

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the City of Grandview Municipal Court

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the City of Grandview Municipal Court shall implement the following protective measures:

General

1. All judges will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. All judges will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The presiding judge of the municipal court will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and county judge and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the county.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than July 8, 2020

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judges and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judges or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6°F, or with new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or having known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building and should seek medical advice.
3. Judges and court staff will be encouraged to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all times.
4. Protective Measures: The court shall provide hand sanitizer to all participants during in person hearings, judge/staff will wear face coverings, judge/staff/bailiffs/participants will have specific seating and standing places to promote social distancing.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Staggered scheduling of individuals with business with the court and no more than 10 people in attendance at one time. Dockets will be held at different times to reduce excessive numbers of people present at the court.
2. The judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals of any options available online and by mail.
3. A notice with this information will be posted on the court and city's websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building.



Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations will be scheduled on a docket by themselves, and zoom hearings will be encouraged.
2. The judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the court and city's websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building.
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by setting people 65 and over on a docket by themselves, and zoom hearings will be offered.

Social Distancing

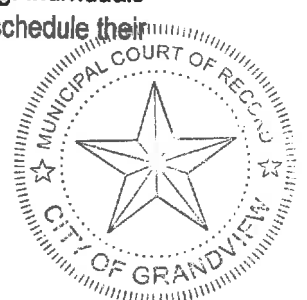
1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the court building will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least six feet.
2. Public common areas, including breakrooms and snack rooms, have been closed to the public.
3. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of the courtroom has been determined and will be posted on days court is scheduled. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
4. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. Seating is limited to every other row.
5. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, and clerk, court reporter, and bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.
6. Individuals needing to use the restrooms shall be limited to one person at a time.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building, inside the courtroom, and inside bathrooms.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, and on the judges' bench.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the bailiff will ask the individuals if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals who indicate yes to any of these questions will be rescheduled for a later date and time.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to take their temperature before coming to the court building. Individuals with a temperature higher than 99.6°F degrees will be instructed to contact court staff to reschedule their hearing.



3. Staff who are admitting individuals entering the court building will be provided face coverings, gloves, and hand sanitizer.

Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court building will be encouraged to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them.

Cleaning

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the courtrooms between morning and afternoon proceedings, and at the beginning and end of each day the courtroom is used.
2. Court building cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
3. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

Other

The court will provide individuals with multiple options to avoid having an in-person hearing.

I have attempted to confer with all judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building regarding this Operating Plan. In developing the plan, I consulted with the local health authority and county judge and mayor, documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Date: 5/26/2020



Presiding Judge of Municipal Court

