

COVID 19 ORDER 2021 - January 12

**CIVIL DISTRICT COURT AND FIRST AND SECOND CITY COURT
AMENDED EMERGENCY ORDER IN REPOSE TO
PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS (COVID-19)**

Acting in accordance with Louisiana Constitution Article V, Section 1; due to the emergency as detailed by Governor John Bel Edwards' Declarations of Public Health Emergency (Executive Department Proclamations No. 25 JBE 2020, and most recently renewed by proclamation number 209 JBE 2020; the Louisiana Supreme Court's Order dated April 6, as amended on April 22, 29, May 15, June 5, 2020, and January 11, 2021, and in accordance with the inherent powers of this Court, the Chief Judge, acting on behalf of the Judges of the Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans, and Chief Judge, acting on behalf of the First and Second City Courts,

HEREBY ORDER THAT:

1.

All civil jury trials are suspended until March 1, 2021. The court will post a notice on its website for those jurors scheduled for jury duty in March (www.orleanscdc.com).

2.

All civil hearings, pre-trial, and post-trial proceedings, scheduled between January 11, 2021 and March 1, 2021 may proceed by in-person proceedings, or via video conference via Zoom or Skype platform, with the consent of the parties and the judge. Consent shall not be unreasonably withheld by any party, which shall be enforced by the trial judge pursuant to the authority granted by the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure Article 191, or as expressly provided by law. The parties by consent may request a judge trial via a Zoom or Skype platform.

3.

The parties' appearing via video conference must comply with the submission deadlines set forth in Rule 9.9 of the District Court Rules.

4.

All individuals seeking entry into the courthouse will be pre-screened. Pre-screening will include a temperature scan and the answering of the following questions:

In the past 14 days:

- Have you had a temperature of 100°F or greater?
- Have you been fever-free without the assistance of a fever reducer, i.e. Tylenol?

- Have you experienced a new or worsening cough or sore throat?
- Have you experienced shortness of breath or chills in the last 48 hours?
- Are you awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test?

5.

Should a litigant and/or witness exhibit COVID-19 symptoms upon arrival at court, the litigant and witness will not be admitted into the courthouse. The litigant and/or witness shall contact the Division/Section to which the case is assigned (contact information will be displayed) and advise the Division/Section of his/her denied admission to the courthouse. The Division/Section will determine how the hearing/trial will proceed

6.

All individuals seeking entry into the courthouse are required to wear a face mask or other covering extending over the nose and mouth, and shall keep it on at all times while in the courthouse. The court will provide a mask to litigants and witnesses who present to court without one. A face shield is not considered a mask and cannot be worn in place of a mask. A face shield may be worn over a mask.

7.

If a litigant and/or witness has a disability that prevents him/her from making an appearance in court for a scheduled hearing/trial, upon service of a pleading and/or a subpoena requiring an appearance, the litigant and/or witness should immediately request a reasonable accommodation from the court. An accommodation request form can be found on the court's website at www.orleanscdc.com. Alternatively, the litigant and/or witness can request an accommodation form from the Judicial Administrator at 504-407-0370.

The litigant/witness should return the form to the Judicial Administrator by mail, fax or email within five (5) days of service of a pleading and/or subpoena.

Michele Collins
Judicial Administrator – Civil District Court
412 Loyola Avenue, Rm. 320
New Orleans, LA. 70112
Telephone: 504-407-0370
Fax: 504-592-9279
ada@orleanscdc.com

For Orleans Parish First City Court, litigants/witnesses requiring an accommodation because of a disability or COVID related issue should immediately telephone Mr. Ambrose Pratt at (504) 407-

0401 upon being served with a summons and/or pleading and/or a subpoena or other court order directing the litigant/witness to appear in court.

An accommodation request form can be found on the court's website at www.orleanscdc.com.

Litigants/witnesses should return the form to Mr. Ambrose Pratt by mail, fax or email before the scheduled trial or hearing date.

Ambrose Pratt
Chief Deputy – First City Court Clerk's Office
421 Loyola Avenue, Rm. 201
New Orleans, LA. 70112
Telephone: 504-407-0401
Fax: 504-592-9281
apratt@orleanscdc.com

For Orleans Parish Second City Court, litigants/witnesses requiring an accommodation because of a disability or COVID related issue should immediately telephone The Office of Darren Lombard - Clerk of Second City Court at (504) 407-0435 upon being served with a summons and/or pleading and/or a subpoena or other court order directing the litigant/witness to appear in court.

An accommodation request form can be found on the court's website at www.orleanscdc.com.

Litigants/witnesses should return the form to Mr. Lombard's office by mail, fax or email before the scheduled trial or hearing date.

Darren Lombard
Clerk of Second City Court
225 Morgan Street, Rm. 206
New Orleans, LA. 70114
Telephone: 504-407-0435
Fax: 504-366-2970
dlombard@orleanscdc.com
erobinson@orleanscdc.com

8.

Elevators shall be limited to two (2) persons at any given time.

9.

Hallways and corridors shall be clear and are to be used for access only. Social/physical distancing (of at least 6 feet apart) shall be observed and enforced at all times while in the courthouse.

10.

Vendors providing food delivery services to Court personnel will not be permitted to gain entry into the courthouse beyond the lobby area. Those vendors shall wait outside of the

courthouse or in the lobby and are instructed to contact their customer to meet them in the lobby upon arrival.

11.

Unless otherwise instructed by the Division/Section, after gaining entry into the courthouse, attorneys and their clients waiting for a matter to be heard shall wait outside of the courtroom where the matter is to be heard and shall maintain social/physical distancing therein, until their case is called.

12.

Each courtroom will be limited to a maximum of 25% of its full seating capacity at any given time, including the judge and judge's staff. Social/physical distancing shall be observed therein. Additionally, all shared surfaces in each courtroom will be sanitized at the beginning of the court's day and after each hearing has concluded.

13.

All social/physical distancing related signage or physical markings in and around the courthouse shall be observed and enforced at all times.

14.

The Sine Pro app is a remote check-in system that will allow an individual to remain in their vehicle or otherwise outside of the courthouse, but within the immediate vicinity of the courthouse, until their case is called. Several Divisions/Sections of the court will be utilizing the Sine Pro app for check in. Individuals having business before those Divisions/Sections of the court are encouraged to download the free Sine Pro app on their cell phones and use the Sine Pro app to check in when they arrive at the courthouse. You should contact the Division/Section for your case prior to your appearance date to find out if it is utilizing the Sine Pro app for check in. If the litigant does not have a mobile number, the litigant should proceed to the area outside of the courtroom where their matter is scheduled to be heard and shall maintain social/physical distancing therein, until their case is called.

15.

The following basic infection prevention measures shall be observed by all individuals while in the courthouse:

- Frequent and thorough handwashing, with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, whenever possible;

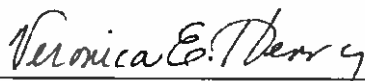
- Use of alcohol-based (at least 60%) hand sanitizer, when handwashing is not readily available (available on premises); and
- Covering of coughs and sneezes with inner elbow

This Order is effective at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 and will remain in effect until further notice. All provisions of this Court's prior Orders shall remain in place, except as modified herein. Adjustments to this Order, if necessary, will be posted on the Court's website (www.orleanscdc.com) and the Louisiana Supreme Court website (www.lasc.org), and in the news media.

Signed, this 12th day of January, 2021 in New Orleans, Louisiana.



Chief Judge Bernadette D'Souza
Civil District Court



Chief Judge Veronica E. Henry
First City Court