
Revised Circuit Court Operating Plan


WHEREAS: On May 21, 2021, the Wisconsin Supreme Court terminated the following orders: (1) In re the Matter of Jury Trials During the COVID-19 Pandemic—Amended (S. Ct. Order issued March 22, 2020; Amended April 15, 2020); (2) In re the Matter of Filing of Court Documents in Circuit and Appellate Courts (Temporary Mailbox Rule) (S. Ct. Order issued April 13, 2020); (3) Interim Rule 20-02; and In re the Matter of the Extension of Orders and the Interim Rule Concerning Continuation of Jury Trials, Suspension of Statutory Deadlines for Non-Criminal Jury Trials, and Remote Hearings During the COVID-19 Pandemic (Amended Order) (S. Ct. Order issued October 1, 2020);

WHEREAS: The Wisconsin Supreme Court “no longer requires that personal masking, social distancing, and sanitizing court facilities be part of any plan for circuit court and municipal court proceedings approved by the chief judge of the applicable judicial district. Instead, circuit courts and municipal courts, with the approval of the applicable chief judge, shall make county-wide decisions about what is in the best interest of circuit court and municipal court operations, respectively. This includes deciding whether or not to continue to require masking, social distancing, and sanitizing court facilities on a county by county basis.”;

WHEREAS: On June 4, 2021, pursuant to the order of the Wisconsin Supreme Court dated May 21, 2021, the Presiding Judge of Washburn County has requested approval to revise the Washburn County operational plan dated June 30, 2020;

THEREFORE: The Covid-19 Circuit Court Operating Plan for Washburn County is revised effective June 7, 2021.

Date: 6-7-2021



Honorable Maureen Boyle
Chief Judge, 10th Judicial District

First Amended Covid-19 Circuit Court Operating Plan for Washburn 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 court, the Washburn County Circuit Court will implement the following protective measures:

General:

1. Circumstances may present that require the Washburn County Courts to modify these procedures to carry out court functions.
2. All judges will use reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely in appropriate cases.
3. The Court will continue to maintain communication with the Washburn County Public Health Officer and the Washburn County Office of Emergency Management. This plan will be modified when necessary.
4. Judges will determine the necessity for in-person proceedings on a case by case basis.

Judge and Court Staff Health:

1. The Judges and Court Staff will follow Washburn County Public Health guidelines.

Vulnerable Populations:

1. In appropriate cases, vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by using zoom video or telephonic appearances at the court's discretion.

Social Distancing & Reduced Occupancy:

1. As many court hearings as practicable will be conducted telephonically or by Zoom subject to the discretion of the presiding judge.
2. The general public may or may not be allowed into the courtroom to observe court proceedings in person. Zoom meeting information will continue to be provided upon request to individuals who wish attend public hearings any time the general public is not allowed into the courtroom to observe proceedings that are open to the public.
3. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the court building will be encouraged to maintain adequate social distancing of at least six feet.
4. The Court staff shall monitor room capacity of the courtrooms and in their discretion may either ask individuals to socially distance themselves, appear remotely, or attend from a remote hearing room.

Hygiene:

1. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been arranged at stations throughout the building, outside of each courtroom and at the Clerk of Court's window.

2. Notices regarding the availability of hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes/spray will be posted at the entrance of each courtroom, jury room and court-related confined spaces.
3. Disinfectant wipes or spray have been placed at counsel tables, inside the entrance to the large courtroom, on the witness stand, and on the judge's benches.
4. CDC flyers outlining appropriate hygiene, social distancing and public safety have been posted in multiple locations on each floor of the court building.

Screening:

1. Washburn County has no security screening at the main entrance. However, for jury trials health screening will be performed at the designated jury room where jurors are instructed to report as set forth in the Jury Trial Plan. Social distancing and face coverings requirements will be enforced by the Judge, court staff and if necessary, law enforcement upon request by court staff.

Face Coverings:

1. The Judges and court staff will follow Washburn County Public Health guidelines.
2. **Non-Jury Trial Proceedings:** Unless fully vaccinated, Judges, court staff, attorneys, parties, witnesses and the general public will be required to wear a cloth face covering or face mask while in the courtrooms, jury rooms, and other designated areas of the Washburn County Courthouse. They will practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hand hygiene recommendations at all times.
3. **Jury Trials:** All persons present in the Courtrooms, jury rooms and court-related confined spaces for jury trials shall wear face coverings, unless the Judge specifically determines on the record that it is necessary for a witness not to wear a face covering during the witness's testimony in order for the judge or jury to weight the witness' credibility. Notices regarding this requirement will be posted at the entrance of each courtroom, jury room and court-related confined spaces and will state that this requirement will be enforced by the Judge, court staff, and, if necessary, law enforcement upon request by court staff.
4. The Court reserves the right to require individuals who appear to be symptomatic, regardless of vaccination status, to be masked within the courtrooms or other designated areas of the Washburn County Courthouse.

Cleaning:

1. Courthouse maintenance staff will clean the courtrooms at the end of each day the courtrooms are used.
2. Courthouse maintenance staff has been provided with cleaning supplies shown to be effective with the Covid-19 coronavirus.
3. Courthouse maintenance staff has been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.
4. Cleaning wipes or cleaning spray and paper towels will be provided at counsel tables and anyone using the table will need to clean before or after each use.

Definitions(s):

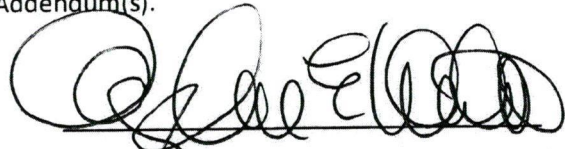
1. "Fully vaccinated" means the person has received one of the FDA approved COVID-19 vaccines and any required/recommended boosters. It requires a person to be up-to-date and current with his/her vaccination. Persons are not considered "fully vaccinated" until at least two weeks have elapsed from completing the first shot or series of shots with two-shot vaccinations.

Other:

This order supersedes any previous order in conflict with these provisions.

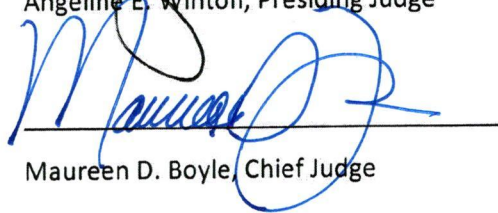
I have conferred with all Washburn County Circuit Court staff, including Court Commissioners and will ensure that all individuals conducting hearings in the courtrooms covered by this Operational Plan will conduct proceedings consistent with the plan and Addendum(s).

Dated this 4th day of June, 2021.



Angeline E. Winton, Presiding Judge

Dated this 7th day of June, 2021



Maureen D. Boyle, Chief Judge