



MEMORANDUM

May 15, 2020

To: All Judicial and Non-Judicial Personnel of the Unified Court System

From: John W. McConnell
Nancy Barry

Re: Coronavirus – Courthouse Procedures

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With the anticipated expansion of courthouse operations in coming days and weeks, we thought it appropriate to summarize the current Unified Court System protocols addressing COVID-19 issues in our facilities.

A. Wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

While present in a UCS facility (other than in a closed private office), all court personnel and visitors shall be required to cover their nose and mouth with a mask or cloth face-covering. The UCS will provide appropriate personal protective equipment to court personnel; members of the public will be required to provide their own.

B. Persons at Risk Shall be Prohibited From Entering Court Facilities

1. Any person who (1) has been diagnosed with, or has had close contact with anyone diagnosed with, COVID-19, and has not obtained medical clearance to appear in public; or (2) has been directed to self-quarantine, isolate or self-monitor for the coronavirus by any doctor, hospital or health agency, and has not obtained medical clearance to appear in public, or (3) has traveled internationally in the previous 14 days; or (4) has flu-like symptoms (including cough, sore throat, temperature of 100.4° or higher, shortness of breath) (collectively, “Persons at Risk”) should not enter a court building or facility.

2. Persons at Risk having business before the court should contact the court by telephone or email and follow instructions on how to proceed.
3. Uniformed court personnel may inquire to ensure that court visitors understand and are in compliance with this directive.

C. Persons at Risk Entering Court Facilities

If a court visitor who self-identifies as a Person at Risk as described in par. B enters a court facility, court personnel shall take the following steps:

1. court uniformed personnel shall be notified; and
2. uniformed personnel shall notify the visitor of the procedure described in section A, and request that the visitor leave the court facility immediately and call the contact number for further information.
3. If the visitor declines to leave the building, a uniformed supervisor shall assess the situation and take appropriate steps (including contacting local medical assistance).
4. at earliest opportunity, court personnel shall direct appropriate cleaning of areas contacted by the visitor.

D. Court Employees

1. If a court employee self-identifies as a Person at Risk as described in par. B, the employee:
 - a. shall not come to work;
 - b. shall notify a work supervisor of the circumstances; and
 - c. shall contact a personal medical provider or public health provider and follow medical instructions.
2. If a court employee self-identifies as a Person at Risk as described in par. B and is present at work,
 - a. the employee shall immediately notify a work supervisor of the circumstances and shall go home, contact a medical provider or public health provider, and follow medical instructions;
 - b. the supervisor shall immediately notify uniformed court personnel;
 - c. at earliest opportunity, court personnel shall direct appropriate cleaning of areas contacted by the employee; and
 - d. uniformed personnel shall apprise other appropriate supervisory personnel of steps as directed by health authorities.

E. Receipt of Notification of a Confirmed Coronavirus Diagnosis

In the event that the court receives notice that a courthouse visitor or employee has been diagnosed with the coronavirus:

1. Senior uniformed personnel on site shall inform uniformed command outside the courthouse, and shall prepare an Unusual Occurrence Report/Aided Report (UOR) that includes the name of the diagnosed person. Court managerial personnel shall contact the diagnosed person, inquire whether that person consents to the disclosure of his or her identity as part of follow-up health and safety notifications to UCS judges and staff, and note in the UOR whether such consent has been received.
2. Court personnel shall review records of any court locations contacted by the diagnosed person, and the duration and nature of such contacts over the prior two weeks.
3. Judges and court staff within these contact areas shall be notified immediately about the diagnosis and the contact. If the diagnosed person has given permission for disclosure of his or her identity, that name may be disclosed in the course of such notification. If not, as required by current law, that identity shall not be disclosed; instead, the diagnosed person shall be described in a general fashion (e.g., “an attorney,” “a court employee working in ____,” etc.). In either case, judges and staff shall be provided with all available details about the scope of the diagnosed person’s presence, time and whereabouts in the courthouse, instructed to contact their personal physicians to receive medical advice, provided excused leave to seek medical advice if they choose, and directed to notify the court of any further developments or medical directives.
4. Best efforts shall be made immediately to notify all attorneys and other members of the public who were in the contact areas during the relevant periods, while keeping the name of the diagnosed person confidential.
5. Local administrators shall inform other UCS personnel in the courthouse of the incident at earliest opportunity, while keeping the name of the diagnosed person confidential unless granted permission to disclose it (as described in pars. 1 and 4).
6. At earliest opportunity, court personnel shall direct appropriate cleaning of areas contacted by the person diagnosed.
7. A public statement describing the incident, without disclosing the identity of the diagnosed person, shall be posted on the UCS internal and public websites.

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In all instances described above, court uniformed personnel shall be notified and an Unusual Occurrence Report/Aided Report shall be prepared. The report shall describe all

courthouse areas visited by the Person at Risk, and time of such visits. Copies of court calendars in such visited areas shall be maintained, in the event that court visitors must be notified of the incident. Appropriate public notice shall issue whenever a Person at Risk is determined to be a high or medium risk for coronavirus contagion according to CDC standards. The Department of Public Safety will follow up with reports of suspected diagnosed courthouse visitor cases as circumstances dictate.

As we return to more conventional work arrangements throughout the State in coming weeks, the health and safety of our workforce remains the top UCS priority. As always, thank you for your dedication and cooperation.

c: County Clerks