

COVID-19 Operating Plan

City of Poteet Municipal Court, Atascosa County

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, Judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of **City of Poteet Municipal Court** 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 Office of Court Administration regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. All Judges will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The presiding Judge will maintain regular communication with the local health authority, Court Administrator and City Administrator and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the City.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than July 1, 2020.

Judge and Court Staff Health

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: Temperatures will be taken of all individuals upon entering the building housing the court, everyone entering the courtroom will be required to use hand sanitizer, signs will be posted reminding individuals of best hygiene protocols.
3. Judges or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6°F, or with new or worsening 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 will be required to wear face coverings when not able to practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all time.
5. Protective Measures: Hand Sanitizer is provided in the building for the public. No more than three (3) individuals will be allowed in the lobby area of City Hall and no more than ten (10) will be allowed in the courtroom at a time. Staff working the counter will be separated from the public by security glass. Options available to handle court cases by phone, email, mail, and online are being encouraged to reduce any in-person dealing with the court. Notices for these options have been posted on the court's webpage and Facebook page.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building: After screening, defendants will sign into court with their name and phone number. After signing in, the defendant will wait in his/her vehicle. Defendants will be called/text to enter the court room as allowed by social distancing practices. Upon entering the courtroom defendants will be required to use hand sanitizer. Once seen by Judge/Prosecutor, defendants will return to their seat until called by the Court Clerk for payment/paperwork processing. Defendants will be let into city hall one at a time.
2. No person will be allowed in the courtroom unless they have business before the court. The exceptions will be for parents/guardians of the a juvenile or minor.

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 systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.
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 set appointment times to reduce exposure to individuals and be offered a reset, remote hearing appointment or remote hearing through video platform.

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. The men and women's restrooms in the building can only accommodate one individual at a time. This will ensure social distancing and the maximum capacity.
3. The maximum capacity of the courtroom will be posted, monitored, and enforced by court staff.
4. To maintain proper social distancing protocols, chairs will be placed 6ft apart from one another and social distancing markers will be placed on the floor. Seating will be limited to no more than ten (10) individuals in the courtroom.
5. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, Judge's bench, 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 entrance of the courtroom.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the Judges' benches, and in the hallways.

3. The Center of Disease Control's, "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted in in the court room.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the court bailiff or designated staff will ask the individuals if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; 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.
2. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, the court bailiff or designated staff will use an infrared thermometer to determine the temperature of the individual. Individuals whose temperature equals or exceeds 99.6°F will be refused admittance to the court building.
3. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including face mask, gloves, and hand sanitizer.

Face Coverings

1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a cloth face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.
3. Individuals who will be required to be in the court building for over 1 hour will be provided surgical masks and required to wear them while in the court building if the supply is available.

Cleaning

1. Court staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every couple of hours.
2. Court 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 staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
4. Court staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

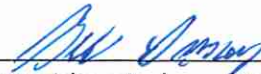
Other

1. Individuals will check-in and be asked to wait in their vehicles until the court calls or text them to be seen.
2. The City of Poteet Municipal Court may hold court twice a month in order to ease the case load.
3. This Operating Plan may be amended or changed to meet the needs of the court for any reason deemed necessary for public health and safety.

I have attempted to confer with all Judges of court regarding this Operating Plan. In developing the plan, I consulted with the local health authority, Court Administrator, and City Administrator, documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the Judges of court and all court

personnel in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

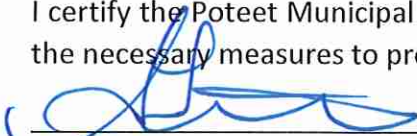
Date: June 03, 2020



Presiding Judge of Municipal Court, City of Poteet,
Atascosa, County, Texas

CONSULTATION

I certify the Poteet Municipal Court has consulted with me on the above Operating Plan and will take the necessary measures to protect individuals that attend any court proceedings.



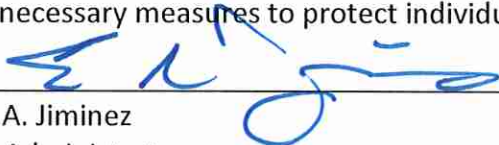
Abigayle Frautschi
Court Administrator

6-4-2020

Date

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Eric A. Jiminez
City Administrator

6-4-2020

Date