

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Nocona 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 courts of the Municipal Court of the City of Nocona, Texas, will implement the following protective measures:

General

1. The 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. The 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, county judge and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the city.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than July 1, 2020

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: All staff will self monitor and will immediately report any symptoms or exposure to his or her supervisor.
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 required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
4. Protective Measures: Masks, disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be provided to staff.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building:
Any hearings that are in person will always be within established social distancing guidelines.

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.
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.
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by resetting their hearing until after the pandemic has subsided.

Social Distancing

1. Public entry to the court area will be limited to the front doorway on Clay Street.
2. Non-participants (such as family members, friends, children, and observers) will not be permitted in the court area; provided, however, that each juvenile defendant shall be accompanied by one parent or guardian.
3. 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 6 feet.
4. Public common areas, including restrooms, and kitchen, have been closed to the public.

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Gallery

5. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of each court area has been determined and posted. The maximum capacity of the court area will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
6. Seating in the court area will be arranged so as to provide appropriate social distancing, so that rows, or individual seats, are separated by at least six feet, in arrangements which will provide the safest environment.

Well

7. In each court area, 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.

Hygiene

1. Non-contact hand sanitizer dispenser will be placed at the entrance to the court area.
2. Tissues and hand sanitizer have been placed near the door of the court area, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" will be posted at the public entrance to the court area.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court area, Marlene Bishop or court staff 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 refused admittance to the court building.
2. When individuals attempt to enter the court area, Marlene Bishop or court staff will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 100.0°F will be refused admittance to the court building.
3. Inmates being transported from the jail to the court building will be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 and have their temperature taken prior to transport. Inmates with symptoms or a temperature equal to or above 99.6°F will not be transported to the court building. Then they will be screened again before entering the building.
4. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court area will be provided personal protective equipment, including appropriate face covering and disposable gloves.
5. Persons entering the court area will not be permitted to bring personal property other than identification, keys, pen, and documents necessary for use during the proceeding.

Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court area will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a cloth face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.
3. Individuals who will be required to be in the court area for over 1 hour, including the Judge and staff, will be required to wear, at a minimum, non-medical grade face masks while in the court area.

Cleaning

1. Court area cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the building at least every 24 hours.
2. Cleaning staff will clean the court area between every docket session that is conducted, and at the end of each day the court area is used.
3. Cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
4. Cleaning staff will have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

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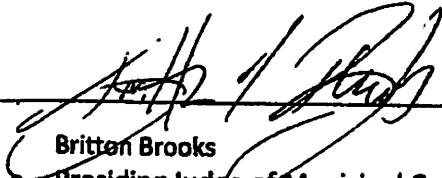
5. Sanitizing wipes will be available on the tables to be used to wipe down surfaces after each trial.

Other

1. Participants, court staff, and any other attendee will be instructed to alert the court if the person has, or knows of another person present who has, COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, or a fever, cough or sneezing.

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 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 _____



Brittan Brooks
Presiding Judge of Municipal Court

Date _____

Dr. Delbert L McCaig, DO
Montague County Health Authority

Date _____

Robert H Fenoglio
Mayor, City of Nocona

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Britton Brooks

Date 03 Jul 20

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ALBERT M. FEUN D.O.

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Britton Brooks
Presiding Judge of Municipal Court

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Dr. Delbert L McCaig, DO
Montague County Health Authority

Date 7-6-2020



Robert H Fenoglio
Mayor, City of Nocona