

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 32.2020

COVID-19 OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES: PHASE TWO, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 13, 2020

NOTE: Changes from the previous administrative order are underlined.

On June 2, 2020, this Court certified to the Missouri Supreme Court that conditions are appropriate to operate under Phase Two of the Supreme Court's Order and Operational Directives dated May 5, 2020.

All Circuit, Associate Circuit and Municipal divisions of the Thirty-second Judicial Circuit will continue operations subject to the Phase Two operational directives with the additional directive set out in this Administrative Order. These operational directives will remain in effect until further order of the Court.

Phase Two operational directives must remain in effect until at least October 31, 2020 and they may be extended unless the incidence of COVID-19 decreases significantly from the current level. In the event of a dangerous increase in the incidence of COVID-19, the Court may revert to Phase One or Phase Zero or order a complete closure of the Court. Different phases may be applied to different counties or different municipal divisions as circumstances warrant.

In order to implement the currently applicable operational directives, it is ORDERED that:

1. No person exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms or who has been exposed to a person exhibiting those symptoms may enter a court facility.
2. Personnel will be positioned at every public entrance to turn away any person who is prohibited by this order from entering the facility.
3. Only litigants, witnesses and attorneys will be admitted to the building. Family members and supporters must remain outside. If a litigant believes that he or she cannot proceed without support, the litigant should contact his or her attorney and request a continuance. The press will be admitted upon reasonable request.
4. A maximum of twenty-five people per public room is encouraged where possible. This number will not include court personnel in the courtrooms.
5. No person will enter any court facility without a face mask. No face masks will be provided to the public. The Court has no masks to distribute. Face masks must be worn in all public areas of the building, including courtrooms. Face masks will not be worn by witnesses while testifying, or by counsel while examining witnesses or while addressing the Court.
6. Everyone will exercise social distancing. Tape markers will be placed at the courthouse entrances and within courtrooms where necessary to indicate spacing of six feet. Seating in courtrooms will be designated at six foot intervals.

7. Court personnel will work in shifts when possible and vulnerable court personnel will work from home.
8. All facilities will be cleaned as much as possible and everyone will practice good handwashing and protective hygiene.
9. All jury trials are suspended through October 31, 2020 and this suspension may be extended thereafter.
10. Matters involving vulnerable individuals may be taken up by video conferencing where possible and, where that is not possible, continuances shall be granted liberally.
11. Any document to be presented to the Court for approval, such as plea petitions, waivers of sentencing assessment reports, waivers of jury trial, proposed judgments or orders or any other document which would be handed to the judge, shall be signed by all necessary signatories and e-filed no less than twenty-four hours in advance of the hearing.
12. A copy of this order shall be posted at every public entrance to each court facility.

August 12, 2020


Benjamin F. Lewis, Presiding Judge