



IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF TREUTLEN COUNTY

STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER REGARDING COURT PROCEDURES DUE TO COVID-19
PANDEMIC FOR THE DUBLIN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

WHEREAS, Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, and Brian Kemp, the Governor of the State of Georgia, have declared a state of emergency due to the coronavirus COVID-19 Pandemic; and further as a part of his Executive Order dated June 29, 2020, Governor Kemp ordered "that no provision of this Order shall limit, infringe, suspend, or supplant any rights conferred by or any judicial order, judgement, or decree issued pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or constitution of the United States, nor shall any person use any provision of this Order as a defense to an action in violation of a judicial order, judgement, or decree by any court created pursuant to the laws or constitution of this State or the laws or constitution of the United States", and;

Filed in Office, This 23rd day of
Sep 2020 10:30 AM
Cynthia Smith Clerk

WHEREAS, by order dated August 11, 2020, extending prior orders dated March 14, April 6, May 11, June 12 and July 12, 2020, Honorable Harold D. Melton, the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, has found a State of Judicial Emergency and has issued his order directing that the Chief Judge of each Superior Court in each judicial circuit to establish court policies and procedures during the pandemic to ensure public health and safety in the continued operation of all classes of courts including the provision of "comprehensive, written guidelines" that specify "who shall be admitted to the courthouse and courtroom and how public health guidance will be followed," pursuant to the authority granted this court by OCGA Sections 38-3-61 and 38-3-62 this court issues the following Order and Policy regarding procedures to be followed at the Treutlen County Courthouse and Annex until further Order:

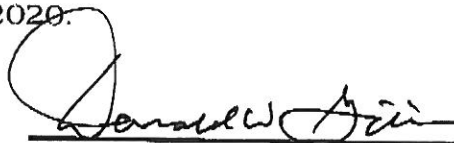
1. No person shall be permitted entry into the Treutlen County Courthouse or Annex who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who has been in close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 or suspected of having COVID-19 and has not subsequently been medically cleared or has symptoms thereof. Those symptoms are fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking, headache, loss of sense of taste, loss of sense of smell or sore throat. "Close contact" means coming within six (6) feet of a so infected person for a period in excess of fifteen (15) minutes.

2. No person shall be permitted entry into the Treutlen County Courthouse or Annex at any manned security station who is not wearing a protective face covering such as a surgical mask, cloth, bandanna, scarf or other covering over their nose and mouth, which must be worn at all times in courtrooms and public areas, except as provided herein. Once any person has left a public area of the courthouse and entered the office of any government official within the building, being a visitor or staff member, it is within the discretion of that elected official or department head to require or not require face coverings and other health related procedures within those offices.
3. The Sheriff of Treutlen County is directed to refuse admittance to the courthouse to persons who are unwilling to comply with these directions and document that said person was turned away on a form provided by the court if that person had court related business at that time. The Sheriff is further directed to temperature scan each person seeking entry into the courthouse and refuse admittance to anyone who has a temperature at 100.4 degrees or more.
4. All persons within public areas and courtrooms of the Treutlen County Courthouse or Annex must conduct themselves to remain at least six feet "socially distant" from other persons

during their time at the courthouse, and the Sheriff is directed to monitor traffic flow in and out of the courthouse and volume of persons within the public areas at all times, and if in the Sheriff or his deputy's discretion the number of persons is such that social distancing cannot be maintained, no further admittance will be allowed until enough persons have conducted their business and left so that social distance can be maintained.

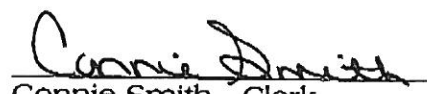
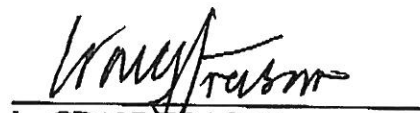
5. The respective Judges of the Superior, State, Magistrate, Juvenile, and Probate Courts of this Circuit shall conduct all court proceedings when possible via videoconference. When it is not possible to conduct a court proceeding by videoconference, the courts have discretion to conduct in person court proceedings, but must limit the number of persons admitted to the courtroom to maintain 6 foot social distancing at all times while at the same time allowing the public to attend court. This will require each court to stagger court proceedings. All persons inside courtrooms shall be required to wear a face covering with the exception of the judge if the judge is on the bench or a witness who is then testifying or an attorney or party engaged in the present proceeding at a social distance from the other participants and as may then be directed by the then presiding judge.

6. If any class of court plans a court day where there will be a high volume of participants, the Chief Judge of that Court will be required to obtain the approval of the Chief Judge of the Superior Court of this Judicial Circuit before doing so. It will be necessary to do this to give the other courts an opportunity to defer their proceedings to accommodate the needs of that court on that particular day, to accomplish the social distancing required by this Order.
7. The court directs all persons to wash or sanitize their hands using personal equipment or the restrooms and sanitizer stations located in public areas upon entering the building and the court directs that the County Board of Commissioners is to ensure that these materials are available to the public in ample supply.
8. The court directs this Order to be prominently posted at all courthouse entrances; provided to all attorneys in the local bar by electronic means; posted on the Treutlen County and the eighthdistrict.org website; published prominently in the Soperton News or Tri-County News at the expense of Treutlen County; and, this order shall be enforced by the contempt powers of the Court.



DONALD W. GILLIS
Chief Judge
Treutlen Superior Court
Dublin Judicial Circuit

Approved:


JON F. HELTON
Judge Superior Court
Dublin Judicial Circuit
JUD GREEN
Judge Superior Court
Dublin Judicial Circuit
SAMUEL A. HILBUN
Judge Juvenile Court
Dublin Judicial Circuit
JAMES C. GARNER
Judge State Court
Treutlen County
T.J. HUDSON,
Judge Treutlen County Magistrate and Probate Court
Connie Smith, Clerk
Clerk of Courts
Treutlen County
L. CRAIG FRASER,
District Attorney
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