
State of Michigan
14th Circuit Court
60th District Court
61st Probate Court

Local Administrative Order
Circuit Court Order – 2020
District Court Order – 2020
Probate Court Order – 2020

**MUSKEGON COUNTY COURTS' PLAN TO
RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY
PHASE THREE**

990 Terrace Street, Muskegon, MI 49442

In accordance with Administrative Order 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the chief judge(s) of the 14th Circuit, 60th District, and 61st Probate Courts of Muskegon County have consulted with the local health department and determined that gating criteria is satisfied as of 7/3/2020. Specifically:

1. There have been no COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period; or, confirmed or suspected cases have occurred in the court facility, but deep cleaning of exposed areas and applicable employee self-quarantine actions have been taken; and,
 2. There is a downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests)]; 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 State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and the SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase Three requirements; and,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 the Muskegon County Public Health Director and obtained data confirming that regional health care facilities are able to treat all patients without crisis care; and,
 5. The chief judge has consulted with the Muskegon County Public Health Director and has confirmed 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 Muskegon County Courts have enacted the following protections:
1. Normal staffing may 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. Where appropriate, the floors in public common spaces have been marked 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. Whenever able, employee arrival times are staggered 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 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 Muskegon County Courts are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:

1. The public and court employees will continue to be screened upon 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? Additionally, a touchless/ contactless thermometer is utilized to verify each individual's temperature.
 - b. Do you have a cough or worsening cough (excluding chronic cough due to known medical reason)?
 - c. Do you have shortness of breath/breathing difficulties?

OR

- d. Do you have any 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 who has or probably has a COVID-19 diagnosis?
- f. Have you traveled internationally in the last 14 days?

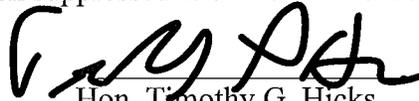
Any individual responding "yes" to the screening questions will not be allowed to enter the courthouse until they can pass the screening questions. Screening personnel will notify the court of any individual that does not make it past screening. The court will accept documents for filing from the person at the document drop box. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party to 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 court(s) is/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. Restrictions will include:

- Limit the total number of attendees in each courtroom to 1/3 of total capacity as determined by local Fire Marshal so as to accommodate social distancing guidelines;
 - Post signage regarding capacity of public areas within courtrooms;
 - Permit separate viewing areas for non-parties, as appropriate;
 - Maintain a minimum of six-foot social distancing at all times;
 - Require masks both inside and outside courtrooms wherever proper social distancing cannot be maintained.
3. Off-site and on-site visits with probationers and clients may fully resume, subject to the practice of six-foot physical distancing, wearing masks when the distance cannot be maintained, and minimizing exposure to social settings where social distancing is not possible.
 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 to 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. At the front entrance of the Hall of Justice, handouts with the following information are available for the public:
 - Zoom PMR information for each Judge, Magistrate, and Referee
 - Contact information for the courts, email addresses for electronically filing documents, and electronic payment information.

The Muskegon County Courts are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19 and is/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: 6/30/2020



Hon. Timothy G. Hicks
Chief 14th Circuit and 61st Probate Judge

Date: 7/6/2020



Hon. Raymond J. Kostrzewa
Chief 60th District Court Judge