

IN THE SUPERIOR AND STATE COURTS OF ROCKDALE COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

**In Re: Declaration of Covid-19 Petit *
Jury Protocol**

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PETIT JURY GUIDELINES

On September 29, 2020, the following individuals met to develop detailed guidelines for the safe resumption of grand jury proceedings: Robert F. Mumford, Judge, Rockdale County Superior Court; Nancy Bills, Judge, Rockdale County State Court; Alisha Johnson, Rockdale County District Attorney; James F. Cabe, Rockdale County Clerk of Superior and State Court; Charles Gasner, Chief Assistant Public Defender; Lieutenant Dexter Harris, Rockdale County Sheriff's Department Court Services; Captain Tom Brewer, Rockdale County Sheriff's Department Judicial Services; and Andrew Hammer, Rockdale County Deputy Director of Recreation and Maintenance. During such meeting the following guidelines were adopted:

1. Petit Jurors will be summoned by the Clerk of the Superior Court for January 2021 unless there is an increase in COVID-19 cases and it is determined based on the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control ("CDC") that Petit Jurors cannot be safely summoned.

2. Petit Jurors shall be summoned in a manner to ensure that an appropriate social distancing of six feet can be maintained at all times. This may result in potential Petit Jurors being summoned for multiple days during the week as opposed to all Petit Jurors being summoned for a single day. Jury trial schedules for the various courts will have to be adjusted to accommodate this new schedule for summoning Petit Jurors.
3. Prior to the selection of jurors, potential Petit Jurors will be directed to the Rockdale County Auditorium located at 903 Main Street, Conyers, Georgia for orientation.
4. Petit Jurors will enter the Rockdale County Auditorium through the front door located on Main Street.
5. Petit Jurors and courthouse staff (and all other individuals entering any part of the courthouse facility) will be required to wear a face mask that covers the mouth and nose and maintain a social distance of six feet from each other at all times.
6. Hand Sanitizer will be available at the entrance door to the auditorium, courthouse and outside each courtroom door.
7. The Rockdale County Sheriff's Department will provide extra security to ensure the safety of Petit Jurors and staff.
8. The Clerk of the Rockdale County Superior and State Court shall excuse any Petit Jurors who requests to be excused due to a statutory exemption and shall defer on a case by case basis Petit Jurors who have COVID-19 fears, are considered a "vulnerable person" as defined by the CDC, and/or have child care/virtual learning concerns.
9. The staff members of the Clerk of the Superior and State Court's office will pre-screen by telephone each Petit Juror prior to his or her arrival at the Courthouse for Covid-19 symptoms using questions set forth by the CDC as follows:

- a. Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the past 48 hours:
- Fever or chills
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Fatigue
 - Headache
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Congestion or runny nose
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- b. Within the past 14 days, have you been in close physical contact (6 feet or closer for at least 15 minutes) with a person who is known to have laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or with anyone who has any symptoms consistent with COVID-19?
- c. Are you isolating or quarantining because you may have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 or worried that you may be sick with COVID-19?
- d. Are you currently waiting on the results of a COVID-19 test?

If the answer to any of these questions is “yes” the potential Petit Juror shall be deferred to the next petit jury session and directed not to report.

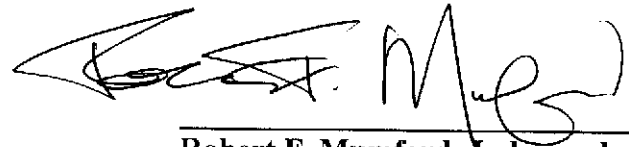
10. Prior to entering each morning and after each lunch break, the temperature of each Petit Juror will be taken and the questions set out in the preceding paragraph shall be asked of each Petit Juror. If the Petit Juror has symptoms of a fever or answers “yes” to any of

the questions the Petit Juror shall be excused if not serving on a case. If such Petit Juror has been selected to serve on a specific case, the Petit Juror shall be isolated away from the other Petit Jurors and any other individuals and the Judge presiding over the case shall be immediately notified.

11. Any area that a symptomatic individual has been in contact with shall be immediately sanitized thoroughly.
12. On the first day of petit juror are summoned to appear, staff of the Rockdale County Clerk of Superior and State Court will be available in the parking lot to direct Petit Jurors to the correct location to prevent Petit Jurors from going to the entry doors of the courthouse.
13. Face masks, hand sanitizer, and disposable gloves shall be made available.
14. Single-use notebooks and writing instruments will be on hand for Petit Jurors use.
15. Petit Juror voir dire shall take place in a courtroom that is large enough to allow for appropriate social distancing. If necessary, potential Petit Jurors shall be brought into the courtroom in small groups to allow for proper social distancing.
16. Jurors who are selected to hear a case shall be seated in the courtroom with at least six feet between each juror. Jurors shall be informed to return to their specific seat after any breaks in the proceedings.
17. If the juror room for the courtroom is not large enough to allow for proper social distancing, juror deliberations shall take place in the courtroom or other location that allows for proper social distancing of jurors. Such alternate area shall be closed to anyone but the jurors and all audio and video devices in such areas shall be turned off during juror deliberations.

18. On breaks, Petit Jurors shall be excused from the courtroom on a staggered basis to ensure social distancing can occur in the hallway and restroom facilities.
19. If the Court becomes aware that a Petit Juror, courthouse staff, witness or visitor has tested positive for COVID-19, the Court will notify all individuals who had close contact (as defined by the CDC) with such individual of their potential exposure by email or telephone. The name of the individual who tested positive for COVID-19 shall **NOT** be disclosed.
20. Courtroom proceedings shall remain open to the public at all times. Visitors shall have their temperature taken prior to their entry into the courthouse. Any visitor with an elevated temperature or symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness shall not be admitted.
21. Visitors in the courtroom shall be seated so that they have no contact with jurors and shall maintain a six foot distance from each other at all times.
22. If there are more visitors than the courtroom can accommodate while enforcing appropriate social distancing guidelines, alternative viewing areas shall be designated that has video access to the courtroom proceedings.
23. Family members and victims and their families shall be given priority to courtroom seating.
24. Individuals shall not be allowed to congregate in common areas while waiting to access to the courtroom.
25. Witnesses should be staggered so that witnesses who are waiting to be called to testify can maintain six feet social distancing. While testifying, witnesses may remove their facial mask and wear a face shield so that the Petit Jurors can better evaluate demeanor.
26. Courtrooms and common areas in the courthouse shall be cleaned on a daily basis.

SO ORDERED this 12th day of October, 20 , at Conyers, Georgia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert F. Mumford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R" and "M".

**Robert F. Mumford, Judge and
Chairman of the Local Committee for
Jury Trial Guidelines
Rockdale County Superior Court,
Rockdale Judicial Circuit**