

IN THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

NOTICE OF RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS ON PUBLIC ACCESS TO COURT FACILITIES EFFECTIVE AUGUST 13, 2020

BY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER OF RUSSELL E. STEELE, PRESIDING JUDGE OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, ENTERED ON AUGUST 13, 2020, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND CONTINUING UNTIL FURTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT THE COURTS OF THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT SHALL RETURN TO COURT OPERATING PHASE ZERO, AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Courts of the Second Judicial Circuit in Adair County, Knox County, and Lewis County shall remain open and operational. **However, with very limited exceptions, in-person proceedings are suspended.** Attorneys who want to have matters heard or taken up must obtain approval of the judge to have the matters placed on the court's docket. At the judge's discretion, proceedings, hearings, and conferences may be conducted by teleconference, video conference, including Zoom, Web-ex, Polycom, or any other method that does not require the physical presence of persons on Court Premises.

2.. In the event the judge presiding over any proceeding determines: (a) that there is no reasonable alternative to an in-person hearing or conference and, therefore, an in-person hearing or conference is required; and (b) that the physical appearance of attorneys, parties, witnesses, interested third parties, guardians ad litem, children's division workers, law enforcement officers, or any other individual is required, and whose appearance cannot be satisfied by teleconference or video conference, then the in-person hearing or conference shall proceed., in which event, the following policies, procedures, and protocols shall be followed:

a. **Individuals experiencing or exhibiting symptoms related to COVID-19 shall not be allowed to enter Court Premises.** The Bailiff shall implement appropriate levels of screening, where possible, at the entrances to Court Premises to limit or prevent individuals experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 from entering Court premises. **Such screening may include temperature checks and screening questions** to each individual entering Court Premises.

b. **Face coverings are required** for all court personnel, attorneys, judges, clerks, bailiffs and other individuals who enter Court Premises, including the courtrooms, lobbies, hallways, restrooms, conference rooms, jury rooms, elevators, and any other area that may be used by the public to obtain access to or use of the courtroom or court related services. All persons who are authorized to enter Court Premises are urged to bring their own personal face covering, but face coverings will be provided to those individuals who do not have them. The judge has the authority, in his or her discretion, after considering the need and desirability for the optimum protection of all persons from the risk of infection of COVID-19, to allow those persons actively involved in an in-person court proceeding, including attorneys, parties, witnesses, and court personnel, if necessary to facilitate effective communication or for other good cause.

c. **Social distancing of at least six (6) feet** from all other individuals on the Court Premises is required. Seating in courtrooms or lobby or common areas will be appropriately limited to ensure a minimum of six (6) feet of social distancing. Tape or other visible means may be used to demark six (6) foot distances where practical.

d. **A limit of ten (10) persons**, including court personnel and attorneys, will be permitted in the courtroom or other individual room, lobby, or common area within the Court Premises. The Bailiff shall arrange and manage in-person court appearances for each court docket or proceeding, in coordination with the judge and attorneys for parties who are represented.

e. Hand sanitizers will be provided outside each courtroom. Heightened sanitation and disinfection of common and high-traffic areas will be implemented, as practical

f. In addition to court personnel, only attorneys, parties, witnesses, and victims who are involved in matters on the court's docket will be permitted in the courtroom. The judge has discretion to allow other persons to attend court, as necessary or appropriate.

g. Parties who have court proceedings or matters on the court's docket which do not require their appearance or participation should not be required to appear in person.

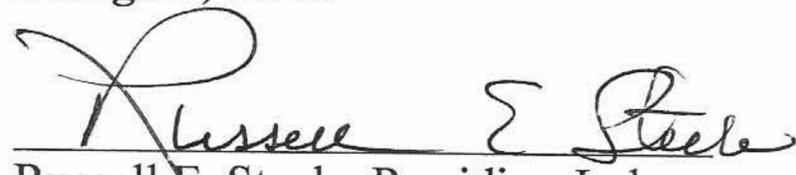
ANYONE ATTEMPTING TO ENTER OR REMAIN ON COURT PREMISES IN VIOLATION OF THIS ORDER WILL BE DENIED ENTRY OR REMOVED BY THE BAILIFF OR OTHER SECURITY PERSONNEL.

3. Individuals not authorized to enter the Court Premises because of the restrictions listed above are provided the following contact information to have remote access to the administration of justice:

- (a) If represented by an attorney, they should contact their attorney;
- (b) Attorneys scheduled to appear in court should contact the Circuit Clerk's Office in the county of their scheduled appearance as follows:
 - (i) Adair County Circuit Clerk at 660-665-2552;
 - (ii) Knox County Circuit Clerk at 660-397-2305;
 - (iii) Lewis County Circuit Clerk at 573-767-5352;
- (c) If any person needs information about the status of a case, they should consult Case.net or contact the appropriate Circuit Clerk's Office at the phone number listed above;
- (d) Any person who is a prospective juror should contact the appropriate Circuit Clerk's Office at the phone number listed above;
- (e) Any person seeking an Order of Protection regarding adult or child abuse should contact the appropriate Circuit Clerk's Office at the phone number listed above;
- (f) For general information or information regarding other matters not listed above, please contact the Office of the Presiding Circuit Judge at 660-665-3145.

4. The Circuit Clerks shall establish procedures and protocols for pro se (unrepresented) persons to deliver and/or file pleadings and other documents with the Courts, including, but not limited to, Petitions for Orders of Protection. This may include receiving faxed documents, creating drop boxes at designated entries to Court Premises, or other methods for pro se litigants to have continuous access to the Courts. As soon as those procedures are finalized they will be posted on Court Premises doors.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 13th day of August, 2020.



Russell E. Steele, Presiding Judge
Second Judicial Circuit