

MUNICIPAL COURT OF NICHOLSON

P. O. Box 365
Nicholson, Georgia 30565
706-757-3408

Nicholson Municipal Court – Guidelines

As provided for by the Second Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency entered by the Supreme Court of Georgia on May 11, 2020 and Section IV of the Third Order Extending Declaration of Statewide Judicial Emergency entered by the Supreme Court of Georgia on June 12, 2020, the City of Nicholson Municipal Court will move forward with regularly scheduled court hearings beginning on October 15th, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic having greatly affected daily life, new procedures are required to comply with social distancing and other public health requirements to safeguard the health of litigants, lawyers, judges, court personnel, and the public during in-court proceedings.

The following procedures and guidelines, in effect until further notice, are not designed for inconvenience, but rather to ensure that matters are handled safely, effectively, and efficiently:

1. Do not bring any non-essential members (e.g., children, spouses, other family members, friends, etc.) to court.
2. Contact the court clerk (cityadmin@nicholson-ga.com; 706-757-3408) about your scheduled court date **immediately** so that your Court date can be reset or other arrangements can be made if:
 - a. You are a person subject to Section III of Executive Order 04.23.20.02 titled “Sheltering in Place” (<https://gov.georgia.gov/document/2020-executive-order/04232002/download>), as extended by the Governor of the State of Georgia on April 30, 2020, in Executive Order 04.30.20.01 (<https://gov.georgia.gov/document/2020-executive-order/04302001/download>), as extended by the Governor of the State of Georgia on May 28 2020, in Executive Order 05.28.20.01 (<https://gov.georgia.gov/document/2020-executive-order/05282001/download>), as extended by the Governor of the State of Georgia on June 29, 2020, in Executive Order 06.29.20.01 (<https://gov.georgia.gov/document/2020-executive-order/06292001/download>).
 - b. You have small children and do not have childcare.
 - c. You or anyone you have been in contact with has a fever, sore throat, congestion, or any other symptom of COVID-19 in the last fourteen days.

- d. You do not feel comfortable attending court in person for **any** reason and wish to postpone your court date or seek to resolve your case without appearing in person.
3. Defendants under 21 years of age may have one parent or their legal guardian attend the court hearing with them.
4. **ALL** litigants, lawyers, judges, court personnel, and the public will be required to wear a face mask. **PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN FACEMASK.** If you do not have one, one will be provided.
5. Upon arrival to the building and parking lot housing the City of Nicholson Municipal Court:
 - a. Park
 - b. There will be a check-in area at the front door to notify the court that you have arrived. Temperature scans and questions will be asked before people will be admitted into the building. The courtroom will be set up to permit social distancing. Hand sanitizer will be available.
6. The courtroom and common areas will be measured out to reflect 6' social distancing marks. An officer will also be present to direct you of the procedures that will be taking place. Pay close attention to the officer's directions and adhere to the signs and markings that will be set in place.
7. Everyone's temperature will be taken before entering the building and will be asked screening questions. When screened, anyone who registers a fever of 100.4 degrees, or higher, will be refused admission and will be given documentation regarding a new court date.
8. Once inside the building, follow the directions given by the officer regarding the procedures that you must follow inside of the courtroom.

The courtroom will remain open to the public as required by law. The above guidelines are intended to be in compliance with public health guidance and with the requirements of the United States and Georgia constitutions and applicable statutes and court rules. These guidelines are intended to allow for the business of the court to proceed through the practice of social distancing and other habits to reduce the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Prior to your court date and every day thereafter, please remember: to practice social distancing (specifically, staying 6 feet away from others when you must go into a shared space); frequently wash your hands or use alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer when

soap and water are not available; wear face coverings (mask or cloth); avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; stay home when sick; and avoid frequently touched objects and surfaces.