

**IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF RINCON
STATE OF GEORGIA**

**ORDER ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS DURING JUDICIAL
EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS on March 14, 2020 the Honorable Harold D. Melton, Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court issued an Order declaring a statewide judicial emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 38-3-61, which Order has since been extended twice, and

WHEREAS it has become necessary for various courts of the State of Georgia to establish protocols and procedures to be exercised during court proceedings during said pandemic emergency,

NOW THEREFORE this Court hereby enters this Order which shall remain in effect until further Order.

1. Upon arrival at the Courthouse, all persons attending Court shall be greeted by representatives of the Rincon Police Department who shall take each person's temperature using a remote thermometer and shall ask health and recent activity questions, which shall be answered honestly.
2. If any person has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher, or answers any of the health questions with an answer placing that person at risk, entrance to the courthouse and courtroom shall be denied and that person shall be furnished with contact information for the Clerk of the Court in order to reschedule any proceedings in which they are involved. Police personnel shall also notify the Court of all persons denied entry.

3. Face masks may be worn while inside the court building and during all court proceedings, and the wearing of such face masks is encouraged, but is not required. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrance and in the courtroom, for so long as supplies are available.
4. Social distancing of at least six (6) feet shall be maintained at all times, and the Rincon Police Department will assist with such spacing by directing people to honor such spacing as well as by visible marks placed on the floor.
5. Each person having a court proceeding shall first see the Solicitor in the lobby area, and after speaking to the Solicitor, if the case cannot be resolved, then that person shall notify one of the Police Officers present in the lobby that he or she needs to enter the courtroom, and as soon as social distancing shall permit, that person shall be permitted entry into the courtroom.
6. All persons inside the courtroom shall stand only on the marked areas of the floor so as to maintain social distancing.
7. Only the parties themselves, counsel and witnesses shall enter the courtroom or any adjacent areas. Any defendant under the age of 21 years may be accompanied by one parent or other guardian.
8. All persons who are members of a vulnerable population, such as persons over 65, persons with serious underlying health issues, and other serious conditions are encouraged to bring such conditions to the attention to the Court Clerk prior to any court appearance so that reasonable alternatives may be offered to such person.

9. All persons who have health conditions or problems which prevent their standing in any staging or waiting area shall immediately notify one of the Police Officers in the lobby so that a chair or additional accommodation may be furnished.
10. The Clerk of the Court is directed to post this Order at the entrance to the Courthouse as well as on the Court's website.

SO ORDERED this 7th day of July, 2020.



Judge Ray C. Smith
Rincon Municipal Court