

# Minimum Standard Health Protocols for COSM Municipal Court, Hays County

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 court of San Marcos Municipal Court, Hays County will implement the following protective measures:

## General

1. All municipal court judges may conduct proceedings remotely or in person.
2. The local administrative district judge will maintain regular communication with the local health and county authority and county judge and adjust this protocol as necessary with conditions in the city and county.
3. Judges will begin setting in-person proceedings no sooner than April 7, 2021

## Judge and Court Staff Health

1. 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 Hays County Government Center and should seek medical advice.
2. Court staff will be required to wear face coverings in the courtroom or when interacting with non-judicial persons. Judges and Court staff should practice social distancing and appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
3. Protective Measures: All areas available to Judges and court staff will have sanitizer stations, masks and gloves for the handling of court documents and other items and cleaning supplies so that staff may clean their work stations throughout the day.

## Scheduling

The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: Municipal Court Judge will determine the capacity of courtrooms to determine the appropriate number of individuals keeping in mind social distancing measures. Additionally, Courts will reduce their docket size per day and further reduce that docket by differing times throughout the day.

## 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. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis, including teleconferencing, hybrid teleconferencing or an in-person proceeding in a limited access courtroom.

### **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 6 feet.

#### *Gallery*

2. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be monitored and enforced by the court bailiff.
3. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating.

#### *Well*

4. 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. There are also plexiglass barriers at each station.

### **Hygiene**

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building, outside of elevators on each floor, outside of each courtroom, and outside of bathrooms.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and in the hallways.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" will be posted in multiple locations on each floor of the court building.
4. Additional signage indicating appropriate hygiene measure, as well as social distancing, will be placed in all public locations of the Hays County Government Center.

### **Screening**

When individuals attempt to enter the court building, Courthouse Security 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.

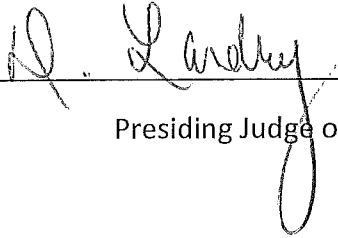
### **Face Coverings**

All individuals entering the municipal courtrooms will be required to wear face coverings at all times.

Cleaning

Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas and courtrooms of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned regularly.

Date: 3/10/2021

  
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Presiding Judge of Municipal Court