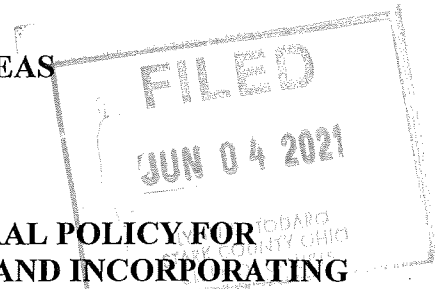


IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
STARK COUNTY, OHIO



IN RE: SUPERSEDING ORDER ESTABLISHING GENERAL POLICY FOR COURTHOUSE ENTRY AND JURY TRIAL PROTOCOL AND INCORPORATING MODIFICATIONS DUE TO CURRENT STATUS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC – 6/4/21

The matter of public health considerations and responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the loosening of precautions and policies previously enacted in response to previous declarations of the President of the United States and the Governor of the state of Ohio, is before the Court this 2nd day of June 2021. In order for the Court to protect and maintain the health and safety of the community at large as well as those required to enter; and to assure Constitutional protections of all individuals subject to the jurisdiction of this Court; and upon the Court's own motion, the following Order regarding Policy for Courthouse Building Entry and Jury Trial Protocol is hereby adopted and immediately *supersedes any previous temporary order*:

Policy Regarding Entry to Courthouse Buildings

1. The previously outlined requirement to wear a mask inside the Courthouse buildings remains in place, with an exemption in place for fully vaccinated persons. Summoned parties, jurors, attorneys and spectators are encouraged to carry vaccination cards or a cell phone photo of their cards in order to be exempt. The Court will supply a disposable face covering to anyone requiring one.
2. Facility access restrictions for non-essential persons will remain in place until further order. Only attorneys/parties/witnesses directly involved in a proceeding, those conducting business directly with the Stark County Clerk of Courts, summoned jurors, or members of the press may enter. If requested, remote access will be accommodated whenever feasible.
3. Social distancing requirements will be relaxed based on Ohio Department of Health and CDC guidelines.

4. Enhanced sanitation protocols and barriers previously erected will remain in place.

Stark County Common Pleas Court Revised COVID-19 Jury Trial Protocol

1. Juror Summons: Based on jury response rates and approved excused dismissal rates for "COVID-19 era" jurors summonsed for grand jury, the Court will summons the same number of jurors as always, 350.
2. Telephone Message for Jurors: The recorded message line will include a reminder of the mask or facial covering protocol and the exemption for jurors who choose to provide proof of full vaccination.
3. Juror Appearance for Jury Selection:
 - a. Jury Selection will take place in Courtroom 201 or Courtroom 202.
 - b. Jury Commissioners and bailiffs shall arrive by 7:30 a.m.
 - c. Prospective Jurors will be given the opportunity to present proof of vaccination upon arrival. If presented, the juror will remain exempt from the mask requirement throughout his/her service.
 - d. Any juror not exempt from the requirement is required to wear a mask or facial covering throughout his/her service. The Court will provide any juror with a disposable face covering if requested.
 - e. Once checked in by Jury Commissioner, the juror will be directed to an assigned seat inside the courtroom.
 - f. Each individual judge will have discretion to permit those jurors wearing face masks to lower their mask when providing a verbal response to a question if necessary.
4. Trial Witnesses: Witnesses are subject to same requirements as jurors

regarding facial coverings. If required to wear a mask, the witness may remove it prior to testimony and replace it before leaving the witness stand.

5. Public or Media Spectators: In order to ensure the safety and security of jurors, court staff, the attorneys, and the defendant, public access, other than the media, will not be permitted in the courtroom during voir dire.

6. Exhibits: All exhibits shall be marked and exchanged prior to trial. Each party is responsible for providing a copy of the exhibits to the Court and opposing counsel.

7. Deliberations: Courtrooms may be utilized to serve as deliberation rooms when a larger deliberation room is unavailable. Court Staff will ensure that all recording and video equipment is off.

8. This protocol is subject to further modification by the Court and the Canton City Public Health Department, should circumstances arise necessitating deviation from the procedures set forth herein.

IT IS SO ORDERED.


JUDGE HARTNETT
Administrative Judge

A copy of this order will be published on the Court of Common Pleas website and shall be served by regular or electronic mail upon the following:

Chief Justice of the Ohio Supreme Court
Stark County Prosecuting Attorney
Stark County Sheriff
Stark County Commissioners
Stark County Public Defender
Stark County Clerk of Courts
Stark County Bar Association
Counsel of Record in affected cases