

Amending COVID-19 Circuit Court Operating Plan

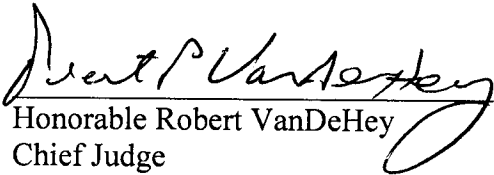
WHEREAS: On May 21, 2021, the Wisconsin Supreme Court terminated the following orders: (1) In re the Matter of Jury Trials During the COVID-19 Pandemic—Amended (S. Ct. Order issued March 22, 2020; Amended April 15, 2020); (2) In re the Matter of Filing of Court Documents in Circuit and Appellate Courts (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: The Circuit Court Judges have determined that it is in the best interest of the circuit court operations for Grant County to amend its existing COVID-19 Court Operational Plan, dated June 30, 2020.

THEREFORE: The COVID-19 Court Operational Plan for Grant County is hereby amended.

Date: June 7, 2021


Honorable Robert VanDeHey
Chief Judge
Seventh Judicial Administrative District

GRANT COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT SECOND AMENDED OPERATIONAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Order of the Wisconsin Supreme Court dated May 21, 2021 and the guidance of the CDC, and after consulting with the Clerk of Circuit Court, Register in Probate, representatives of the County, representatives of the County Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney's office, the local office of the State Public Defender, the local child support agency, members of the local county bar, and representatives of the county, including the County Health Director and County Emergency Management Director, the following SECOND AMENDED OPERATIONAL PLAN, is hereby adopted, upon approval of the Chief Judge.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

All court proceedings shall be handled as they were pre-covid. With the exception of scheduling conferences, civil/family status hearings and juvenile review hearings, all proceedings are presumptively in person. Litigants and counsel with requests to appear remotely for other hearings are directed to make inquiry of the court's judicial assistant.

Access to Courthouse Building

Physical access to the Grant County Courthouse will be by a single public entrance to the courthouse. The duties of the security officer shall include periodically monitoring this entrance and being available to offer instruction and guidance to entrants regarding the Operational Plan's requirement of face-coverings for unvaccinated individuals and other access issues.

Face Coverings

All persons who are not fully vaccinated and who are present in the courthouse shall wear face coverings. Face coverings in individual offices within the courthouse shall be consistent with Grant County policy and the policy of the individual offices within the courthouse.

An exception to face covering may be made if 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 weigh the witness's credibility.

"Face covering" is defined as a fabric covering over the nose and mouth sufficient to impede the emission of vapor from the wearer. Surgical-type masks are preferred but not required. Individuals are encouraged to provide their own face covering provided it complies with the requirement above. The court will have a sufficient supply available for those who need them.

Face shields may be considered adequate face coverings except when social distancing cannot be honored, at the discretion of the presiding court officer.

Notices shall be posted as appropriate and this facemask requirement for unvaccinated individuals may be enforced by the judge.

Sanitation

Dispensers for hand sanitizing with alcohol-based sanitizer and surface sanitizing with anti-viral wipes shall be located at the following locations:

- At the court security officer table at the entrance to the courthouse
- At the public access counter for each courthouse office
- In each courtroom at counsel table, the clerk's desk, and entry to the courtroom
- In each room where the potential jurors or the jury convenes
- At each elevator entrance

Social Distancing

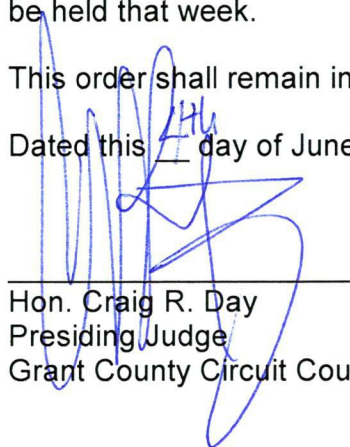
To the maximum extent possible, all persons who are not fully vaccinated in the courthouse shall practice social distancing by maintaining a minimum of a five-foot separation from others who are not a member of their household; maintaining a six-foot separation distance is preferred. Exceptions may be made in individual circumstances to permit counsel and his/her client to sit closer upon mutual consent of attorney and client.

Jury Trials

To the maximum extent practicable, jury selections shall be compressed into the fewest number of days to reduce the number of days when the entire panel is present in the courthouse. Ideally, this would mean only one day of jury selections per week for all trials to be held that week.

This order shall remain in effect until modified or terminated by further order of the court.

Dated this 14 day of June, 2021.



Hon. Craig R. Day
Presiding Judge
Grant County Circuit Court