STATE OF MICHIGAN GENESEE COUNTY PROBATE COURT 7th CIRCUIT COURT	GENESEE COUNTY RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY PHASE TWO	LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020- J Circuit 2020- J Probate

Genesee County Probate Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 257-3528
7th Judicial Circuit Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 424-4355

ORDER RE: PLAN TO RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY – PHASE TWO

In accordance with Administrative Order No. 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the Chief Judge of the Genesee County Probate Court and the 7th Judicial Circuit Court has consulted with the local health department and determined that gating criteria for movement into Phase Two is satisfied as of August 7, 2020. Specifically:

1. There have been no COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period; and,

2. There is a downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period; and,

3. State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase Two requirements; and,

4. The chief judge has consulted with the Genesee County Health Department and obtained data (attached) confirming that regional health care facilities are able to treat all patients without crisis care; and,

5. The chief judge has consulted with the Genesee County Health Department and obtained data (attached) confirming that there is no evidence of COVID-19 rebound within the local community and no need to implement additional social distancing measures based upon a resurgence of infections in the local area.

A. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and the public, the Probate and Circuit Courts have enacted the following protections:

1. Employees will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms. Employees who feel sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms will not report to work. Employees who feel sick or display symptoms at work will be sent home.

[1] Guidance on COVID-19 symptoms is evolving rapidly. The most up-to-date information about symptoms of COVID-19 are available on the CDC website at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html

2. Court employees have been surveyed and those employees who have self-identified as a vulnerable employee and unable to return to work have been offered appropriate accommodations, including the ability to work remotely if their job lends itself to remote work.

3. Employees will be encouraged to work remotely where feasible to facilitate social distancing among on-site staff.

4. Employees should wear face coverings in court facilities at all times unless 6 ft. social distancing is guaranteed. The courts have taken the following steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:

    a. Placed physical barriers between workspaces that are not at least six feet apart.

    b. Marked the floor in common spaces to indicate six-foot intervals.

    c. Required employees to wear masks while in public spaces.

    d. Required employees handling mail to wear masks and gloves.

    e. Implemented staggered shifts of employees to reduce crowd size and the risk of people gathering at start and close times.

5. Employees will practice good hygiene through hand washing, frequent disinfecting of used items and surfaces, sneezing or coughing into a tissue or elbow, and avoiding touching their faces.

6. Employees will not travel for non-essential business.

7. The court has consulted with the local health department and developed policies regarding employee travel outside of Michigan. Any quarantine and/or isolation requirements will be implemented consistent with the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and/or local public health officials.

8. Employees have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.

9. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper handwashing.

10. Shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before each use. Examples of shared equipment include copiers, fax machines, and telephones used by more than one employee during a single shift or in consecutive shifts. This equipment should be wiped down with disinfectant or a disinfectant wipe between uses.

11. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.

12. The court has developed a contact tracing policy and will implement contact tracing procedures after receiving notification that the court facility has had confirmed exposure to COVID-19. These procedures will help the court identify and notify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and will identify exposure locations that need to be cleaned and disinfected pursuant to CDC guidelines.

B. The Genesee County Probate Court and the 7th Judicial Circuit Court are maintaining the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:

1. The public will be asked to self-screen using posted screening questions prior to entering the court building and will be questioned by court personnel or security prior to entering the court building. Screening questions will include, but are not limited to, the following:

   a. Do you have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees?

   b. Do you have a cough or worsening cough (excluding chronic cough due to known medical reason)?

   c. Do you have shortness of breath?

   OR

   d. Do you have at least two of the following symptoms:
      - Fever
      - Chills
      - Repeated shaking with chills
      - Muscle pain
      - Headache
      - Sore throat
      - New loss of taste or smell

   e. Have you had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?

   f. Have you traveled internationally in the last 14 days?

   Any individual responding "yes" to the screening questions will not be allowed to enter the courthouse until they can pass the screening questions. The court will immediately provide the following information to any individual who does not pass screening:

1. Contact information for all judicial offices, and the attorney referee office, for notification concerning a court proceeding that an individual is unable to attend. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party to a court proceeding, upon notification that the person is unable to attend, the court will work to reschedule the hearing/trial to either a remote proceeding or to a future date when the person may pass courthouse screening;

2. Information for setting future appointments with court clerk offices; and

3. Information related to alternative means of filing with the courts (i.e., other than in-person).

The above will be located on a single card suitable for point of access distribution by screening personnel.

The court must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.

C. In order to facilitate increased activity in the courthouse, the courts are using the following measures related to court proceedings:

1. Proceedings will be conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Administrative Order No. 2020-6.

2. In-person court proceedings will be allowed on a limited basis. Only parties, counsel of record, witnesses and jurors will be permitted to attend in-person court proceedings. Public court proceedings, that are not otherwise closed pursuant to court order or limited by statute, will be available to the public via livestream.

The number of occupants permitted to be present for an in-person court proceeding may exceed 10 if the size of the courtroom or other meeting space is such that social distancing can be maintained at all times. Face coverings will be required for court in a manner consistent with the SCAO Return to Full Capacity Guide.

3. Off-site visits with probationers and clients will not resume.

4. Large venues and common areas in the courthouse (e.g. waiting areas, sit-down dining, etc.) will not be open for use. Members of the public are required to wear facemasks to the extent they can be medically tolerated. They will not be provided by the court prior to entry.

5. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(C), members of the public or staff who refuse to wear required face coverings or adhere to social distancing requirements may be asked to leave the court facility.

6. Any member of the public who is asked to leave the court facility must be offered an opportunity to conduct court business virtually, attend court proceedings virtually, file documents in an alternative manner, or confer with court administration to determine alternate arrangements for accessing the court.

7. The Genesee County Probate Court and 7th Judicial Circuit Court are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19 and are continuously evaluating data to assess their readiness to proceed to the next phase of court capacity, which is anticipated to be October 5, 2020.

Effective Date: August 17, 2020

Date: 8. 13. 20

Duncan M. Beagle, Chief Judge
Genesee County Probate Court
7th Judicial Circuit Court