

LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE RULES
of the
286th DISTRICT COURT
HOCKLEY AND COCHRAN COUNTIES, TEXAS

Effective January 1, 2023

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RULE 1 - GENERAL RULES WITH RESPECT TO DISPOSITION OF CASES

RULE 1 - GENERAL RULES WITH RESPECT TO DISPOSITION OF CASES

- Rule 1.01 **Calendars and Holidays.**
a. The Court shall publish its calendar at co.hockley.tx.us setting out a schedule for jury and non-jury weeks
b. The Court will observe those holidays recognized for county employees by the respective Commissioners Courts.
- Rule 1.02 **Hours of Court Proceedings.** The Judge shall determine the hours of operation for the Court.
- Rule 1.03 **Time Standards for Disposition of Cases.** To the extent possible, cases shall be brought to trial or final disposition within the time standards as prescribed by Rule 6 of the Rules of Judicial Administration and Rule 1 of the Regional Rules of Administration of the Ninth Administrative Judicial Region.
- Rule 1.04 **Continuances.** With leave of Court, an agreed continuance may be granted without a written motion. Otherwise, continuances will not be granted except for good cause shown upon written motion supported by affidavit. All motions for continuance shall contain a certificate of conference that the request has been discussed with all opposing parties or counsel and that such motion is agreed or opposed. The party filing the motion shall be responsible for obtaining a hearing on the motion in timely fashion. The court may conduct a hearing on a motion for continuance by telephone or by zoom.
- Rule 1.05 **Preferential Settings.**
a. Preferential settings shall be made in accordance with Sections 23.101 and 23.102 of the Government Code.
b. Preferential settings may also be made if, because of unusual circumstances, more than ordinary difficulty would be encountered in having all counsel and witnesses available on the regular docket and a special setting will facilitate the orderly conduct of the Court's business.

- Rule 1.06 **Submission of Orders, Judgments and Instruments.**
a. Agreed, approved or default judgments and orders should be submitted directly to the Court Coordinator for submission to the Judge for signature. All agreed orders or judgments shall be approved as to form by all counsel and/or *pro se* parties. Default judgments shall be approved as to form by counsel.
b. In contested matters, all counsel and *pro se* parties shall make reasonable effort to agree, in writing, to the form of the order to be submitted to the Court. If all counsel and *pro se* parties cannot agree on the form of the order or judgment, the Court will schedule a hearing on entry of the judgment with notice to all parties upon request.
c. All orders shall be submitted for signature within 7 days of the hearing.
- Rule 1.07 **Counsel For Indigents.** Counsel for indigents will be appointed and compensated as required by law and by the current plan governing same.
- Rule 1.08 **Interpreters.** When an interpreter is needed for a party or witness, counsel for the party or counsel who intends to call the witness shall notify the Coordinator as soon as is practical.
- Rule 1.09 **In-Person hearings and Zoom Hearings.** When a request for hearing is necessary with the Court Coordinator, please request whether you prefer zoom or in-person hearing. Please exchange exhibits with counsel prior to the hearing with a copy to the court. If a party, attorney or witness or observer has signs of illness, please request zoom access or do not appear.

RULE 2 - CIVIL CASES OTHER THAN FAMILY AND JUVENILE CASES

- Rule 2.01 **Requests for Contested Non-Jury Settings.**

A request for setting shall be addressed in writing to the Court Coordinator, with notice to all counsel and *pro se* parties who are entitled to notice in the case, and shall include an estimate

of the time required for trial. Court Call or Zoom will be used when necessary.

- Rule 2.02 **Settings for Uncontested Matters.** Settings for uncontested matters, including default judgments, may be obtained through the Coordinator and need not be in writing.
- Rule 2.03 **Jury Trial Settings.** Unless an earlier request is made in accordance with this rule, civil cases in which a jury trial is demanded will automatically be placed on the jury docket approximately 6 months after filing. Requests for settings for jury trials at an earlier date shall include a certification that all discovery is complete, or will be complete at least twenty (20) days prior to the first docket date, that the jury fee has been paid, and that a demand for jury has been filed.
- Rule 2.04 **Docket Calls and Announcements for Jury Trials.**
a. The Coordinator shall send notices to attorneys or *pro se* parties of the time, date, and place of docket call.
b. The attorney who will try the case or an authorized attorney shall be present at the docket call unless the Judge has allowed announcements by other means.
- Rule 2.05 **Assignment of Cases for Trial.** Cases shall be assigned their order for trial at the docket call at the discretion of the Judge.
- Rule 2.06 **Hearings on Pre-Trial Pleas and Motions.** Requests for hearings on pre-trial motions including, but not limited to, temporary injunctions, discovery motions, protective orders, summary judgments and contempt, shall be submitted to the Coordinator for setting. After setting is obtained, it is the responsibility of the moving party to obtain proper notice or citation on all opposing parties entitled thereto.
- Rule 2.07 **Discovery Documents.** Discovery documents shall not be filed with the Clerk unless filing is required by other rule or court order.
- Rule 2.08 **Summary Judgments.**

- a. Summary judgments are heard by submission without oral argument.
- b. Subject to the approval of the Court, for good cause shown, the parties may request oral argument.
- c. Court Call or Zoom is available for hearings, if any.

Rule 2.09 **Dismissals for Want of Prosecution.** The Judge may issue a notice of intent to dismiss for want of prosecution in any case which has not been set for trial or finally disposed of within the time standards set out in Rule 1.03 or within such other time period as the Court deems appropriate according to the nature of the case.

Rule 2.10 **Alternate Dispute Resolution.** The Judge may refer cases for Alternate Dispute Resolution.

Rule 2.11 **Jury Questions and Instructions.**
In all civil jury cases, anticipated jury questions, definitions and instructions shall be submitted to the Court in electronic medium no less than three (3) working days prior to commencement of voir dire examination.

Rule 2.12 **Juror Questionnaires.**

- a. Copies of juror questionnaires which have been returned will be delivered by the Clerk to attorneys or *pro se* parties upon request prior to voir dire unless otherwise ordered by the Court.
- b. Attorneys and *pro se* parties shall not copy juror questionnaires.
- c. Attorneys and *pro se* parties shall return all juror questionnaires to the Clerk at the end of voir dire.
- d. The Clerk shall maintain the confidentiality of juror questionnaires as required by law.
- e. If a party has questions for the jurors, the party shall submit the proposed question to the judge or coordinator for approval at least 30 days prior to the jury trial setting.

Rule 2.13 **Covid Operating Plan**

The Covid Operating plans are attached as standing orders.

RULE 3 - FAMILY AND JUVENILE CASES

- Rule 3.01 **Family Law Cases Generally.** Procedures for Family Law cases shall be as provided in Rule 2 and as supplemented by this rule.
- Rule 3.02 **Inventories and Disposition Proposals in Property Cases.** In disputed property division cases, each attorney shall submit to the Court and opposing counsel not later than the commencement of trial an inventory of property, with values, and debts and a proposed property division including property claimed or recognized as separate property.
- Rule 3.03 **Conference Required in Family Law cases.** Each attorney shall, prior to the day of trial, confer with opposing counsel, if any, regarding settlement, stipulations, estimated time of trial, the extent, description, character and value of property in question, amount of support, medical insurance for any children and the cost thereof, conservatorship, periods of possession and/or access, rights, duties and powers of conservators and other relevant issues.
- Rule 3.04 **Temporary Orders.** Temporary Orders will be by Zoom unless good cause is shown.
All exhibits will be exchanged with the parties and the Court prior to any hearings.
The Court has limited the number of witnesses to the parties only and the Court reserves the right to limit the length of the testimony per side depending upon the court's docket.
All experts, law enforcement and school officials may testify by an affidavit or a report or by letter during temporary orders.
Each side shall submit a financial information report to the court and the opposing side in each case seeking temporary spousal support and/or child support.
All temporary orders involving children shall include injunctive relief prohibiting disparaging remarks, using alcohol/drugs 24 hours prior to and during any possession of the child(ren), and

overnight stays by an unrelated adult during the possession of the child(ren).

Motions to Modify Temporary Orders shall not be heard unless an affidavit is attached to the motion including facts supporting a serious and immediate concern that cannot be addressed at a final hearing.

The Court will consider affidavits from your expert, if any.

The Court does not favor interviewing children who are the subject of the proceeding. This may be conducted by Zoom to avoid missing school.

As a matter of course, the standard injunction regarding property, personal matters and children will be entered against both parties by the Court. No testimony regarding this will be required.

The attorney for each party shall announce to the Court, at the beginning of the hearing, the disputed issues. **The testimony and evidence shall be limited to those specific issues only.**

Rule 3.05 **Spousal Support.**

In all cases where spousal support is requested, each party shall submit a financial information report to the court and the opposing sides showing minimum reasonable needs.

Rule 3.06 **Prove-ups.**

Prove-ups may be conducted by Zoom or by attaching an affidavit in the envelope with the Decree.

RULE 4 -CRIMINAL CASES

Rule 4.01 **Grand Juries.**

a. Terms for grand juries for the 286th District Court shall be January and July in Hockley and Cochran Counties.

Rule 4.02 **Appearance of Defendant and Counsel.** Immediately upon employment, the defense attorney shall file written notice thereof with the District Clerk and provide a copy of same to the attorney for the State and to the Court Coordinator.

- Rule 4.03 **Bond and Bond Forfeiture.**
a. Bond shall be set immediately after indictment.
b. Bond forfeiture will be promptly initiated upon any failure of the defendant to appear after proper notice has been given.
- Rule 4.04 **Docket calls.**
a. The Court Coordinator or her designated agent shall send and post notices to attorneys, bondsmen, and all *pro se* or unrepresented defendants of the time, date, and place of docket call.
b. The attorney who will try the case or an authorized attorney shall be present at docket call unless the Judge has allowed announcements by other means. Zoom appearance is preferred.
c. Defendants without attorneys shall be required to be present at docket call or bond will be forfeited.
- Rule 4.05 **Announcements.**
a. An announcement of “ready” by the attorney for the State means that no plea agreement could be reached, that all witnesses are available and that counsel for the State is ready for trial.
b. An announcement of “ready” by defense counsel means that the defendant and all witnesses are available and that counsel is ready for trial.
c. Cases for which defense counsel announces a guilty plea will be set for plea at a date and time to be determined by the Court.
- Rule 4.06 **Plea Bargains.**
a. Unless good cause is shown, plea bargains will not be approved for cases which have previously been announced by defense counsel for disposition by a plea of guilty, set for guilty plea hearing and subsequently not disposed by guilty plea.
- Rule 4.07 **Speedy Trial.** All cases will be set for trial as expeditiously as possible.
- Rule 4.08 **Pre-Trial Matters.** Pretrial hearings will not be automatically scheduled. Counsel shall advise the Court of any motions to be heard prior to trial and shall obtain a setting from the

Coordinator. Zoom is allowable for pre-trial hearings.

Rule 4.09 **Preferential Settings.** Preferential settings shall be made as required by statute.

Rule 4.10 **Juror Questionnaires.**

- a. Copies of juror questionnaires which have been returned will be delivered by the Clerk to attorneys or *pro se* parties upon request prior to voir dire unless otherwise ordered by the Court.
- b. Attorneys and *pro se* parties shall not copy juror questionnaires.
- c. Attorneys and *pro se* parties shall return all juror questionnaires to the Clerk at the end of voir dire.
- d. The Clerk shall maintain the confidentiality of juror questionnaires as required by law.
- e. If any party has questions for the jurors, the party shall submit the proposed questions to the judge for approval at least 30 days prior to the jury trial setting.

Rule 4.11 **Arraignments and Bond Reduction Hearings.**
Arraignments and Bond Reduction hearings shall be by Zoom.

Rule 4.12 **Paysheets.**
Paysheets for court-appointed counsel in civil cases are due within 30 days of any hearing or trial or plea. Untimely paysheets may not be paid.

RULE 5-JURY MATTERS

Rule 5.01 **Management of Juries.** The Judge will adopt or cause to be adopted a jury plan for each county. Covid plans are under standing orders.

RULE 6- ATTORNEY MATTERS

RULE 6.01 **Conflicting Settings.**

- a. An attorney seeking to have a case continued on the grounds that the attorney is to go to trial in another court, shall furnish

the Court and opposing counsel with a motion for continuance, which shall disclose the name of the court in which such other case is pending, the style of the case, the time for which such case is set, and the date on which the conflicting setting was made. A copy of the setting notice of the conflicting case shall be attached to the motion. In the event the conflicting case is passed, continued or disposed of prior to or during the week in which the case is set for trial under these Rules, the attorney shall immediately notify the Judge and opposing counsel of such fact.

b. Rule 10(b) of the Regional Rules of Administration of the Ninth Administrative Judicial Region shall establish the priority of cases in the event of conflict between courts.

Rule 6.02 **Substitutions**. Any attorney substituting for another attorney of record shall file with the Clerk a written notice of substitution signed by the client together with a proposed order permitting the substitution. At the time of filing, such attorney shall furnish a copy of the notice to the Judge, the attorney for whom substitution is being made, and all other attorneys of record or *pro se* parties.

Rule 6.03 **Withdrawal**. If there is no substitution of counsel as provided in Rule 6.02, no attorney of record shall attempt to withdraw without presenting a motion and obtaining from the Court an order granting leave to withdraw. Such motion shall be accompanied by the client's written consent to such withdrawal or a certification that a copy of such motion has been mailed to the client at his/her last known address, with notice advising the client that the motion will be presented to the Court at a date not less than ten (10) days after mailing, and that any objection to such withdrawal should be made to the Court in writing before such date. Such notice shall be included within the motion or a copy of the letter attached to the motion. A copy of the motion shall also be delivered or mailed to opposing counsel. Such leave may be denied if withdrawal will delay trial. If leave is granted, the attorney shall notify the party and all other attorneys or *pro se* parties of such action by mail and

file proof of notice with the Clerk.

RULE 7 - ATTORNEY VACATIONS

Rule 7.01 **Attorney Vacations.** Attorneys may notify the Court of scheduled vacations in accordance with Rule 11 of the Regional Rules of Administration of the Ninth Administrative Judicial Region.

RULE 8-COURTROOM DECORUM

Rule 8.01 **Trial Witnesses and Exhibits.**

a. Counsel shall examine witnesses while seated at counsel table. If counsel needs to approach the witness, counsel may do so without asking leave of court unless instructed otherwise.

b. No physical or documentary evidence shall be published to the jury without leave requested and granted by the Judge.

c. Exhibits shall be exchanged with the parties and the court prior to any trial or hearing.

Rule 8.02 **Conduct of Counsel.**

Counsel shall conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of professionalism set out in THE TEXAS LAWYER'S CREED and shall preserve order and decorum in court proceedings and be courteous to litigants, jurors, witnesses and other lawyers. See Canon 3 B. (3) and (4), Texas Code of Judicial Conduct.

Rule 8.03 **Conduct of Parties, Witnesses and Spectators.**

All counsel, parties, witnesses and spectators shall wear appropriate attire and conduct themselves in a dignified and courteous manner. During the course of a trial or hearing, no person shall approach the Judge, Clerk or other participants in the hearing (including counsel) about matters not related to the hearing, without the permission of the Court.

Rule 8.04 **Audio or Video Devices, Telephones and Recording of Proceedings.**

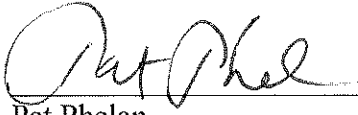
All court proceedings shall be reported by the Court Reporter of

the 286th District or a deputy court reporter as permitted by the Judge. Without prior consent from the Judge, no person shall make audio, video or any other type of recordings of court proceedings. All cell phones shall be turned off during court proceedings.

Miscellaneous Order

The foregoing Local Administrative rules are adopted to be effective January 1, 2023.

Your cooperation is appreciated.



Pat Phelan
286th District Judge

Jury Proceeding Addendum to COVID-19 Operating Plan for the HOCKLEY County and COCHRAN County Judiciary

Effective on and after April 1, 2021

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of jurors, litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of **Hockley and Cochran counties** will implement, in addition to the procedures and protocols in the previously submitted COVID-19 Operating Plan, the following protective measures for jury proceedings:

General

1. All judges will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person jury proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration.
2. Except for criminal cases where confinement in jail or prison is a potential punishment, judges may conduct remote jury proceedings if the court follows the requirements of the hearings on objections or motions section below and ensures that all potential and selected petit jurors have access to technology to participate remotely. Judges may conduct remote jury proceedings in a criminal case where confinement in jail or prison is a potential punishment only with appropriate waivers and consent obtained on the record from the defendant and the prosecutor.

Jury Proceeding Approval Process

1. Judges wishing to conduct a jury proceeding will follow the procedure requested by the RPA and the OCA to obtain approval to proceed with the jury proceeding from the local administrative district judge and Regional Presiding Judge.

Hearings on Objections or Motions Related to Proceeding

1. Parties who are scheduled for a jury proceeding are encouraged to make any objections or motions related to proceedings at least 10 days prior to the trial setting.
2. Any objections or motions related to proceeding with a jury proceeding will be heard by the judge presiding over the case at least seven days prior to the jury proceeding or as soon as practicable if the objection or motion is made or filed within seven days of the jury proceeding.

Communication Protocols

1. Each judge with an approved in-person jury proceeding will require the parties to communicate with the court if any participant in the jury proceeding, including attorneys, parties, attorney support staff, or witnesses, has tested positive for COVID-19

within the previous 14 days prior to any portion of the jury proceeding, currently has symptoms of COVID-19, or has had recent known exposure to COVID-19.

2. If the approved in-person jury proceeding involves an incarcerated participant, the judge will require the sheriff to report any positive COVID-19 test of the incarcerated participant within the previous 30 days prior to any portion of the jury proceeding, any current symptoms of COVID-19, or any recent known exposure to COVID-19.

Scheduling

1. Judges should attempt to alert parties who will not be proceeding prior to the day of trial to reduce attendance at the court facility.

Summoning Jurors

1. The jury clerk must include with in-person juror summonses information regarding precautions that have been taken to protect the health and safety of prospective jurors and COVID questionnaires that elicit from prospective jurors information about their exposure or vulnerability to COVID-19.
2. Judges will consider using juror questionnaires for voir dire to assist in shortening the length of voir dire or the number of venirepersons.
3. Excuses or requests to reschedule from in-person prospective jurors who have been potentially exposed, who are symptomatic, and who are vulnerable or live with someone vulnerable to COVID-19 will be liberally granted.

Location for Jury Selection, Trial, and Deliberation

1. The following locations have sufficient space to permit adequate social distancing and will be used for in-person jury proceedings:¹
 - a. Jury Qualification: Mallett Center or Local School Gym or Auditorium or Activity Center
 - b. Voir Dire: Mallett Center or Activity Center or Local Gym or Auditorium
 - c. Trial: 3d Floor, District Courtroom or Cochran District Courtroom
 - d. Jury Deliberation: 286th District Courtroom. If necessary, all court participants other than jurors will leave the courtroom.
2. Security protocols at the locations for jury proceedings have been reviewed with the appropriate courthouse security personnel and are adequate for the proceeding.

Screening

1. In addition to the requirements of the previously submitted in-person Operating Plan, all court participants and observers attending an in-person jury proceeding will be screened for elevated temperatures and will be questioned to determine if the individual has recently had symptoms of COVID-19 or been exposed to COVID-19.
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2. All participants in a trial who are incarcerated will be screened by the jail/prison prior to transport to the courtroom and any known exposure, symptoms, or COVID-19 positive test results within the past 30 days will be reported to the judge presiding over the jury trial prior to the transport of the participant to the courtroom.

Face Coverings

1. In addition to the requirements of the previously submitted in-person Operating Plan, all persons entering the common areas of a courthouse, including a courtroom or any other location being used to conduct a jury trial, may required to wear a face covering.
2. All court participants may wear face coverings from jury qualification through the end of trial.
3. Court participants who may need to lower their face mask to speak or for a short period of time may wear a face shield. When speaking, you will be permitted as a court participant to lower his or her mask so long as a face shield is worn, and the person speaking is immobile.

Social Distancing

1. Social distancing of all court participants and observers will be maintained at all times during the jury proceeding, including during the trial and deliberation.
2. Special attention will be paid by courts to ensure adequate social distancing and managed exits of individuals during breaks, especially when dismissing large groups of people for a break.

Alternate Jurors

1. Each judge with an approved in-person jury proceeding will be encouraged to consider selecting alternate jurors to permit the trial to continue in the event of a juror becoming ineligible to serve for a reason unrelated to that person's exposure to or contraction of COVID-19.

Microphone Protection Protocols

1. Judges will limit, to the degree possible, the shared use of microphones during the jury proceeding.
2. If a microphone must be shared, judges will limit the passing of the microphone unless the microphone is cleaned between each user.
3. Disposable microphone covers will be placed on shared microphones and changed between each user.

Exhibit/Evidence Management

1. Judges will limit, to the degree possible, the use of physical or paper exhibits/evidence where feasible or appropriate by converting the exhibit/evidence to a digital form.

2. When physical or paper exhibits/evidence is required, judges will reduce the exchange of that exhibit/evidence to the number of persons necessary and will limit passing the exhibit/evidence to the individual members of the jury.
3. If an exhibit/evidence is required to be transferred from person-to-person, single use gloves will be provided, worn, and discarded immediately after handling the exhibit/evidence.
4. During jury deliberations, judges will make efforts to provide the jury with access to digital exhibits/evidence that would normally be shared with the jury during deliberation. Where digital exhibits/evidence is not feasible, judges will consider limiting the transfer of the exhibits/evidence from juror-to-juror by spreading the exhibits/evidence on a table for inspection from the table in the jury deliberation room.

Witnesses

1. Judges will inquire whether witnesses to the proceedings have COVID-related issues.
2. To the degree constitutionally permissible or with the consent of the parties, judges will permit witnesses to testify remotely via videoconference, especially if that witness has symptoms of or a recent positive test for COVID-19, has been recently exposed, or is vulnerable to contracting COVID-19.

Food Precautions

1. Courts that provide food to jurors or other participants during a jury proceeding will ensure individual food portions, such as individually boxed meals, are provided.

Cleaning

1. In addition to the requirements of the previously submitted in-person Operating Plan, frequent cleaning protocols in the courtrooms and facilities will be maintained throughout the jury proceeding as appropriate.
2. Shared spaces such as witness stands, seating in the gallery, and seating during qualification/voir dire will be cleaned during transitions of those spaces.
3. Seats for members of the jury panel and selected jurors will be assigned to reduce potential transmission and the need for more frequent cleaning.

I have attempted to confer with all judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building regarding the Jury Proceeding Addendum to the Operating Plan. In developing the plan, I consulted with the local health authority and county judge, documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Date: 4/1/2021

Local Administrative District Judge

Covid-19 Operating Plan Summary for Hockley and Cochran Counties In person Jury and Non-Jury

No court in person participant may have tested positive for COVID-19 within 30 days.

If feverish, equal to or greater than 99.6 degrees, or if coughing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or having known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have Covid-19 shall not be permitted to enter the courtroom and should seek medical advice. Individuals will submit to having his/her temperature taken.

Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised should contact the court in advance for accommodations.

Hand sanitizer shall be used prior to entering the courtroom. Sanitizing should be routinely performed, including when a transition of participants occurs.

Inmates being transported from the jail to the courtroom will be screened for Covid-19 symptoms and have his/her temperature taken prior to transport and prior to entry in the courtroom.

All persons not from the same household who are permitted in court will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet or current CDC or WHO requirements.

You may seat in designated, marked areas only.

The counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, clerk, court reporter, and bailiff seating shall maintain social distancing.

Individuals are permitted to wear masks especially if he/she is in attendance in court more than 1 hour.

Exhibits must be exchanged in advance by pdf to the court, court reporter and to each side to avoid contact. We will try to put the exhibit you are discussing with the witness on the court's television during the testimony. If an exhibit must be touched, disposable gloves are required.

Please let the court know in advance if the "Rule" is called for so that we can take care of the "Rule" with as little interaction with the courtroom and the participants as possible.

Face coverings are required unless it's the witness or the attorney examining the witness.

If a witness or party cannot attend because he/she has COVID-19 symptoms, we will try to allow his/her testimony by zoom.

Please do not share microphones. Please disinfect the microphones after each use.

It is encouraged that witnesses shall wait in the car until it is his/her time to testify to limit interaction. If this is not possible, the witness must remain outside of the courtroom, maintain social distancing, no interactions with other offices, and wear facial coverings.

Use of the elevator or restrooms should be limited. If the elevator must be used, please limit to same household and please disinfect after use. There may not be any food or drinks.

THESE RULES, REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES ARE FOR OUR PROTECTION AND THE PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC. AS YOU KNOW, ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES MAY BE ADDED.

Remote are hearings are preferred at this time. Remote hearings must not be possible or practical.

Sincerely,

PAT PHELAN, JUDGE PRESIDING