

IN THE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF CLAYTON COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

FILED
CLAYTON COUNTY, GA

2023 JAN -4 AM 8:34

CHANAE Q. CLEMONS
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT

COURT OPERATING PROCEDURES

WHEREAS the Statewide Emergency declared by Governor Brian Kemp has ended; and

WHEREAS Governor Brian Kemp signed legislation eliminating all mandates requiring the wearing of masks into law; and

WHEREAS the Judicial Emergency Orders issued by the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of Georgia have all ended; and

WHEREAS the Center for Disease and Control has issued new COVID-19 Guidelines eliminating the requirements for social-distancing; and

IT IS THEREFORE HEREBY ORDERED that all prior orders issued during the COVID-19 Emergency are set aside, effective immediately.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that all court operations are returned to their pre-COVID-19 operating procedures and guidelines, which includes among other operations, all levels of courts, District Attorney and Solicitor offices, clerk offices, scheduling of jurors for jury trials and grand juries, etc.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the checking of temperature, COVID-19 related questioning, and wearing of masks in the courthouse shall no longer be mandated, but masks shall be made available to the public and given to those who

request one. Further, each judge can at their option mandate the wearing of masks and the checking of temperatures for their courtroom, and masks will be provided to each judge, along with a non-contact infrared body thermometer.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that those judges whose courtrooms were utilized as “Pods” as well as all other courtrooms which were used as “Pods” during the COVID-19 emergency shall no longer be used as Pods as every courtroom has now been equipped for any judge to conduct virtual court in their respective courtroom if they choose to do so.

Due to the lack of available Sheriff staff on the courthouse side, with respect to inmates, only Superior Court will be allowed to be fully opened for jury trials and all other criminal matters at this time, and all inmates who have to appear for court in Superior Court, will be brought over from the jail to the respective judge’s courtroom, and the judge may then conduct court virtually or in-person at their option.

It is anticipated that there will be sufficient court-side personnel sometime in February 2023, and the foregoing procedures will apply to State Court beginning March 1, 2023. However, until sufficient staffing is available, the State Court shall continue operating as it now does.

Regarding Magistrate Court criminal operations, at this time, first appearances and preliminary hearings shall continue to be conducted virtually.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that jurors shall be seated in the main jury holding room as they were before COVID-19, without social-distancing, with masks being made available to all who want one. Further, jurors shall be brought up to each judge's courtroom in the number requested by each judge, in the same manner as before COVID-19.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that each Superior Court Judge shall be assigned two bailiffs for their courtroom and each State Court Judge shall be assigned one bailiff. Chief Orderly Stuart Benton shall be responsible for the hiring, managing, training, and assigning of bailiffs to each courtroom. This does not prevent any judge from recommending bailiffs to Mr. Benton, but, if he determines that they are not qualified, then they will not be allowed to serve as bailiffs for our courts.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that if there are any operations that may have been omitted in this Order, that said operation(s) be conducted in the manner as it was conducted pre-COVID-19.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 4th day of January, 2023.

FILED
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SHANAE Q. CLEMONS
CLERK SUPERIOR COURT



ROBERT L. MACK, JR. – Chief Judge
Superior Court – Clayton County Circuit