

STATE OF MICHIGAN GENESEE COUNTY PROBATE COURT 7 <sup>th</sup> CIRCUIT COURT	PLAN TO RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY PHASE THREE FORWARD	LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER C07 2021-12J P25 2021-09J
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Genesee County Probate Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 257-3528  
7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 424-4355

In accordance with Administrative Order 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the Chief Judge of the Genesee County Probate Court (P25) and the 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court (C07) has consulted with the local health department and determined that gating criteria is satisfied as of June 14, 2021. Specifically:

1. There have been no COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period and,

There is 7-day average of 5 percent or less for positive tests as a percent of total tests; and there is a downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period.

2. State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase Three requirements; and,
3. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities and confirmed that regional health care facilities are able to treat all patients without crisis care; and,
4. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities and obtained data (attached) confirming that there is no evidence of COVID-19 rebound within the local community and no need to implement additional social distancing measures based upon a resurgence of infections in the local area.

A. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and the public, the Probate and Circuit Courts have enacted the following protections:

1. Normal staffing will resume at worksites.
2. Vulnerable employees on temporary leave or working remotely may return to work and practice six-foot physical distancing, wearing masks in a manner consistent with the SCAO [Return to Full Capacity Guide](#). Minimizing exposure to social settings where social distancing is not possible is encouraged.
3. Personal travel should take into account the necessary travel precautions and employees are fully aware of the potential for quarantine requirements upon return.
4. Face coverings for employees will be required in a manner consistent with the SCAO [Return to Full Capacity Guide](#). The court(s) have taken the following

steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:

- a. Placed physical barriers between workspaces that are not at least six feet apart.
  - b. Marked the floor in common spaces to indicate six-foot intervals.
  - c. Required employees to wear masks while in public spaces, and in courtrooms or hearing rooms during formal or informal proceedings.
  - d. Developed, in consultation with local public health officials and legal counsel, a face covering policy for employees that is consistent with [MIOSHA Emergency Rules](#)
  - e. Submitted its employee face covering policy to the regional office.
  - f. Required employees handling mail to wear masks and gloves.
5. Employees will practice good hygiene through hand washing, frequent disinfecting of used items and surfaces, sneezing or coughing into a tissue or elbow, and avoiding touching their faces.
  6. Employees have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.
  7. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper handwashing.
  8. Newly exposed areas (e.g. areas recently opened to the public or returning staff) and shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before use. Examples of shared equipment include copiers, fax machines, and telephones used by more than one employee during a single shift or in consecutive shifts. This equipment should be wiped down with disinfectant or a disinfectant wipe between uses.
  9. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.
  10. The court has developed a contact tracing policy and is prepared to implement contact tracing procedures after receiving notification that the court facility has had confirmed exposure to COVID-19. These procedures will help the court identify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and will identify exposure locations that need to be cleaned and disinfected pursuant to CDC guidelines.
- B. The Probate and Circuit Courts are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:
1. The public will be asked to self-screen using posted screening questions prior to entering the court building and to fill out a screening questionnaire for possible

contact tracing. Screening questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Do you have a cough or worsening cough (excluding chronic cough due to known medical reason)?
- b. Do you have shortness of breath?

OR

- c. Do you have at least two of the following symptoms:
  - Fever
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
- d. Have you had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and you are not fully vaccinated?
- e. Have you traveled internationally in the last 14 days?

Any individual responding “yes” to the screening questions will not be allowed to enter the courthouse until they can pass the screening questions. Screening personnel will notify the court of any individual that does not make it past screening. The court will accept documents for filing from the person. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party to a court proceeding, the court will reschedule the hearing/trial to either a remote proceeding or to a future date when the person may pass courthouse screening. The court must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.

- C. To facilitate increased activity in the courthouse, the court(s) are enacting the following measures related to court proceedings:
  1. Proceedings will be conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Administrative Order No. 2020-6.
  2. In-person court proceedings will be allowed on a limited basis if social distancing and face coverings continue to be required, subject to the individual discretion of a judge who may permit a face covering to be removed to assist with clarity of an audible response, while maintaining social distancing by the speaker.
  3. The public is required to wear masks pursuant to the provisions outlined in the Return to Full Capacity Guidance.
  4. Large venues and common areas in the courthouse (e.g. waiting areas, sit-down dining, etc.) will be open for use using limited six-foot physical distancing.

5. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(c), members of the public or staff that refuse to adhere to social distancing requirements or other mitigation procedures may be asked to leave the court facility.
6. Any member of the public who is asked to leave the court facility must be offered an opportunity to conduct court business virtually, attend court proceedings virtually, file documents in an alternative manner, or confer with court administration to determine alternate arrangements for accessing the court.

The Probate and Circuit Courts are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19 and are continuously evaluating data to assess their readiness to proceed to Phase Four, which is anticipated when a public health announcement is made that COVID-19 has been suppressed within the United States.

Effective: 6.21.2021

Date: June 14, 2021

Duncan M. Beagle /s/  
Duncan M. Beagle, Chief Judge  
Genesee County Probate Court  
7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court