



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF GREENE COUNTY
STATE OF MISSOURI
THIRTY-FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

In Re: OPERATING PHASE TWO - COURT NORMALIZATION ORDER

Notification to the Public

Administrative Order 2021-AO06

WHEREAS in response to the declaration of national and state emergencies following the classification of COVID-19 as a pandemic, this Court and the Supreme Court of Missouri have entered several orders directing the operation of court proceedings during the crisis; and

WHEREAS the Supreme Court of Missouri issued its Order and Operational Directives, dated May 4, 2020, effective May 16, 2020. The order provides the Missouri Judicial Circuits with Operational Directives governing a plan for normalization of court operations and supersedes all previous orders; and

WHEREAS it remains the sincere desire of the Court to continue to conduct important, and most often essential, court operations and meet all constitutional obligations to the citizens of our community, while at the same time taking all reasonable measures to protect the health and safety of court employees, attorneys, parties, and citizens; and

WHEREAS in compliance with the Order of the Supreme Court, the Presiding Judge of the Thirty-first Judicial Circuit has given notice to the Supreme Court of Missouri that the Gateway Criteria have been met, and the Courts in Greene County will continue operations under the guidelines of "Operating Phase Two."

WHEREFORE, the Presiding Judge hereby enters the following order:

1. Effective February 1, 2021, the Court will increase in-person court proceedings where they can safely be conducted in compliance with social distancing protocols and occupancy rate limitations applicable in our community. The determination of what cases may safely be conducted will be made by the Judge supervising the case; and may include all case types previously considered as exempt during Operating Phase Zero, and all case types previously considered as critical during Operating Phase One and additional case types as determined appropriate.
2. All persons admitted to the Judicial Court Facility or Juvenile Facility will continue to be screened with basic health, contact, and travel questions. Persons will continue to have their temperature checked prior to admittance and will not be admitted if their temperature is 100.4⁰ or higher.
3. All persons admitted to the Judicial Court Facility or Juvenile Facility will be required to wear a face mask upon entrance, and while in the common areas of the facility. Persons are requested to bring their own mask for this purpose; however, subject to availability, masks will be provided. Masks will be required in all common areas, including courtrooms, of the Judicial Court Facility.
4. All persons admitted to the Judicial Court Facility or Juvenile Facility will be required to respect the 6-foot social distancing requirement in all common areas and in the courtrooms. Floor markings will be visible to assist in maintaining the distancing.
5. Occupancy rates in courtrooms, jury assembly rooms, jury deliberating rooms, break rooms, and other areas in court facilities, will be limited to an occupancy rate of 25 or less, whenever possible, and operate under social distancing protocols. Most rooms in the court facility will not accommodate 25 persons while maintaining social distancing requirement. If the courtroom is occupied at capacity, parties may check in with the bailiff and then wait in the common area outside the courtroom to be called, as space permits.
6. Judges, court staff, attorneys, and parties are still encouraged to use all available technologies, including teleconferencing and video conferencing, wherever possible, to limit in-person courtroom appearances, to the extent not prohibited by constitutional or statutory provisions.
7. All nonessential travel by judicial employees for work-related functions remains suspended.

8. The Court will continue the enhanced cleaning and disinfection procedures undertaken at the Judicial Courts Facility and Juvenile Facility. To the extent available, hand sanitizer will be made available for use by all persons in the facilities.
9. Judges and employees will continue to work from home and work in shifts, whenever possible and feasible, to keep staffing levels appropriate, to reduce unnecessary contact and mitigate the spread of the virus, while at the same time support all court activity.
10. Judicial employees will be subject to quarantine or isolation based on various circumstances. Any employee who experiences COVID symptoms, or who has had any contact with another person that is symptomatic or has had contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, should immediately report that circumstance to their supervisor for further instructions.

11. MUNICIPAL DIVISIONS

The Municipal Divisions in Greene County, including Ash Grove, Battlefield, Fair Grove, Republic, Springfield, Strafford, Walnut Grove, and Willard are governed by this Order, except that appropriate occupancy limits may be less based on the size of the municipal court facility and the need to maintain distancing requirements. However, if the Chief Municipal Judge presiding over any Municipal Division determines it is more appropriate for the Municipal Division to operate under the guidelines of Operating Phase One, or Zero, then they shall issue a separate order governing those divisions.

This Administrative Order shall remain in effect until rescinded or superseded by subsequent order of the Court. It is hoped and anticipated that community circumstances will continue to improve; thus, supporting the Court's move to Operating Phase Three at a future date. If the Gateway Criteria are met, and circumstances warrant, the Court will issue a further Court Normalization Order at that time.

Dated: January 27, 2021



Michael J. Cordonnier
Presiding Judge
Thirty-first Judicial Circuit