

STATE OF MICHIGAN GENESEE COUNTY PROBATE COURT 7 <sup>th</sup> CIRCUIT COURT	GENESEE COUNTY RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY PHASE ONE	LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020- 08J Circuit 2020- 05J Probate
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Genesee County Probate Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 257-3528  
7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, 900 S. Saginaw St., Flint, MI 48502 (810) 424-4355

**ORDER RE: PLAN TO RETURN TO FULL CAPACITY – PHASE ONE**

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 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and Genesee County Probate Court, the Honorable Duncan M. Beagle, has consulted with the local health department and determined that gating criteria is satisfied and the Courts are able to proceed to Phase One, 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 downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period; and,
  3. State and local orders restricting movement and/or requiring shelter-in-place have been rescinded or limited and SCAO has determined that existing orders would not prevent the court from implementing Phase One requirements; and,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.
- A. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and the public, the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and Genesee County Probate Court 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>1</sup>
  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 work remotely.
  4. Employees in court facilities will maintain social distancing of six feet at all times

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<sup>1</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-testing/symptoms.html>

and wear masks when six-foot physical distance cannot be maintained. The court has taken the following steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:

- a. Placed physical barriers between workspaces that are not at least six feet apart.
  - b. Marked the floor in common spaces to indicate six-foot intervals.
  - c. Required employees to wear masks while in public spaces.
  - d. Required employees handling mail to wear masks and gloves.
  - e. Implemented staggered shifts of employees to reduce crowd size and the risk of people gathering at start and close times.
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. Employees have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.
  8. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper handwashing.
  9. Shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before each 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 wipe between uses.
  10. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.
  11. 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 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and Genesee County Probate Court are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:
1. The public will be asked to self-screen using posted screening questions prior to entering the court building and will be questioned by court personnel or security prior to entering the court building. Screening questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Do you have a cough?
- b. Do you have shortness of breath?
- c. A temperature of 100F or higher?

OR

- d. Do you have at least two of the following symptoms:
  - Chills/Repeated Shaking
  - Muscle pain
  - Sore throat
  - Headache
  - 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 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. The court will immediately provide the following information to any individual who does not pass screening:

1. Contact information for all judicial offices, and the attorney referee office, for notification concerning a court proceeding that an individual is unable to attend. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party to a court proceeding, upon notification that the person is unable to attend, 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;
2. Information for setting future appointments with court clerk offices; and
3. Information related to alternative means of filing with the courts (i.e., other than in-person).

The above will be located on a single card suitable for point of access distribution by screening personnel.

The court must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.

2. As an additional measure to ensure minimal, controlled person-to-person contact in the court facility, the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and Genesee County Probate Court will be closed to the public on Fridays during Phase One, beginning Friday, June 26, 2020, and extending no later than Friday, July 31, 2020.

The closing measure was approved in LAO 2020-07J (Circuit), 2020-04J

(Probate). The State of Michigan developed a Work-Share Program intended to assist qualifying employers with unprecedented fiscal challenges and work force retention associated with COVID-19.

The Genesee County Courts are cooperating with the local funding unit to minimize fiscal implication of COVID-19 and responsibly begin the gradual reopening process.

- C. In order to facilitate essential court business, the following measures related to court proceedings are enacted:
1. Proceedings will be conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Administrative Order No. 2020-6.
  2. In-person court proceedings will be limited to no more than 10 people.
  3. Members of the public are required to wear face masks or coverings to the extent they can be medically tolerated. They will not be provided by the court prior to entry.
  4. 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.
  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 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court and Genesee County Probate Court 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 Phase Two of the return to full court capacity, target date for which is July 13, 2020.

Effective: June 22, 2020

/s/Duncan M. Beagle

Duncan M. Beagle  
Chief Judge  
Genesee County Probate Court  
7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court

6.10.2020

Date