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CLERK'S OFFICE
JUVENILE COURT
HENRY COUNTY, GA

IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF HENRY COUNTY
STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE:

REVISED STANDING ORDER FOR HENRY JUVENILE COURT PROCEDURES
DURING CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19 PANDEMIC
Effective July 1, 2021

IN RECOGNITION OF the ongoing worldwide coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, and its continuing to affect Henry County and the State of Georgia, the Juvenile Court of Henry County, Georgia, in consultation with the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Henry County government, this Court desires to continue to afford protection to the public and county employees accessing Henry County's Judicial Center. Accordingly, the Court herewith adopts the following guidelines for in-court proceedings and for otherwise conducting business with Henry Juvenile Court. The following **Guidelines** are herewith made the Order of this Court.

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of these guidelines is to provide for safe and orderly access (including public access to those proceedings where public access is allowed under applicable Georgia law) to conduct business with the Juvenile Court and to attend and participate in all judicial proceedings conducted in Juvenile Court, while making reasonable and necessary provisions for the health and safety of all persons attending court or working in the Henry County Judicial Center and in Henry County Juvenile Probation Office across the street from the Judicial Center.
2. **Definitions.**
 - a. "Facemask" means a covering of the mouth and nose but not the rest of the face.
 - b. "Judicial Center" means the Henry County Judicial Center, 44 John Frank Ward Boulevard, McDonough, Georgia. For purposes of this Order, "Judicial Center" also encompasses the Henry Juvenile Court's Probation Offices that are located across John Frank Ward Boulevard from the Judicial Center.
 - c. "Public area" means all parts of the Judicial Center (and Probation Office) not reserved for staff.
 - d. "DPH" means the Georgia Department of Public Health.
3. **Directions for those who have, have been exposed to, or are especially vulnerable to, COVID-19.**
 - a. Persons who have been diagnosed with COVID-19; who have been exposed to the Coronavirus or to COVID-19 within 14 days; or who are experiencing fever or cough, should **NOT** attempt to enter the Judicial Center, our Juvenile Court Clerk's office, Probation office, or any courtroom, waiting room or conference room therein, in an effort to conduct any business with or attend any court proceeding in Henry Juvenile Court; rather, he/she should call the telephone number provided with your court notice, or at the door, to speak with someone with Henry Juvenile Court for further instructions.

b. Persons who are immune-compromised or medically fragile, or living in a household with someone who is immune-compromised or medically fragile; or who are over age 65; or who have child care issues due to COVID-19 or have with other health limitations that make them especially vulnerable to coronavirus/COVID-19 are invited to call the telephone number provided with your court notice, or at the door, to speak with someone with Henry Juvenile Court. You may be able to avoid appearing in Court and/or travelling to the Judicial Center by calling ahead.

c. All persons, but particularly those described in paragraphs 3(a) and 3(b) above, are encouraged to attend any court proceeding by virtual technology (i.e. Zoom videoconferencing platform) in lieu of live attendance. If any such person is seeking to observe and is not a party or witness appearing to participate in a court proceeding, they are encouraged to access the proceeding on the internet via You-tube (but only if the particular hearing of interest is one that is open to the public as closed hearings will not be found on You-tube and you would not be able to observe any such closed hearing live in the courthouse).

d. Anyone who works in the Judicial Center with known or suspected COVID-19 shall be isolated, and any person with COVID-19 exposure likely to result in infection shall be quarantined, in accordance with the DPH Seventh Amended Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures found at <https://www.gasupreme.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/7-Seventh-Amended-Administrative-Order-for-Public-Health-Control-Measures.pdf>, or any subsequent version thereof.

e. Court personnel who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or who have been exposed to it as defined by the Henry County return-to-work protocol shall comply with that protocol before returning to work.

f. When there is reason to believe that anyone who works at or has visited the Judicial Center has been exposed to COVID-19, DPH or the local health department shall be notified and notification of persons who may have been exposed shall occur as directed by DPH or the local health department.

4. **Admission to the Judicial Center.** All persons entering the Judicial Center for purposes of attending Court proceedings in Henry Juvenile Court, or contacting and/or conducting business with Henry Juvenile Court staff **SHALL:**

- a. Be screened for cough, fever and recent exposure to coronavirus/COVID-19; and
- b. Wear a facemask at all times while in the public areas of the Judicial Center (provided at the door if needed); and
- c. Comply with directives of court and security personnel building signage regarding appropriate distancing; and
- d. Comply with all provisions of this Standing Order.

5. **Movement within the Judicial Center.** The afore-identified Persons within the Judicial Center, both inside and outside of courtrooms, **SHALL:**

- a. Stay at least six feet from all other persons (except those with whom they are related or with whom they traveled to court), to the extent practicable; and
- b. Not board elevators with other persons except those with whom they are related or with whom they traveled to court, and

- c. Wear a face mask (that fully covers both nose and mouth) at all times while in the public areas of the Judicial Center, including the courtrooms; and
- d. Not congregate or loiter in the hallways in a way which obstructs other persons' access to elevators, offices or courtrooms, or otherwise obstructs persons from maintaining appropriate social distancing, and
- e. Comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing and other requirements pursuant to this Standing Order.

6. **Admission to courtrooms and/or waiting areas.** Persons entering Juvenile Court courtrooms or waiting areas **SHALL:**

- a. Sit in one and only one designated area per room or area, and
- b. When notified that a room or area is full, follow instructions for seating elsewhere, and
- c. Wear a facemask (that fully covers both nose and mouth) at all times while in the courtroom, any waiting room/area or any conference room, and any other public space in the courthouse, and
- d. Comply with directives of court and security personnel regarding appropriate distancing and other compliance mandates with this Standing Order.
- e. Due to the limited seating, persons with business before the Court are encouraged not to bring nonessential persons with them, especially children.
- f. Anyone using a pen supplied by the Court must return it upon request for cleaning.
- g. To allow for seating that maintains social distancing, each person shall sit in a seat, which has been pre-placed by court staff.
- h. No one shall sit in a seat not designated for occupancy. **CHAIRS SHALL NOT BE MOVED FROM THEIR DESIGNATED LOCATION, EXCEPT BY AUTHORIZED COURT PERSONNEL.** Technology, when available, may allow viewing of any court proceedings prescribed by law as open to the public (many hearings held in Juvenile Court are not open to the public). Parties and witnesses summoned to appear for a court hearing shall be afforded priority for seating in the courtrooms and in the court's waiting area. Those not entitled to such priority may be required to move to other locations.
- i. Persons in the waiting area shall maintain order and quiet at all times so as not to disturb court proceedings and any televised access to any court proceeding.

7. **Special court procedures.** Due to the pandemic, the Court is employing special procedures to minimize the risk to everyone's health. To this end, we are continuing to conduct many court hearings virtually utilizing the Zoom videoconferencing platform. When live, in-courtroom hearings are scheduled, the courtroom will be limited to designated seats, designed to require distancing; and distancing will be enforced in waiting areas and in conference rooms as well as in the courtroom. These precautions are also enforced in the Clerk's office. Handling of paperwork will be kept to a minimum. Court personnel will sanitize areas of the courtroom between users.

To the extent practicable, and as allowed by law and the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Georgia, all Juvenile Court proceedings required to be open to the public shall be open to the public by either live attendance and/or by online live-

streaming via You-Tube. A link to viewcourt by live streaming shall be posted on Henry County's webpage.

8. Hand sanitation. Regular hand sanitation is encouraged and supplies located in the common areas of the Judicial Center or in the courtroom may be utilized. Those with business before the Court are encouraged to utilize those supplies and to vigorously clean and sanitize their hands before, during and after accessing the Judicial Center and the Juvenile Courtrooms and other facilities.

9. Staff. Except when in their individual designated workspace, all rules specified above for guests to the Judicial Center/Juvenile Court shall equally apply to all Henry Juvenile Court staff. Even when in non-public areas of the courthouse, Staff shall continue to utilize facemasks and social distancing when that area is being accessed by other employees.

10. Teleconference protocols. Persons participating in court proceedings by teleconference (i.e. Zoom or similar virtual platform) shall take no actions which disrupt the proceedings. More specifically, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, participants shall observe the following instructions:

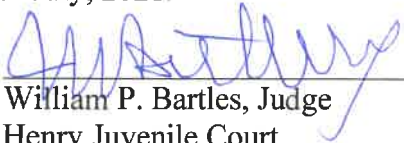
- A. Dress as if in court. Sit at up-right chair at a table or desk.
- B. No food or drinks allowed during session.
- C. Be in a room or location where no one else can audibly or visually disrupt the proceedings.
- D. Must participate via audio AND video.
- E. Must be in a well-lit room or area and must always show face on screen. Do not leave the screen to run errands.
- F. No hats or headcovers (unless for religious purposes).
- G. Make sure device is fully charged so no interruption in participation.
- H. No texting, talking to third parties, net surfing, emailing, or doing anything else during session that would be a distraction.
- I. No lying down, lounging, driving or leaving the video screen.
- J. No smoking or vaping.
- K. No use of profanity.

11. Contempt of Court. The procedures outlined in this Order are necessary for the safe, efficient operation of the Court. Persons failing to observe these procedures may be attached for contempt of Court.

12. The Clerk shall post a copy of this Order prominently at the entrance to the Judicial Building, at the entrance to the Clerk's office, and at the entrance to the waiting area shared by the Courts two courtrooms. Further, the Clerk shall distribute copies of this Order to all employees of the Court and to all attorneys regularly practicing before the Court.

13. Duration of Order. This Order shall expire December 31, 2021, unless terminated earlier or extended for additional duration for good cause.

SO ORDERED, this 9th day of July, 2021.



William P. Bartles, Judge
Henry Juvenile Court