



STATE OF MICHIGAN
55TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT
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ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2021-03

PLAN TO RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY – PHASE TWO (FORWARD)

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 55th District Court has consulted with the local health department and determined that gating criteria is satisfied as of May 14, 2021. Specifically:

1. There have been no COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period; and
 2. There is a 7-day average of 15% 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.
 3. State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and the SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase Two requirements; and,
 4. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities confirming that regional health care facilities are able to treat all patients without crisis care; and,
 5. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities 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 55th District Court has enacted the following protections:
1. Employees are self-screening for COVID-19 symptoms. Employees who feel sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms will not report to work. Employees who feel sick or display symptoms at work will be sent home.¹

¹ Guidance on COVID-19 symptoms is evolving rapidly. The most up-to-date information about symptoms of COVID-19 are available on the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

2. Court employees have been surveyed, and those employees who have self-identified as a vulnerable employee and unable to return to work have been offered appropriate accommodations, including the ability to work remotely.
3. Employees will be encouraged to work remotely where feasible to facilitate social distancing among on-site staff.
4. Face coverings for employees will be required in a manner consistent with the SCAO [Return to Full Capacity Guide](#). The courts have taken the following steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:
 - a. Physical barriers are placed between workspaces that are not six feet apart.
 - b. Marked the floor in common spaces to indicate six-foot intervals.
 - c. Employees are required to wear masks while in public spaces within the courthouse.
 - d. Employees processing mail wear masks and gloves.
 - e. Employees have staggered work assignments to reduce employee size.
5. Employees practice good hygiene through handwashing, frequent disinfecting of used items and surfaces, sneezing or coughing into a tissue or elbow, and avoiding touching their faces.
6. Employees will not travel for non-essential business.
7. Quarantine and/or isolation requirements will be implemented consistent with the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and/or local public health officials.
8. Employees have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.
9. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper hand washing and social distancing.
10. Shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before use. All copier locations have disinfecting wipes.
11. The Court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.

12. The Court 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 55th District Court has enacted the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:

1. Court personnel or security personnel will screen the public prior to entering the court building. Screening questions will include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Do you have a fever greater than 100.0 degrees? [A touchless/ contactless thermometer is also used.]
 - b. Do you have a cough or worsening cough (excluding chronic cough due to known medical reason)?
 - c. Do you have shortness of breath?

OR

- d. 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
- e. Have you had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and you are not fully vaccinated?

Any individual responding “yes” to the screening questions will not be allowed to enter the courthouse. Screening personnel will notify the court of any individual who does not pass the screening procedure. If the person came to the court to file documents, the court will facilitate a means for their filing. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party or witness in a court proceeding, the court will work to reschedule the hearing/trial as 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. In order to facilitate the essential business of the court, the court is maintaining the following measures related to court proceedings:
1. Proceedings are being conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Administrative Order No. 2020-6.
 2. Based upon the discretion of the presiding judge, in-person court proceedings will be allowed on a limited basis. The court will limit the number of attendees in a courtroom to only the parties to the case. The court will continue to livestream court proceedings to make the hearings accessible to individuals not allowed in the courtroom. Face coverings will be required for court in a manner consistent with the [SCAO Return to Full Capacity Guide](#).
 3. Off-site visits with probationers and clients will not resume.
 4. Large venues and common areas in the courthouse may be open for use. Members of the public are required to wear facemasks to the extent they can medically tolerate it. They will be provided by the court prior to entry.
 5. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(C), members of the public or staff who refuse to wear required face coverings or adhere to social distancing requirements 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 55th District Court is regularly conferring with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19.

Effective Date: May 18, 2021

Date:

5-18-21

Donald Allen, Jr.

Honorable Donald Allen, Jr.
Chief Judge

From: [Region2 Info](#)
To: [Donald Allen](#); [Michael Dillon](#)
Cc: [Region2 Info](#)
Subject: D55 2021-03 Plan to Return to Full Capacity - Phase Two - Approved
Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 9:45:50 AM

D55 2021-03 Plan to Return to Full Capacity – Phase Two - Approved

Rescinds D55 2021-02

This is to advise that we have reviewed the above referenced administrative order and find that it conforms to the requirements of MCR 8.112(B). This order is being accepted and filed.

Julia Norton, J.D.
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Region II Administrator
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