

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
COLUMBIANA COUNTY, OHIO
2020 MISC 77

FILED
COLUMBIANA COUNTY
COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
MAY 15 2020

ANTHONY J. DATTILIO
CLERK

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GENERAL ORDER:)
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)
RE: RESUMPTION OF OPERATIONS)
COURT AND HEARING POLICIES AND)
PROCEDURES)

JUDGMENT ENTRY

This matter comes on for further review on May 15, 2020, of the Court's prior Administrative Orders issued in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) public health emergency.

WHEREFORE, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other public health authorities have continued to advise the taking of precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to the COVID-19 virus and to slow the spread of the disease; and

WHEREFORE, in its Responsible Restart Ohio Court Access publication, dated May 7, 2020, the Ohio Supreme Court directed that Courts must establish policies that guide the operations of the Ohio judicial system and protect the health of court employees and the public while also supporting community efforts to control the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to protect the health and safety of the public, court personnel, counsel, litigants, witnesses, and all other case participants, and in order to effectuate the mandate of the Ohio Supreme Court, the General Division of the Columbiana County Court of Common Pleas hereby implements the following policies and procedures, effective May 18, 2020, and until further Order:

1. The Court will follow all Ohio Department of Health directives, including the Director's Stay Safe Order, dated April 30, 2020, and will consult with public health authorities for specific guidance, as necessary.
2. As ordered by the Columbiana County Commissioners and/or public health authorities, upon entering the Columbiana County Courthouse all persons shall wear a face covering, shall have their temperature taken at the front door, and shall answer basic health questions. Failure, refusal, or inability to follow or meet these procedures could result in being denied permission to enter the Courthouse.

3. Unless specifically permitted by the Judge presiding over a hearing, the only persons permitted on the second floor of the Courthouse are the parties to a hearing, their respective counsel, and any victim. All non-parties to a hearing shall remain outside the Columbiana County Courthouse unless specifically directed to enter the building.
4. All persons entering the second floor of the Columbiana County Courthouse shall continuously wear a face covering, unless instructed otherwise by the Judge or Magistrate presiding over a hearing or as otherwise provided by law.
5. All persons entering the second floor of the Columbiana County Courthouse shall continuously observe appropriate social distancing of not less than six (6) feet between themselves and any other person. If required to wait for the commencement of a hearing, a person is permitted to sit, and is hereby directed to sit, in a seat marked with an "X." Upon the commencement of a hearing, all persons shall be seated in a Courtroom as directed by the Judge presiding over a hearing.
6. Counsel shall have any exhibit to be used during a hearing marked and exchanged prior to the commencement of a hearing. A copy of any exhibit shall be provided to the Court or Official Court Reporter with an additional copy placed at the witness stand.
7. Counsel shall question a witness from counsel table or as directed by the Judge or Magistrate presiding over a hearing. Counsel shall limit their movement around the Courtroom in order to maintain appropriate social distancing.
8. In order to prevent any gathering or accumulation of people, and in order to maintain appropriate social distancing on the second floor of the Columbiana County Courthouse, the Court's schedule must operate on time. Unless specifically permitted by a Judge or Magistrate presiding over a hearing, there shall be no allowance for negotiations at the courthouse prior to the commencement of a hearing.
9. When appropriate and with prior notice, hearings will be conducted telephonically or by means other than an in-person hearing.
10. The Court reserves the right to develop and/or apply additional protocols, policies, and procedures as necessary and/or address other logistical matters that may develop, as circumstances dictate. Further, the Court reserves the right to develop and/or apply appropriate exceptions to these policies and procedures on a case-specific basis.
11. Jury trials and grand jury proceedings involve large jury venire pools. These pools often consist of many individuals in the categories identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as being particularly at risk. Therefore, it is anticipated that additional policies and procedures will be developed specifically pertaining to prospective jurors and related jury proceedings.

The cost of filing this Judgment Entry are waived.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



JUDGE SCOTT A. WASHAM


JUDGE MEGAN L. BICKERTON

May 15, 2020

- cc: The Supreme Court of Ohio
- Columbiana County Municipal Court
- East Liverpool Municipal Court
- Security (First and Second floor)
- Jami Shulas, Court Operations
- Sheriff of Columbiana County
- Columbiana County Adult Probation
- Columbiana County Bar Association c/o C. Brooke Zellers, Esq.
- Columbiana County Prosecutor's Office
- Columbiana County Clerk of Courts
- Columbiana County Commissioners
- Columbiana County Law Library