

COVID-19 Public Safety Policies - 10th Judicial District

Amendment to Safety Policy of July 30, 2021

Issued August 11, 2021

Effective August 12, 2021

In consideration of recent directives from Wake County regarding all county facilities, as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and the Chief District Court Judge, in consultation with the 10th Judicial District Emergency Response Team, issue the following amendment to the 10th Judicial District Safety Policy issued July 30, 2021.

These policies shall apply to the Judicial Facilities of the 10th Judicial District (Wake County). These policies, and the policies amended hereby, 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 additional safety measures, as needed, to protect courthouse personnel and the public while honoring the Judicial Branch's commitment to open courts and the prompt administration of impartial justice. Additional information about the Judicial Branch's response to the COVID-19 outbreak is available at <https://www.nccourts.gov/covid-19>.

These policies are not a substitute for personal responsibility -- the CDC recommends that every person take affirmative measures to avoid contracting COVID-19. The CDC measures vary depending on whether individuals have been fully vaccinated and may be reviewed at <https://www.cdc.gov>.

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, probation and parole officers with offices in Judicial Facilities, bailiffs assigned to Judicial Facilities and security personnel assigned to Judicial Facilities.

POLICIES

The policy is amended by (1) modifying the face covering policy age exception to apply only to children under five (5) years of age, and (2) by adding instructions on who to contact if face coverings are not available at Judicial Facility entrances.

Effective August 2, 2021, all persons who are in a court facility are required to wear a face covering while they are in public areas of the facility, including courtrooms, public corridors, elevators and waiting areas. Courthouse personnel are not required to wear face coverings when in their private workspace and not 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 five (5) years of age. Judicial officials may allow face coverings to be removed for brief periods to facilitate communication during court proceedings after due consideration for the safety of others in the proximity of the speaker.

County and Court officials are making every reasonable effort to ensure a supply of face coverings at security stations in the Judicial Facilities for persons who have been unable to procure one prior to entry into the facilities. If face coverings are not available at any security station, please contact the office of Trial Court Administrator at Kellie.Z.Myers@nccourts.org.

This amendment shall be effective on August 12, 2021.