



TO: Judicial Council

FROM: Chief Justice Melton

Date: May 19, 2021

RE: Recent CDC Guidance

On Thursday, May 13, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated its public health guidance for individuals who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. The CDC's guidance for sensitive settings more comparable to court operations, however, has not yet been revised. Because litigants, lawyers, witnesses, jurors, and other participants in judicial proceedings are often compelled to come to court rather than attending voluntarily, courts should be cautious about changing COVID-19 safety protocols for in-court proceedings until the CDC issues updated guidance more directly applicable to such activities. It appears likely that such updated guidance will issue soon. The Judicial COVID-19 Task Force is monitoring the CDC guidance, and courts may also ask their local committees of judicial system participants to consider whether new public health guidance should affect the court's specific operating guidelines for in-court proceedings.