

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 20-3

COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS FACILITY SEATING, MAXIMUM CAPACITY AND CLEANING

NOW COMES the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and enters this Administrative Order concerning Court operations.

IT APPEARING TO THE COURT that the Chief Justice has declared that catastrophic conditions exist in all North Carolina counties. Although the Superior Court will remain open for business, the normal operation of the court will change to contain Emergency Directives to reduce the spread of infection.

This Administrative Order is in addition to all previous Orders.

WHEREAS, on May 21, 2020, the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court issued updated Emergency Directives, and specifically entered Emergency Directive 11 and 12 regarding duties of the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge;

WHEREAS, Emergency Directive 11 appoints each Senior Resident Superior Court Judge as the designated COVID-19 Coordinator. Emergency Directive 12 directs each Senior Resident Superior Court Judge to undertake certain protective activities including courtroom spacing, maximum allowable occupancy, and posting of such information;

WHEREAS, Emergency Directive 12 requires at the minimum, the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge to ensure that hand sanitizer is available at the entry and exit of each facility and preferably, at all high touch areas of the facility including doorways, service counters, stairwells, and elevators;

WHEREAS, Emergency Directive 12 also requires the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge to ensure that all areas accessed by the public are cleaned daily, with high touch areas cleaned periodically throughout the day;

WHEREAS, in order to implement the requirements of Emergency Directives 11 and 12, the Court hereby enters the following Administrative Order:

1. That the terms and requirements of Emergency Directive 11 and Emergency Directive 12 are hereby incorporated into this Order as if fully setout herein.
2. That maximum area for each courtroom shall be determined as follows:
 - a) Avery County courtroom seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions. Grand Jury and Jury room seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions.
 - b) Madison County courtroom seating shall be marked at intervals of 10 feet in the same row, 6 feet in all other directions. Grand jury and jury room seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions.
 - c) Mitchell County courtroom seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions. Grand jury and jury room seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions.

- d) Watauga County courtroom, jury assembly room, jury room and other court authorized waiting/meeting areas seating shall be marked at 6 feet intervals in all directions.
 - e) Yancey County courtroom seating shall be marked at intervals of 10 feet in the same row, 6 feet in all other directions. Grand jury room and jury room seating shall be marked at intervals of 6 feet in all directions.
3. The maximum occupancy for each courtroom shall be the total of all marked seats plus 10. The maximum occupancy for jury assembly rooms, grand jury rooms, jury rooms and/or court authorized waiting/meeting place shall be the total of all marked seats in that room. Once the capacity for a room is met, the bailiff shall not allow any other individuals to enter the room until designated seating becomes available.
 4. The established maximum occupancy shall be prominently posed at the entrance to each courtroom or court authorized waiting/meeting space.
 5. That the County Manager in each County in the 24th Judicial District shall ensure for their respective county that hand sanitizer is, at a minimum, available at the entry and exit of each facility, the entry and exit each courtroom and at all high touch areas of the facility including doorways, service counters, stairwells, and elevators. High touch areas include but are not limited to doorknobs, water fountains, handrails, elevator walls and buttons, bathroom faucets and dispensers, and reception desks or counters.
 6. That the County Manager in each County in the 24th Judicial District shall ensure for their respective county that all courtrooms and meeting rooms used for court proceedings (e.g. jury assembly rooms, grand jury rooms, jury rooms and court authorized waiting/meeting areas) and high touch areas are cleaned daily from 12:30p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and each evening after 5:00 p.m.
 7. That this Administrative Order shall remain in full force and effect until changed or revoked by the undersigned.

This the 27th day of May, 2020.

/s/ Gary M. Gavenus

Gary M. Gavenus

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

24th Judicial District