



STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT
22ND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
McHENRY COUNTY, ILLINOIS



July 8, 2021

Chief Judge Enters Order Regarding Social Distancing and Ends Activation of Continuity of Operations Plan

For Immediate Release

FROM: The Chambers of Chief Judge James S. Cowlin

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(Woodstock, IL) On July 8, 2021, Chief Judge James S. Cowlin, pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Order, entered an Administrative Order, regarding social distancing in the Michael J. Sullivan Judicial Center and ending the activation of the 22nd Judicial Circuit's Pandemic Continuity of Operations Plan. After conferring with McHenry County Department of Health and other local governmental authorities, Chief Judge Cowlin entered the order which states in part, that effective Monday, July 12, 2021:

“Individuals, including judges, court staff, parties, attorneys, jurors and witnesses, should not enter any courthouse if they have flu-like symptoms including fever, cough, or shortness of breath (excluding such symptoms caused by chronic conditions); currently have been directed to quarantine or isolate at home by any medical provider or public health official; or reside or have regular close contact with a person currently subject to a quarantine or isolation direction issued by a medical provider or public health official and are not themselves fully vaccinated.

If a person is not fully vaccinated, that person shall wear a mask and should maintain social distance.

Individuals or employees who are fully vaccinated may continue to wear a mask or facecovering.”

The Court will continue operations in a manner that limits the number of people in a courtroom and hallways of the Judicial Center, allows for efficient court appearances and takes advantage of

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procedures that allow cases to progress by remote appearances and submissions of proposed orders.

At the discretion of the judge presiding over a courtroom, the use of video remote appearances shall continue pursuant to Supreme Court Rule, Local Court Rule, and Guidelines for a Virtual Courtroom, as established by the 22nd Judicial Circuit and as encouraged by Illinois Supreme Court Chief Justice Anne Burke. All pleas and post plea matters scheduled in Traffic Court may continue to be heard remotely via Zoom and trials or other evidentiary proceedings, related to traffic citations, will be heard in person in Courtroom 102. Petitioners may continue to present petitions for emergency orders of protection, stalking no contact orders and civil no contact orders by remote video conferencing technology pursuant to Supreme Court Rules. Agreed orders will continue to be accepted in the Civil and Family Divisions. All court schedules established during the activation of the Continuity of Operations Plan shall continue in their current form, until further order of the Court.

Beginning October 1, 2021, statutory time restrictions in the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1963 (725 ILCS 5/103-5) and section 5-601 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 shall no longer be tolled. All days on and following October 1, 2021, shall be included in speedy trial computations.

This has been an unprecedented time for the judicial branch of government. However, through the collaborative efforts of many people, departments, and agencies, the 22nd Judicial Circuit has continued to provide essential services and access to justice during this time of crisis. Courts across Illinois, including the 22nd Judicial Circuit, have learned that certain procedures and practices adopted during the pandemic should continue as best practices into the future. The Court will continually evaluate post COVID-19 practices, and if necessary, will modify practices to better serve all court patrons. Information concerning practices can be found on the 22nd Judicial Circuit's and Circuit Clerk of the Courts websites at:

[22nd Judicial Circuit | McHenry County, IL \(mchenrycountyil.gov\)](https://www.mchenrycountyil.gov)

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