

COVID TRIAL/GRAND JURY WHITE COUNTY RESTART COMMITTEE

OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES:

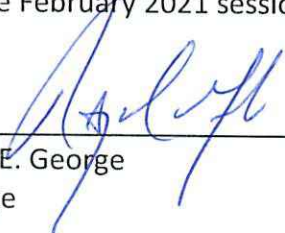
Meeting Date: November 3, 2020

Present via ZOOM: Raymond George, Chief Superior Court Judge – Presiding
T. Buckley Levins, Superior Court Judge
Dena Adams – Clerk of Superior Court
Neal Walden - Sheriff
Rick Kelley – Sheriff elect
Steve Ferrell, DCA
Jeff Langley – District Attorney
Corey Hyde – Magistrate Judge
Melissa Jackson – Judicial Assistant (Judge Joy Parks)
Justin Ussery – Assistant Chief – CSO
Heather Wheeler – Judicial Assistant (Judge Jeremy Clough)
Jennifer Vandiver – Judicial Assistant (Judge Buck Levins)

Pursuant to discussions, agreements and directions the following procedures will be followed to facilitate the reconvening of Grand Juries in White County. The first Grand Jury Session is scheduled for February 8, 2021. Presently the District Attorney's office is reporting that they have 88 cases in White County to be presented to a Grand Jury.

1. The main courtroom will be used for the Grand Jury.
2. The Courtroom will be prepared by WCSO – Court Security by marking designated seating in keeping with the CDC guidelines for social distancing
3. The Clerk of Court will send out jury summons no later than November 20, 2020. These summonses shall include an additional questionnaire regarding COVID. (see exhibit A attached).
4. All Jurors, District Attorney & Staff, Bailiffs. the presiding Judge and the Clerk of Court and Staff shall be required to wear a mask at all times, while in the Courthouse. Those without a mask will be provided one.
5. Juror report will be staggered: 34 to report at 9am, 34 to report at 11am, 34 to report at 1pm and 34 to report at 3pm. If a full panel of 23 and 2 alternates (total 25) has not been seated then an additional 34 shall report at 4:30pm. The 4:30 group will be directed to call the jury information line to determine if their report is necessary. If not, they will be excused.
6. All summoned jurors will be instructed to call the jury information line after 6pm to determine if they have been selected to the Grand Jury panel. Those selected will report to the White County Courthouse at 9am on February 9, 2021 to begin their duties.

7. Juror Check-in: A designated Bailiff will be positioned at the security post at the front door. Said Bailiff shall have court authority to excuse any juror that presents with a fever of 100.4 or higher. Said Bailiff shall also complete a juror excusal form. (see exhibit B attached). This form will also be prepared if the Courtroom has reached max capacity and a potential jury is turned away for that reason. All completed forms will be given to the presiding Judge.
8. Between the voire dire of each panel the courtroom will be fogged or wiped down with CDC approved disinfectant by Courthouse Staff and Bailiffs.
9. Temperature screening, mask wearing, and social distancing shall be adhered to during the duration of Grand Jury appearance.
10. The District Attorney's Office will keep witnesses in the hallway of the DA's office. Once their testimony is completed, they will exit the room by the side door near the District Attorney Office.
11. No facility inspections will be conducted during the February 2021 session of the Grand Jury.



Raymond E. George
Chief Judge

COVID-19 Juror Questionnaire

Name:	
Phone:	
Email:	
1. Are you over the age of 65?	
2. Do you have any serious underlying medical conditions such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, severe asthma, severe heart disease, or cancer?	
3. Are you or have you recently undergone chemotherapy or another medical treatment that has caused your immune system to be compromised?	
4. Do you live with or care for someone considered to be at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19? Anyone who would answer "yes" to questions 1-3 above might be at increased risk.	
5. Are you requesting to defer your jury service to a later date because of answering "yes" to any of the above questions?	

Additionally, on the day of service, you will be screened at the courthouse entrance and asked the following questions:

1. Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19, or been in contact over the last 14 days with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or been concerned for any reason that you may have been exposed or infected with COVID-19?
2. Are you currently experiencing any cough, difficulty breathing, or fever above 100.4 degrees, or have you experienced any such symptoms in the last three days?

If your answer is yes to either question *on the day of your service*, you should call the Clerk of Courts office immediately to request a deferral. Failing to appear without justifiable cause may place you in contempt of court.

Exhibit A

_____ County Superior Court
State of Georgia

RE: _____, Summoned juror

On _____ (Date) at
_____ (Time) the above named juror entered the Courthouse.
In accordance with set procedure, said juror was temperature screened.

A reading of ____ ____ degrees was shown.

Based on the temperature reading. The juror was excused from service by

____ The Court designated Baliff _____

Name

And Or (Circle one or Both)

____ The presiding Superior Court Judge. _____

Name

Exhibit B