

# **COVID-19 MINIMUM STANDARD HEALTH PROTOCOLS FOR COURTS OF ORANGE COUNTY, TEXAS**

The following minimum standard health protocols shall be in effect for Orange County, Texas, courts until further notice:

- All unvaccinated persons entering courtrooms, court offices or congregating in spaces immediately outside of courtrooms are encouraged to wear a surgical type mask. This protocol does not apply to court staff in their work areas.
- Social distancing for unvaccinated persons will be used inside the courtrooms and court offices and in the spaces immediately outside of the courtrooms. This protocol does not apply to court staff in their work areas.
- Disposable microphone covers shall be used and replaced for each person using the microphone.
- Hand Sanitizer dispensers are available at various locations around the courthouse and in the individual courtrooms.
- Courtrooms shall be cleaned regularly.
- Jury selection and/or voir dire may be conducted at the Orange County Expo Center or the Orange County Courthouse to allow for social distancing for unvaccinated persons.
- All persons shall, at least one working day before appearing in court, report to the court staff any diagnosis or symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19 occurring within fourteen days of appearing in court.
- Judges may impose stricter health protocols for their court.
- Court schedules shall be coordinated to avoid the assembly of large groups of court participants and visitors inside the courtroom and court offices and in the spaces immediately outside of the courtrooms. Judges will limit docket sizes to ensure that this can be accomplished.
- Reasonable efforts shall be used to conduct proceedings remotely.

The minimum standard health protocols have been adopted pursuant to the Texas Supreme Court 36th Emergency Order, which was extended by the 38<sup>th</sup> Emergency Order.

Effective May 27, 2021.



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Courtney Arkeen,  
Local Administrative District Judge