

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JURISDICTION  
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION  
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION  
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 27B  
PROSECUTORIAL DISTRICT 39

COUNTY OF CLEVELAND  
COUNTY OF LINCOLN

Cleveland County Record No. 20-R-179

Lincoln County Record No. 20-R-45

IN RE: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) )  
 )  
Facial Mask/Covering Requirements in )  
All Court Facilities )  
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**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**  
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

NOW COMES the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and Chief District Court Judge for Judicial District 27B who HEREBY ENTERS the following ***Administrative Order Concerning Facial Mask/Covering Requirements in All Court Facilities*** related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

IT APPEARING TO THE COURT that Chief Justice Cheri Beasley of the North Carolina Supreme Court declared in her March 13, 2020 order and subsequent orders, that under N.C.G.S. §7A-39(b)(2) that catastrophic conditions exist in all counties within the State of North Carolina.

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE COURT that on June 24, 2020, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper signed an Executive Order which requires people within the State of North Carolina to wear facial coverings in certain settings in order to decrease the spread of COVID-19 and highly encourages all state government agencies to adopt similar requirements.

WHEREAS local courts within the State of North Carolina began gradually reinstating in-person court proceedings and since that time, many court personnel have contracted COVID-19, forcing many court facilities to temporarily close so that facilities could be thoroughly sanitized and allow time for court personnel who are at risk of exposure to be tested.

IT APPEARING TO THE COURT that if more in-person court proceedings are to continue in greater number, it is vital that all available tools be utilized to limit any possible transmission of the virus.

WHEREAS Emergency Directive 21 entered on July 16, 2020 by Chief Justice Beasley, orders:

*“All persons who are in a court facility are required to wear a face covering while they are in common areas of the facility and when they are interacting with others.*

*For purposes of this emergency directive, a “face covering” means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is simply wrapped around the lower face.*

*This face-covering requirement does not apply to persons who cannot wear a face covering due to health or safety reasons, who are actively eating or drinking, who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible, who are temporarily removing their face covering to secure medical services or for identification purposes, or who are under eleven years of age.*

*The clerks of superior court shall post a notice of this requirement at the entrance to every court facility in their counties.”*

IN CARRYING OUT THIS EMERGENCY DIRECTIVE, the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and Chief District Court Judge enter the following ***Administrative Order concerning Facial Mask/Covering Requirements in All Court Facilities*** as it relates to the local court operations of Judicial District 27B and the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

PURSUANT to Emergency Directive 21 entered on July 16, 2020 by Chief Justice Beasley, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED:

1. All persons, including but not limited to elected officials, court personnel, litigants, witnesses, attorneys, law enforcement officers, probation officers, parcel delivery service workers who may enter any court facility (including designated alternate facilities) shall be required to wear a face covering while in any common area of the court facility and when there is interaction with others.
2. For purposes of transparency, a “face covering” shall be defined as a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face.
3. This face covering requirement does not apply to any entity who is unable to wear a face covering due to health or safety reasons, who are actively eating or drinking, who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible, who are temporarily removing their face covering to secure medical services for identification or temperature taking purposes, or who are under eleven (11) years of age.
4. The Clerk of Superior Court shall post a notice of this requirement at the entrance to every court facility in their counties.
5. Individuals who attempt to enter any court facility within this Judicial District without a facial covering will be provided a surgical mask when such PPE is available.
6. At any point during any court proceeding an individual finds that they are unable to be understood or heard during the proceeding, it will be in the discretion of each presiding judge of that courtroom to decide if the facial covering should be removed for such purpose.
7. The Office of the Sheriff for each county within Judicial District 27B shall have sole authority of the enforcement of this order. Any individual who refuses to wear a mask who does not fall under the terms of Rule 3 of this order shall be removed from the facility immediately.

THIS ORDER IS HEREBY ENTERED with the intent of protecting the health and well-being of the citizens of both Cleveland and Lincoln Counties while providing orderly access to our Judicial System.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Administrative Order shall be in addition to all previous Administrative Orders entered concerning the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and shall expire when all Emergency Directives entered by the Chief Justice expire or upon further order of the Court.

Signed this the 16<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2020.

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Forrest D. Bridges  
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge  
Judicial District 27B

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Larry J. Wilson  
Chief District Court Judge  
Judicial District 27B

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W. Todd Pomeroy  
Resident Superior Court Judge  
Judicial District 27B