

**IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF METTER**

**STATE OF GEORGIA**

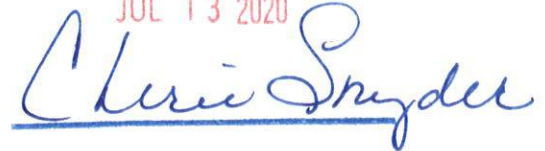
**IN RE:**

**COVID-19 EMERGENCY**

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FILED IN OFFICE  
Clerk of Court  
Metter Municipal Court

JUL 13 2020



**IN ACCORDANCE WITH** the Fourth Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency Order entered on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 by the Hon. Harold D. Melton, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia, the Municipal Court of Metter hereby adopts the following guidelines for in-court proceedings.

A. Court proceedings, remotely or in-person, shall continue in compliance with the court procedures set out herein, requirements of the United States and Georgia Constitution. Proceedings shall occur remotely unless required by law to be in person or unless it is not practicable for technical or other reasons for persons participating in the proceeding to participate remotely.

B. Directions for those who have, have been exposed to, or are especially vulnerable to, COVID-19:

1. Persons who have been diagnosed with COVID 19; who have been exposed to COVID-19 within 14 days; or who are experiencing fever or cough, should not attempt to enter the Metter Courtroom, but should call the telephone number provided with your court notice, or at the Courthouse door, to speak with someone from the Court.
2. Persons with other health limitations which make them especially vulnerable to COVID-19 are invited to call the telephone number provided with your court notice, or at the door, to speak with someone from the Court.

- C. Admissions of the Courtroom. All persons entering the Courthouse shall:
1. be screened for cough, fever and recent exposure to COVID-19.
  2. use hand sanitizer provided by security officers.
  3. wear a face mask at all times while in the public areas of the courthouse (masks will be provided at the door if needed).
  4. comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing.
- D. Movement within the Courthouse, Persons within the Courthouse, outside of the courtrooms, SHALL:
1. Stay at least six feet from all other persons (except those with whom they are related or with whom they traveled to court), to the extent practicable;
  2. Wear a face mask at all times while in the public areas of the Courthouse,
  3. Not congregate with other persons or loiter in the hallways in a way which obstructs other persons' access to the courtroom;
  4. comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing.
- E. Admissions to courtrooms. Persons entering the courtroom SHALL:
1. Sit only in designate areas of the pews;
  2. When notified that a courtroom is full, follow instructions for seating elsewhere;
  3. Wear a face mask at all times while in a courtroom or any other area of the courthouse except as exempted by the Court and while speaking to the court or testifying;
  4. Comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing;
  5. Due to the limited seating, persons with business before the Court

are encouraged not to bring nonessential person with them, especially children;

6. Anyone using pen supplied by the Court must return it as directed for cleaning;
7. To allow for distanced seating, each person shall sit in a marked space on a pew. No one shall sit in a space not marked. If available, an additional area may be available to overflow seating with spectators may observe the proceeding by live audio-video stream. Person with cases on the calendar shall be given priority for seating in the courtroom.
8. Persons in the overflow seating areas designated shall maintain order and quiet so that everyone can see and hear the proceedings.
9. Persons who have completed their business with the Court, or who simply required to sit in the overflow seating area so that persons with business with the court can be seated in the active courtroom.
10. If overflow seating is not available those with business before the court will be given a number and will be called when their case is ready.

F. Special Court Procedure:

Due to ongoing judicial emergency, the Court is employing special procedures to minimize the risk to everyone's health. To this end, we are scheduling more court sessions, with fewer cases summoned per session; seating in the courtroom will be limited to designated seats, designed to require distancing; and distancing will be enforced by Court bailiffs and Sheriff's deputies. Handling of paperwork will be kept to a minimum. Courtrooms will be sanitized between sessions.

G. Contempt of Court:

The Procedures outlined in this Order are necessary for the safe, efficient operation of the Court. Persons failing to observe these procedures may be cited for Contempt of Court.

SO ORDERED this 13<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2020.

  
HON. J. KENDAL GROSS, JUDGE  
Municipal Court of Metter