

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE OGEECHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
(Bulloch, Effingham, Screven, and Jenkins Counties)

STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER ESTABLISHING OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR PROCEEDINGS
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Chief Justice Harold D. Melton entered an Order Declaring Statewide Judicial Emergency on March 14, 2020. Thereafter, Justice Melton amended and extended the Statewide Judicial Emergency until May 13, 2020. The Order was subsequently extended until June 12, 2020. Recently, Justice Melton has entered an Order extending the Statewide Judicial Emergency until August 11, 2020. In addition to extending the Judicial Emergency, the recent Order requires each Court to enter an order establishing operating guidelines that meet certain requirements.

In an effort to comply with the intent of this Order, the following protective measures will be in effect for the Superior Courts of the Ogeechee Judicial Circuit until otherwise modified or removed:


1. All persons entering the courthouse shall abide by Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidelines as promulgated by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), the Georgia Department of Public Health (“DPH”), and the local governing authority.
2. All persons entering the courthouse are strongly encouraged to utilize personal protective equipment (“PPE”) in accordance with CDC and DPH guidelines. PPE includes face masks, face shields, gloves, and other equipment designed to limit the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).
3. Courtroom seating shall be spaced out to allow a minimum of 6 feet of space between each individual.
4. Hand sanitizer dispensers shall be placed near high traffic areas throughout the courthouse.

5. No individual actively infected with Coronavirus (COVID-19), as determined by diagnosis or positive test, will be allowed to enter the courthouse.
6. No person who knows that they have had contact, within the previous 14 days, with an individual who has tested positive for Coronavirus (COVID-19) shall be allowed to enter the courthouse.
7. Any individual who works in a court facility who is known or suspected to have COVID-19 shall immediately be isolated. Additionally, any individual who has been exposed to COVID-19 such that infection is likely, shall be quarantined in accordance with the DPH Seventh Amended Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures, a copy of which is attached to this Order.
8. All persons entering the courthouse shall be subject to a health screening by security personnel which may include the use of equipment to obtain no-contact body temperature readings.
9. All persons entering the courthouse should refrain from any physical contact with other individuals, including hand shakes, elbow bumps, or any other such physical greeting or gesture. Additionally, to the extent possible all individuals are strongly encouraged to limit physical contact with doors or other surfaces.
10. To the extent practicable, any individuals seeking to utilize the elevator system in the courthouse should do so one at a time. In no instance should several individuals utilize the elevator at the same time.
11. In the event that there is reason to believe that anyone who works or has visited a court facility has been exposed to COVID-19, DPH or the local health department shall be notified, and notification of persons who may

have been exposed shall occur as directed by DPH or the local health department.

12. No grand jury proceedings or jury trials will be conducted until further notice.
13. Video conferencing will be used as much as reasonably possible to limit the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19).
14. Criminal matters involving Defendants currently in custody will be heard via video conferencing technology. Criminal matters involving Defendants not in custody will be heard in the courtroom with proper spacing and all aforementioned safety measures in place.
15. Domestic and other civil matters will be heard via video conferencing technology where possible.
16. The scheduling of all in-court hearings will be time-spaced in order to maintain proper physical distancing.
17. In the event that the State or a local governing authority adopts additional or stricter requirements, said requirements shall take precedence over those set forth herein.
18. This Order modifies the requirements set forth in the Court's Order for the Safe Resumption of In-Court Proceedings During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic that was entered in May 2020.

SO ORDERED this 14 day of July, 2020.



F. GATES PEED
Chief Judge
Ogeechee Judicial Circuit



**STATE OF GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SEVENTH AMENDED¹ ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROL MEASURES**

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, Governor Brian P. Kemp issued Executive Order 03.14.20.01, declaring a Public Health State of Emergency in Georgia due to the impact of Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the Georgia General Assembly concurred with Executive Order 03.14.20.01 by joint resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Public Health State of Emergency has been extended through and including July 12, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) recommends that all states and territories implement aggressive measures to slow and contain transmission of COVID-19 in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the number of cases of COVID-19 in the state of Georgia continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 presents a severe threat to public health in Georgia; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a severe respiratory disease that is transmitted primarily through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes; and

WHEREAS, although the vast majority of Georgians are complying with public health recommendations and guidance for the isolation of persons with symptoms of COVID-19, I have received reliable reports that a small number of persons may be behaving in a way that contributes to the spread of this disease in the community; and

WHEREAS, I have determined that it is necessary and appropriate to require persons who:

- have received a positive lab-confirmed test for COVID-19, or
- are suspected to have COVID-19 based on symptoms recognized by the CDC, or
- have been in close contact with a person with known or suspected COVID-19

to isolate or quarantine themselves at home, in order to slow the spread of COVID-19, reduce the number of people who will become infected, and avoid unnecessary strain on Georgia’s healthcare system.

¹ This Fourth Amended Administrative Order amends and supersedes the prior Orders issued on March 21 and 23, April 3 and 15, May 5 and 12, and June 2, 2020.



NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 31-2A-4(4) and 31-12-4, Chapter 511-9-1 of the Rules of the Georgia Department of Public Health (“Department”), and Governor Kemp’s Executive Orders,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED as follows:

Isolation

1. *Persons With Known COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or clinical laboratory of a positive laboratory-confirmed test for COVID-19, the person testing positive for COVID-19 shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department.
2. *Persons With Suspected COVID-19.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider or public health official that COVID-19 infection is diagnosed or suspected based on symptoms, the person with suspected COVID-19 infection shall immediately isolate himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department. As of the date of this Order, the CDC recognizes the following symptoms of COVID-19 infection: fever (a measured temperature over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.
3. Each isolated person shall avoid unnecessary physical contact with any and all persons and shall comply fully with the Isolation Protocol attached to this Order, which may be updated from time to time based on CDC guidance.
4. Each isolated person shall remain in isolation until such time as he or she no longer presents a risk of infection to the public, as determined by the Isolation Protocol then in effect. As of the date of this Administrative Order, the Isolation Protocol requires an isolated person to remain in isolation until either:
 - the person’s fever has been gone for at least seventy-two (72) hours, without taking fever-reducing medication, and
 - the person’s other symptoms have shown progressive improvement, and
 - at least ten (10) days have elapsed from the date symptoms began,

or

 - for a person who was placed under home isolation due to a laboratory-confirmed positive test result, but who has



experienced no symptoms of COVID-19, until at least ten (10) days have elapsed since the date of the person's first positive diagnostic test.

5. Isolated persons should monitor their symptoms and seek prompt medical attention if worsening symptoms develop, as instructed in the Isolation Protocol. An exception to the requirement for isolation applies in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or natural disaster, or if the person's health condition worsens and he or she requires treatment in a healthcare facility.
6. Each isolated person shall cooperate with state and local public health personnel by answering questions as necessary to identify and locate those persons with whom the isolated person has been in close contact (within six (6) feet for fifteen (15) minutes or more) beginning two (2) days before symptoms began or, for isolated persons who have experienced no symptoms of COVID-19, beginning two (2) days before the test sample was obtained. If requested by public health personnel, the isolated person shall provide a list of the locations visited by the isolated person during the time frame that he or she may have been able to transmit the disease.

Quarantine

7. *Persons With COVID-19 Exposure Likely to Result in Infection.* Upon notification by a healthcare provider, public health official, or isolated person of exposure to COVID-19 based on close contact (within six (6) feet for fifteen (15) minutes or more) with a person who must be isolated as provided herein, the person so exposed shall immediately quarantine himself or herself at home or another location approved by the Department.
8. Each quarantined person shall remain at home or in the approved quarantine location for a period of fourteen (14) days from the person's last known exposure to COVID-19. An exception to the requirement for quarantine applies in the event of an emergency, such as a fire or natural disaster, or if the person requires treatment in a healthcare facility. Health care providers, emergency medical services workers, first responders, and other critical infrastructure workers may continue to work, in consultation with their workplace occupational health program and if necessary to ensure adequate staffing, so long as they are asymptomatic, don masks while on duty, and comply with all other quarantine requirements for the duration of the fourteen (14) day period.
9. During the period of quarantine, the quarantined person shall take his or her temperature twice per day and monitor any symptoms of respiratory illness. If at any time the quarantined person experiences symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever (a measured temperature

over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or a feeling of feverishness), chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, the quarantined person shall be considered a person with suspected COVID-19 and shall follow the requirements for isolation set forth above.

Staff members of the Department remain available at 866-PUB-HLTH (866-782-4584) to provide assistance and counseling to persons subject to this Administrative Order concerning their illness or exposure and their compliance with this Order. During the period of isolation or quarantine, the ability of persons subject to this Order to communicate with others outside the isolation or quarantine site, including their ability to exchange confidential communications with legal and medical advisors of their own choosing, will be preserved and facilitated to the extent possible without jeopardizing the integrity of the isolation or quarantine.

Failure to comply with this Order is a misdemeanor offense pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 31-5-8. If the Department has reasonable grounds to believe that a person subject to quarantine or isolation refuses to comply with the requirements of this Order, the Department may provide information to law enforcement as necessary to ensure compliance and facilitate criminal prosecution.

Further, any person who refuses to isolate or quarantine himself or herself as required by this Order may be subject to such further action as may be necessary to protect the public's health.

This Administrative Order shall remain in effect for thirty (30) days following the end of the Public Health State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 03.14.20.01 and as extended thereafter.

SO ORDERED, this 16th day of June, 2020.

Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner
State Health Officer

Attachment:

Georgia Department of Public Health Isolation Protocol