

IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT FOR THE CITY OF VILLA RICA

STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER REGARDING COURT PROCEDURES DUE TO COVID-19

PANDEMIC FOR THE MUNICIPAL COURT FOR THE CITY OF VILLA RICA

WHEREAS, Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, and Brian Kemp, the Governor of the State of Georgia, have declared a state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic;

WHEREAS, Harold D. Melton, the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, has found a State of Judicial Emergency and has issued his order directing that the Chief Judge of each court in each judicial circuit establish court policies and procedures during the pandemic to ensure public health and safety in the continued operation of all classes of courts including the provision of “comprehensive, written guidelines” that specify “who shall be admitted to the courthouse and courtroom and how public health guidance will be followed,” pursuant to the authority granted this court by OCGA Sections 38-3-61 and 38-3-62 this court issues the following Order and Policy regarding procedures to be followed at the Villa Rica Municipal Courthouse until further Order:

1. No person shall be permitted entry into the Villa Rica Courthouse who has tested positive for COVID-19 and has not subsequently been medically cleared or has symptoms thereof. Those symptoms are fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking, headaches, loss of sense of taste, loss of sense of smell or sore throat.
2. All persons within public areas and courtrooms of the Villa Rica Municipal Court must conduct themselves to remain at least six feet “socially distant” from other persons during their time at the courthouse, and the Villa Rica Police Department is directed to monitor traffic flow in and out of the courthouse and volume of persons within the public areas at all times, and if in the Chief or his officer’s discretion the number of persons is such that social distancing cannot be maintained, no further admittance will be allowed until enough persons have conducted their business and left so that social distance can be maintained.

3. The Villa Rica Municipal Court shall remain open to the public as required by the United States Constitution. However, admittance to the court shall be limited by the aforementioned limitations regarding the six feet of "social distance" at all times.
4. All persons entering the court are **strongly encouraged** to wear face shields, masks, or other coverings of the mouth and nose. These masks/coverings should be worn at all times in the courtroom as well as the public areas in proximity to the courtroom. While it is not mandatory that said masks be worn, the Villa Rica Police Department is ordered to take a "no touch" temperature check of any person not wearing a mask prior to his or her entrance into the courthouse, and to not permit the entrance of any person measuring a temperature at 100.4 degrees or more.
5. The court directs all persons to wash or sanitize their hands using personal equipment or the restrooms and sanitizer stations located in public areas upon entering the building. The court further directs ample writing pens be available so that said writing pens will not be reused by multiple people. The court directs that the City of Villa Rica is to ensure that those materials are available to the public in ample supply.
6. The court directs this Order to be prominently posed at all courthouse entrances.

SO ORDERED this 19th day of May, 2020.

MICHAEL L. HUBBARD

Chief Judge, Municipal Court of Villa Rica