

ORIGINAL



FILED

JUL 24 2020

Tammy M. Howard, Clerk
Superior & State Court
Douglas County, GA

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DOUGLAS COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER REGARDING COURT PROCEDURES DUE TO COVID-19
PANDEMIC FOR THE DOUGLAS JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

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 several orders the most recent of which was July 12, 2020 directing that the Chief Judge of each Superior Court in each judicial circuit to 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," and including quarantine requirements for persons who work in court buildings who are positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed with risk of

infection; 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 Douglas County Courthouse until further Order:

1. No person shall be permitted entry into the Douglas County 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, headache, loss of sense of taste, loss of sense of smell or sore throat.

2. No person shall be permitted entry into the Douglas County Courthouse at any manned security station who is not wearing a protective face covering such as a surgical mask, cloth, bandanna, scarf or other covering over their nose and mouth, which must be worn at all times in courtrooms and public areas. Once any person has left a public area of the courthouse and entered the office of any government official within the building, being a visitor or staff member, it is within the discretion of that elected official or department head to require or not require face coverings and other health related procedures within

those offices.

3. The Sheriff of Douglas County is directed to refuse admittance to the courthouse to persons who are unwilling to comply with these directions and document that said person was turned away on a form provided by the court if that person had court related business at that time. The Sheriff is further directed to temperature scan each person seeking entry into the courthouse and refuse admittance to anyone who has a temperature at 100.4 degrees or more. It shall be the responsibility of each department head to temperature check their staff upon entry to the work place.

4. All persons within public areas and courtrooms of the Douglas County Courthouse must conduct themselves to remain at least six feet "socially distant" from other persons during their time at the courthouse, and the Sheriff 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 Sheriff or his deputy'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

5. The respective Judges of the Superior, State, Magistrate, Juvenile, and Probate Courts of this Circuit should conduct all court proceedings when practical via videoconference. When it is not practical to conduct a court proceeding by videoconference, the courts have discretion to conduct in person court proceedings, but must limit the number of persons admitted to the courtroom to maintain 6 foot social distancing at all times while at the same time allowing the public to attend court. This will require each court to stagger court proceedings. All persons inside courtrooms shall be required to wear a face covering with the exception of the judge if the judge is on the bench at a distance from the participants.
6. If any class of court plans a court day where there will be a high volume of participants, the Chief Judge of that Court will be required to obtain the approval of the Chief Judge of the Superior Court of this Judicial Circuit before doing so. It will be necessary to do this to give the other courts an opportunity to defer their proceedings to accommodate the needs of that court on that particular day to accomplish the social distancing required by this Order.

7. 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 and the court directs that the County Board of Commissioners is to ensure that these materials are available to the public in ample supply.
8. Any person who works at the Douglas County Courthouse who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has had "close contact" with a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19 shall not report to work; shall quarantine until medically cleared; shall notify the Chief Judge of their status; and in turn, the Chief Judge shall notify Cobb Douglas Public Health of this event. Close contact is defined as being within six feet of an infected or suspected to be infected person for a total period of at least 15 minutes over the course of a 24-hour day.
9. The court directs this Order to be prominently posted at all courthouse entrances; provided to all attorneys in the local bar by electronic means; posted on the Douglas County website; published prominently in the Douglas County Sentinel at the expense of Douglas County; submitted to the Supreme Court of Georgia electronically;

and, this order shall be enforced by the contempt powers
of the Court.

SO ORDERED this July 21, 2020.

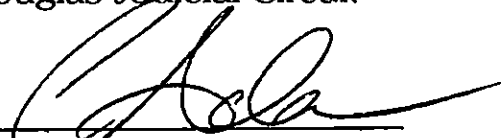


DAVID T. EMERSON
Chief Judge
Superior Court
Douglas Judicial Circuit

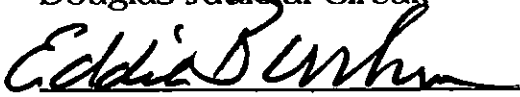
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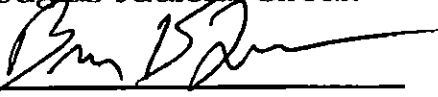
WILLIAM H. MCCLAIN
Judge Superior Court
Douglas Judicial Circuit



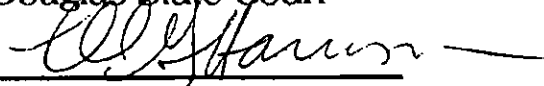
CYNTHIA C. ADAMS
Judge Superior Court
Douglas Judicial Circuit



EDDIE BARKER
Chief Judge
Douglas State Court



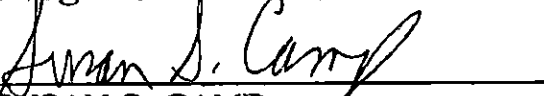
BRIAN K. FORTNER
Judge
Douglas State Court



MICHELLE HARRISON
Chief Judge
Douglas Juvenile Court



TALIA NURSE
Judge
Douglas Juvenile Court



SUSAN S. CAMP
Chief Judge
Douglas County Magistrate Court



BARBARA CALDWELL
Judge
Douglas County Magistrate Court

Not available

HAL HAMRICK
Chief Judge
Douglas Probate Court