

STATE OF MICHIGAN



THE CIRCUIT COURT
8TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IONIA AND MONTCALM COUNTIES

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8th Circuit Court Plan to Return to Full Capacity – Phase Three

8th Circuit Court Administrative Order 2020-04J
64A District Court Administrative Order 2020-07J
64B District Court Administrative Order 2020-05J
Ionia County Probate Court Administrative Order 2020-04J
Montcalm County Probate Court Administrative Order 2020-04J

In accordance with Administrative Order 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the Chief Judge of the 8th Circuit has consulted with the local health departments and determined that gating criteria for movement into Phase Three is satisfied as of June 23, 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 documented cases 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 State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and the SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase Three requirements; and,
 4. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities AND/OR 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 health authorities AND/OR 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 8th Circuit Court, 64A & 64B District Courts, Ionia Probate Court & Montcalm Probate Court have enacted the following protections:
1. Normal staffing will resume at worksites.

2. Vulnerable employees on temporary leave or working remotely may return to work and practice six-foot physical distancing, wearing masks when the distance cannot be maintained. Minimizing exposure to social settings where social distancing is not possible is encouraged.
3. Personal travel should take into account the necessary travel precautions and employees are fully aware of the potential for quarantine requirements upon return.
4. Employees in court facilities will maintain social distancing of six feet at all times and wear masks when six-foot physical distance cannot be maintained. 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. Implemented staggered shifts of employees and/or employees working remotely to reduce 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 have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.
7. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper handwashing.
8. Newly exposed areas (e.g. areas recently opened to the public or returning staff) and shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before 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.
9. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.
10. The court has developed a contact tracing policy and is prepared to 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 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 8th Circuit Court, 64A & 64B District Courts, Ionia Probate Court & Montcalm Probate Court are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:

1. The public will be screened by county/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 with a COVID-19 diagnosis?
 - 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. Screening personnel will notify the court of any individual that does not make it past screening. The court will accept documents for filing from the person. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party a court proceeding, 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. The court must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.

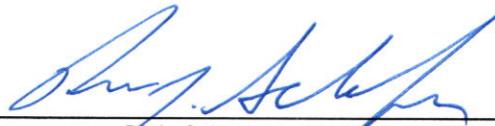
C. In order to facilitate increased activity in the courthouse, the courts are enacting the following measures related to court proceedings:

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. Attendees will be limited to the in-person capacity of the individual courtroom so that distances of 6 feet are maintained between persons. The presiding judge may consult with local health officials to determine a maximum capacity based on the physical space limitations of the judges courtroom. If a consultation with the health department to determine maximum capacity based on physical space limitations is not done, attendees will be limited to ten, including court staff,. All attendees will be required to wear facemasks. The presiding judge may make exceptions during a hearing to facemask requirements to facilitate a clear record of those required to speak, or if issues of identity are presented, as long as social distancing protocols are maintained.
3. Off-site visits with probationers and clients will resume at the discretion of the presiding judge.
4. Large venues and common areas in the courthouse (e.g. waiting areas, etc.) will be open for use using limited six-foot physical distancing.
5. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(c), members of the public or staff that refuse or adhere to social distancing requirements or other mitigation procedures 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.

The 8th Circuit Court, 64A & 64B District Courts, Ionia Probate Court & Montcalm Probate 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 Phase Four, which is anticipated when a public health announcement is made that COVID-19 has been suppressed within the United States.

Date: _____

6/25/2020



Chief Judge 8th Circuit