom, and inside each bathroom.
2. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in multiple locations of the court building.

### **Screening**

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the receptionist 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, the receptionist will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 100.4°F will be refused admittance to the court building.
3. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will have access to personal protective equipment, including face coverings if they choose to wear them, gloves and hand sanitizer.

**Face Coverings**

1. Face coverings are encouraged but not required.

**Cleaning**

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every 12 hours.
2. Court building cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
3. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

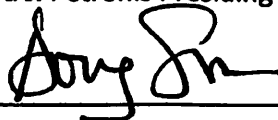
In developing this plan, I consulted with the local health authority and mayor, documentation of which is included with this plan. I will ensure that the courtroom in the city hall building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Date: 6/4/2020



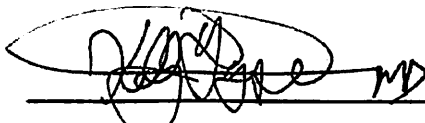
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Richard J. Petronis Presiding Judge of Municipal Court



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Doug Svien, Mayor



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Dr. Kelly S. Doggett, MD, City Health Official