

NOTICE TO THE BAR AND PUBLIC

COVID-19 – CONTINUATION OF CERTAIN PUBLIC HEALTH PRECAUTIONS IN JUDICIARY AREAS OF FACILITIES

COVID-19 trends throughout New Jersey are improving, as reflected in the latest COVID-19 Activity Level Index (CALI) [report](#) posted by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJ DOH). Appropriate public health precautions still remain important, however, especially in indoor locations where individuals are summoned to be present as compared to other public and private places that they choose to visit.

Face Masks and Social Distancing

All individuals who enter or occupy court facilities (including Judiciary areas of mixed-use facilities) for now must continue to (1) wear face masks; and (2) maintain six feet of social distance when possible. Those requirements remain in effect in Judiciary areas occupied by attorneys, parties, jurors, and other external court users, subject to specific exceptions, including for individuals who require an ADA accommodation. Additional exceptions also apply in courtrooms.

Judicial Discretion to Permit Removal of Masks in Courtrooms

Individuals who enter a courtroom should wear a face mask absent further direction from the judge. Effective immediately, judges may permit an individual to remove or lower their face mask if either (a) social distancing of at least six feet is maintained; or (b) the person whose mask is lowered is separated from others by a physical barrier (e.g., plexiglass divider). All individuals always may continue to wear masks if they prefer to do so.

In-Person Jury Proceedings

Face masks and social distancing will be maintained in all in-person jury proceedings (subject to limited judicial discretion as to face masks, as noted above). The Judiciary will provide clear face masks to jurors who are summoned to report for in-person proceedings, including the final phase of criminal jury selections, in-person jury trials, and in-person grand jury sessions. During in-person proceedings, all jurors must wear masks at this time.

Ongoing Review of Public Health Protocols

The Judiciary is continuing to review its policies to ensure alignment with current public health guidance, including recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and NJ DOH, as well relevant actions by the state's Executive Branch. Based on current COVID-19 trends, the Judiciary expects that health protocols will change in the near future. We will provide further information about health and safety protocols in court locations via posted notices and our public website njcourts.gov.

Questions about this notice should be directed to the Office of the Administrative Director of the Courts at (609) 376-3000.



Hon. Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Dated: June 17, 2021