

COVID-19 OPERATING PLAN FOR THE CITY OF BERTRAM MUNICIPAL COURT

Effective August 1, 2020

Presiding Judge Peggy Simon

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the Justice Center building housing the court, the Municipal Court of Bertram, Burnet County, Texas will implement the following protective measures:

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 proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Officer of Court Administration regarding social distancing, maximum group size, other restrictions and precautions.
2. All judges will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceeding remotely.
3. The presiding judge of the municipal court will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with in the city.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than August 1, 2020.

Judge and Court Staff

1. Judges and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring requirements: The Judge and court staff are encouraged to check their own temperatures at home before coming to the court building, If any judge court clerk, or court staff member has a temperature equal to or greater than 100°F, that person will not be permitted to enter the offices or courtroom and shall be sent home and should monitor their medical condition and seek the counsel and advice of their personal physician.
3. Judge or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 100°F, or with new or worsen signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath or 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 will not be permitted to enter the building and should seek medical advice.
4. Judges and court staff are required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
5. Protective Measures: All court staff and judges shall wear cloth, fabric, or surgical masks or bandana that completely cover their mouth and nose, practice social distancing of a minimum of 6 feet from any other person, using antimicrobial hand sprays and gels, such as Purell and Germ-X utilize frequent hand washing, especially after handling any documents, touching any

doorknobs, computer keyboards, telephones, etcetera. Staff will also ensure that their immediate work area is periodically wiped down with cleaners that contain sanitizing properties that kill viruses and bacteria, such as **Clorox®** wipes and sprays.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building:
No more than 4 persons at a time will be admitted into the courtroom, in addition to court security personnel, the judge, and the court clerk. All persons in the courtroom and in the lobby, waiting to be processed, shall wear cloth, fabric covering, bandana, or surgical mask that completely covers their mouth and shall maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet between any other person, inside the courtroom and while in the court building, such as the lobby.

Vulnerable Populations

1. 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 system are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable population.
2. Each judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the courts' websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building.
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by telephone, teleconference or by video conference.

Social Distancing

1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the court building will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet.
2. Each restroom has been evaluated to determine the appropriate capacity to ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity has been posted on each restroom door.
3. Public common areas, including breakrooms and snack rooms, have been closed to the public.

Gallery

4. The maximum number of persons permitted in the gallery of the courtroom has been determined and posted. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff.
5. The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to appropriate social distancing in the seating. Seating is limited to every other row.

6. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, clerk, and bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been placed at the entrances to the building, outside of the courtroom, and outside of bathrooms.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' bench, and in the hallway.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in multiple locations in the court building.

Screening of all persons entering Court Building

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, Court staff/or Bailiffs will ask the individuals if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; have traveled outside the country or in contact with one that has; or have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals who indicate "yes" to any of these questions will be refused admittance to the court building and will be advised that the court will re-set their court date.
2. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including face masks and gloves.
3. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, Court Staff/ or Bailiffs will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 100°F will be refused admittance to the building.

Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face covering at all times, which shall be either cloth or fabric covering, bandana, or surgical mask that completely covers their mouth and nose.

Cleaning

1. Court Building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every working day.
2. Court building cleaning staff will clean the courtrooms between every hearing, between morning and afternoon proceedings and at the end of each day the courtroom is used.
3. Court building cleaning staff has been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
4. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

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

July 22, 2020

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Peggy L. Simon", written over a horizontal line.

Presiding Judge of Municipal Court
Honorable Peggy Simon



Bertram Police Department



Dewayne Kyle
Chief of Police

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COVID-19 PROTOCOL

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY THE BAILIFF IS TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS PRIOR TO ALLOWING ENTRY INTO THE COURT:

CDC RECOMMENDED SPECIFIC QUESTIONS:

1. HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOME HAD CONTACT WITH ANYONE WHO HAS BEEN TESTED FOR OR WHO IS CURRENTLY IN QUARANTINE FOR CORONAVIRUS?
2. ARE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOME EXPERIENCING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS; FEVER, COUGH, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, FATIGUE OR BODY ACHES?
3. WITHIN THE LAST 14 DAYS HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOME HAD CONTACT WITH ANYONE KNOWN TO HAVE ANY OF THOSE SAME SYMPTOMS?

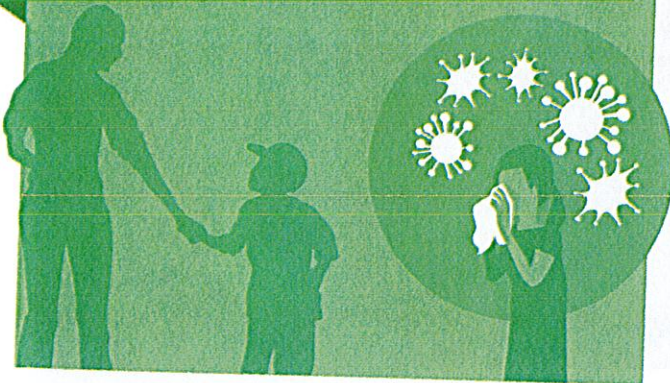
***IF ANY OF THE ABOVE ARE ANSWERED WITH A YES ADVISE THE SUBJECT TO RESCHEDULE THE CASE WITH THE COURT FOR ANOTHER DATE TO ENSURE THERE HAS BEEN A 14 DAY GAP BETWEEN SYMPTOMS/EXPOSURE AND THE COURT DATE.**

ADVISE ALL SUBJECTS ENTERING THE COURT THAT FACE COVERINGS ARE MANDATORY AND THAT SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS WILL BE ENFORCED.

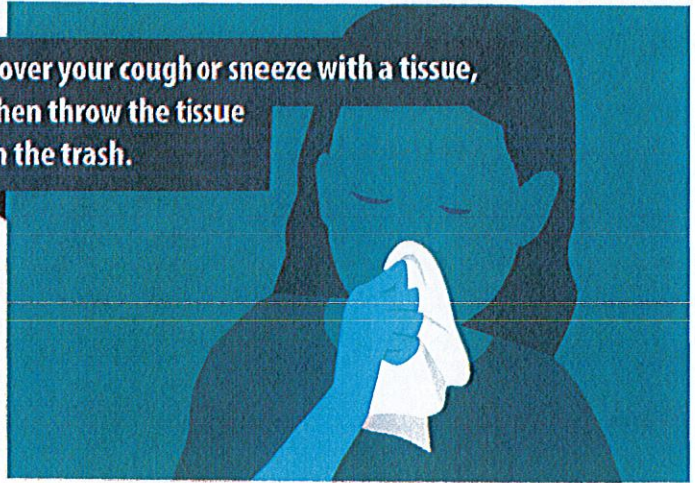
STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

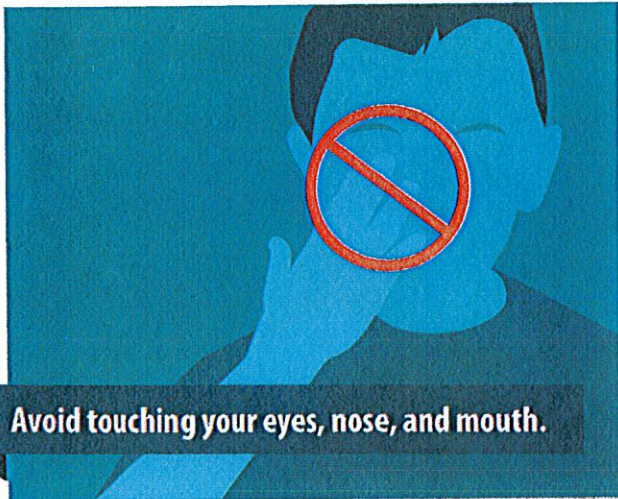
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



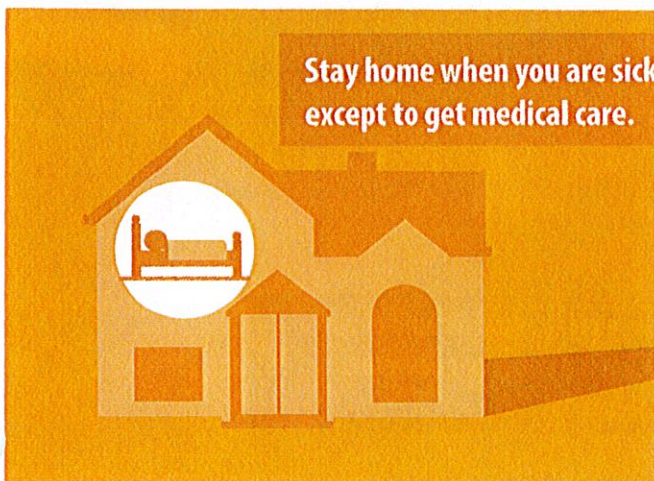
Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



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Texas Department of State
Health Services

For more information: dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus

COVID-19: What to Do



Wash hands often for 20 seconds and encourage others to do the same.



If no soap and water available, use hand sanitizer with at least **60% alcohol**.



Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw the tissue away.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Disinfect surfaces, buttons, handles, knobs and other places touched often.



Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Symptoms of COVID -19 may show up 2-14 days after exposure and may include fever, cough and shortness of breath. If you are in generally good health and have a mild illness, stay home and take care of yourself like you would for the flu. If symptoms worsen, call your doctor.

If you are 65 years or older and/or have other medical problems like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer – and have fever or symptoms - call your doctor. If you are not sick enough to be hospitalized, you can recover at home.

COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019



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Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

updated 03/10/20
3:17 pm

For updates and more information, visit dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

FACT
1

Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

People of Asian descent, including Chinese Americans, are not more likely to get COVID-19 than any other American. Help stop fear by letting people know that being of Asian descent does not increase the chance of getting or spreading COVID-19.

FACT
2

The risk of getting COVID-19 in the U.S. is currently low.

Some people who live in or have recently traveled to places where many people have gotten sick with COVID-19 may be monitored by health officials to protect their health and the health of other people in the community.

FACT
3

Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.

FACT
4

You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

FACT
5

There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



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