



TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
WAKE COUNTY
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May 29, 2020

To: 10th Judicial District Courthouse Personnel and Members of the Public

Fr: Hon. Paul Ridgeway, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Hon. Robert Rader, Chief District Court Judge
Hon. Lorrin Freeman, District Attorney
Hon. Blair Williams, Clerk of Superior Court
Hon. Chris Graves, Chief Magistrate
Mr. Chuck Caldwell, Public Defender
Ms. Kellie Myers, Trial Court Administrator

COVID-19 Public Safety Policies - 10th Judicial District

Effective June 1, 2020

In anticipation of expanding court operations in the 10th Judicial District on June 1, 2020, the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and the Chief District Court Judge, in consultation with the 10th Judicial District Emergency Response Team, the Administrative Office of the Courts, and state and local health officials, establish the following safety policies. These policies are implemented pursuant to the guidance and authority of the Order of the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court dated May 21, 2020.

These policies shall apply to the Judicial Facilities of the 10th Judicial District (Wake County). These policies shall remain in effect until further notice and are subject to change at any time to reflect current medical and safety advice and guidance.

These policies are a baseline. Hiring authorities, judicial officials and courthouse security personnel have discretion to require more robust safety policies, as needed, to meet specific needs and circumstances. Further, these policies are not a substitute for personal responsibility -- the Center for Disease Control recommends that every person take affirmative measures to avoid contracting COVID-19 by: knowing how it spreads, washing hands often, avoiding close contact, covering mouth and nose with cloth face covering when around others, covering coughs and sneezes, cleaning and disinfecting, and monitoring your health.

Definitions:

Judicial Facilities: The Wake County Justice Center, the Wake County Courthouse, and those portions of the Hammond Road Detention Facility utilized for judicial functions.

Courthouse Personnel: Persons working within Judicial Facilities, including judges and staff, magistrates and staff, clerks of court and staff, public defenders and staff, district attorneys and staff, court reporters, interpreters, bailiffs assigned to Judicial Facilities and security personnel assigned to Judicial Facilities.

POLICIES REGARDING SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. At all times while within Judicial Facilities, all persons, including Courthouse Personnel and members of the public, shall:
 - a. Comply with signage and markings in courtrooms and common areas denoting six-foot social distancing spacing and requirements;
 - b. Comply with maximum public occupancy limits established for each courtroom;
 - c. Limit in-person interaction at distances less than six feet with others to only those instances where necessary; where such in-person interaction is necessary, use reasonable measures to keep yourself and others safe; and
 - d. Abide by any courtroom-specific health and safety instructions as established by judicial officials or courtroom security personnel.
2. In addition to the above, Courthouse Personnel should:
 - a. Refrain from large in-person social gatherings (birthday celebrations, retirement parties, baby showers, etc.) in Judicial Facilities; and
 - b. Refrain from inviting social visitors / guests to Judicial Facilities who are not otherwise conducting court business; and
 - c. Refrain from bringing children to Judicial Facilities.

POLICIES REGARDING MASKS / FACE COVERS

1. All persons entering Judicial Facilities are strongly advised to wear an appropriate face cover that covers the mouth and nose in a manner consistent with Center for Disease Control guidelines. Face covers should be worn at all times when:

- a. In common areas (hallways, elevators, security stations, rest rooms, etc.);
 - b. In courtrooms unless actively participating in a hearing or other official business and the wearing of a face cover impedes communication (or as directed by the presiding judge); and
 - c. within six-foot proximity to other persons.
2. If, at any time, judicial officials or courthouse security personnel deem the presence of unmasked individuals to be a threat to public health, persons not wearing an appropriate face cover may be denied access to:
 - a. Judicial Facilities,
 - b. Common areas of Judicial Facilities,
 - c. Elevators within Judicial Facilities, or
 - d. Courtrooms within Judicial Facilities.
3. “Appropriate face cover” is defined as one recognized by the Center for Disease Control as helpful in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 in public settings. Medical or single use medical-type face masks are appropriate. If fabric, the face cover should:
 - a. fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
 - b. be secured with ties or ear loops
 - c. include multiple layers of fabric
 - d. allow for breathing without restriction
 - e. be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape
4. Courthouse Personnel, at all times while within Judicial Facilities, shall wear an appropriate face cover that covers the mouth and nose in a manner consistent with the Center for Disease Control guidelines, except that any Courthouse Personnel may opt to remove one’s face cover:
 - a. When at one’s personal workspace provided that no other person is within six feet;
 - b. While conducting official business where the wearing of a face cover impedes communications (or as directed by the presiding judge); or
 - c. Where one has a health condition certified in writing by a health-care professional that the wearing of a face cover would be detrimental to one’s health, and that certification is provided to the appropriate hiring authority.

5. Bailiffs and security personnel are authorized to require the removal of a face cover worn by any person if, in their discretion, the face cover poses a security concern, impedes identification, or otherwise interferes with the administration of justice within Judicial Facilities.

PRESENCE OF COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

1. No person shall enter a Judicial Facility if they have had symptoms of COVID-19 within the prior 72 hours, or risk of exposure to COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
 - a. The symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - b. Risk of exposure to COVID-19 includes:
 - Persons who are well but who have a sick family member at home with COVID-19
 - Having contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19
 - Living in or visiting a place where COVID-19 is spreading.
2. Court Personnel who have symptoms or exposure to COVID-19 shall:
 - a. Not report to the Judicial Facilities, and
 - b. Promptly notify their supervisor about their symptoms or exposure.