

## **Revisions to Twentieth Judicial Circuit Operations Plan**

### ***Masks required in all 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit courthouses effective August 3rd***

On July 29, 2021, Florida Supreme court Chief Justice Canady issued Administrative Order (AOSC 21-17, Amendment 1) related to COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols and Emergency Operational Measures in the Trial Courts. This amended order was issued to modify and extend previously enacted temporary health and safety protocols. Under Protocol 1B, unless required by federal, state or local laws, rules or regulations or unless authorized by section 1C, a court may not require the wearing of a face mask or physical distancing in a courthouse. Under Protocol 1C, If warranted by local health conditions, the Chief Judge may require the wearing of face masks by all persons in a courthouse and/or physical distancing measures to be instituted during an in-person court proceeding.

Due to local health conditions, Chief Judge McHugh has issued local AO 2.41- First Amended requiring all judges, court staff, members of the public, attorneys, litigants, witnesses, observers, vendors media, law enforcement and employees of all other occupants of the courthouse or court facility to wear a face mask in all public areas of the 20<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit courthouses to mitigate the transmission of the Delta COVID-19 variant. Face masks will be required to be worn while conducting court business or attending a court proceeding. If a person does not have a face mask, one will be provided at no cost. At this time, the 20<sup>th</sup> Circuit will not be instituting physical distancing measures. Requests for social distancing will be handled by the presiding judge.

Jury trials will continue to be conducted with appropriate health and safety precautions in place. Remote technology is still strongly encouraged and will still be used as an alternative to in-person proceedings, when appropriate, to facilitate the efficient and expeditious processing of cases. However, Courtrooms are open to view court proceedings.

The Chief Judge and our Trial Court Administrator will continue to review local health conditions on a weekly basis in our five counties.

These protocols and measures shall remain in effect until otherwise vacated or superseded by a subsequent court order.

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