

**Circuit Court Judges**

Michael P. Hatty, Chief Judge  
Circuit and District Courts

L. Suzanne Geddis  
Matthew J. McGivney



**Livingston County Trial Courts**  
204 S. HIGHLANDER WAY, HOWELL, MI 48843

**Probate Court Judge**

Miriam A. Cavanaugh, Chief Judge  
Probate Court

**District Court Judges**

Shauna N. Murphy  
Daniel B. Bain

Administrative Order

C44 2020-14J; rescinds C44 2020 13J

D53 2020-14J; rescinds D53 2020 13J

P47 2020-12; rescinds P47 2020 11J

**Plan to Return to Full Capacity – Return to Phase One**

In accordance with the Michigan Supreme Court’s Administrative Order 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and upon approval of the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO), the Chief Judges of the Livingston County Trial Courts have consulted with the local health department and determined that local health data related to COVID-19 necessitates returning to Phase 1 of operations as of November 18, 2020. Specifically:

1. There have been COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period but deep cleaning of exposed areas and applicable employee self-quarantine actions have been taken;
  2. There is a downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period but local health data shows an upward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period;
  3. State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter in- place have not been rescinded or limited but the SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase One requirements; and,
  4. The Chief Judges have consulted with health authorities and obtained data confirming that regional health care facilities are able to treat all patients without crisis care.
- A. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and the public, the Livingston County Trial Courts have enacted the following protections:
1. Employees will self-screen 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.<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> 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->

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 if their job lends itself to remote work.
3. To the extent possible, court employees who are working remotely will be allowed the opportunity to continue to work remotely.
4. Employees should wear face coverings in court facilities at all times unless six foot social distancing is guaranteed. The court has taken the following steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:
  - a. Implemented staggered shifts of employees to reduce crowd size and the risk of people gathering at start and close times;
  - b. Reconfiguration of common staff and public areas to ensure social distancing;
  - c. Installation of temporary barriers where appropriate distancing cannot be maintained between work stations;
  - d. Employee lunch and break schedules staggered to reduce the number of staff in common areas;
  - e. Employees encouraged to remain in their assigned work areas as much as possible;
  - f. Employees will wear masks while in common areas (hallways, restrooms, lunch/break rooms, etc.), when in contact with the public, and when social distancing is not possible;
  - g. Employees handling mail will wear masks and gloves;
  - h. Encouraged use of electronic filing (email and fax) and filing drop-off in secure mail box outside of courthouse to minimize in-person filing; and
  - i. Encouraged use of online payments and payment drop-off in secure mail box located outside of courthouse to minimize in-person payments.
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 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 handwashing.

10. 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 wipes between uses.
  11. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.
  12. 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 Livingston County Trial Courts are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:
1. The public will be screened by court personnel or security prior to entering the building. Screening questions will include, but are not limited to the following:
    - a. Do you have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees?
    - 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 with a COVID-19 diagnosis?
    - f. Have you traveled internationally or outside of Michigan 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 a court proceeding, the court will work to reschedule the hearing/trial to either a remote proceeding or to a future date when the person may pass courthouse screening. The court will provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.

- C. In order to facilitate the business of the court, the Livingston County Trial Courts 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 shall be limited to only essential matters and other such matters as scheduled by the presiding judge. Access to courtrooms and other spaces shall be limited to no more than 10 persons, including staff, or any number that ensures six-foot social distancing at all times.
  3. Members of the public are required to wear face masks to the extent they can medically tolerate it. Upon request, face masks will be provided by the court prior to entry. Face coverings will be required for court in a manner consistent with the SCAO Return to Full Capacity Guide.
  4. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(c), members of the public or staff that refuse to wear required face coverings or adhere to social distancing requirements may be asked to leave the court facility.
  5. 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.

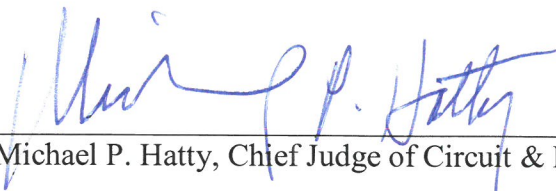
The Livingston County Trial Courts are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19 and are continuously evaluating data to assess their readiness to proceed to the next phase of court capacity.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Effective date: November 18, 2020

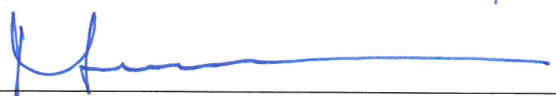
Date:

November 16, 2020

  
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Hon. Michael P. Hatty, Chief Judge of Circuit & District Court

Date:

11/17/2020

  
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Hon. Miriam A. Cavanaugh, Chief Judge of Probate Court