



IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER RE RETURN TO OPERATING PHASE 3 AND RESUMPTION OF JURY TRIALS

The Supreme Court issued its Order and Operational Directives effective August 1, 2020 stating the importance that the courts of Missouri remain open. Pursuant to the Operational Directives, and the Administrative Order of the 38th Judicial Circuit dated February 7, 2021, the Circuit transitioned to Phase 3 effective March 1, 2021.

In Phase 3, the Court will operate with the following restrictions:

- a. Members of the public who are not involved in a court proceeding will not be allowed in the court house.
- b. Social distancing is required of court staff, attorneys, parties and witnesses.
- c. Individuals will not be allowed access to a court facility who have been exposed to or are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19.
- d. The temperature of all individuals entering a court facility will be taken and those individuals with a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more will not be allowed entry.
- e. The use of masks or face coverings by judicial employees or members of the public is mandated.
- f. In-person proceedings will be held, as long as social distancing requirements can be met. Attorneys may notice routine matters on the Court's routine dockets and may contact the Court for special settings.
- g. With social distancing requirements, the maximum occupancy of the courtrooms in Christian County is about 14, which includes the judge and staff. This will significantly limit the number of cases that can be heard at one time. If the number of matters noticed up for a routine docket will cause social distancing restrictions to be exceeded, then attorneys and parties should anticipate being asked to wait in the lobby, outside or in their cars until their case may be heard. The Court may be trying different methods to handle this scheduling difficulty so patience is requested.

- h. Jury proceedings will be held in compliance with social distancing protocols.
- i. Technologies such as teleconferences and video hearings will be available in all cases. Attorneys who are not comfortable with in-person hearings are encouraged to schedule motion hearings and other matters by telephone or video conference.
- j. Large venues and common areas such as courtrooms, jury assembly rooms, jury deliberating rooms, break rooms, and other areas in the court facility can operate under social distancing protocols.
- k. Extra cleaning and disinfecting will occur throughout each day and hand sanitizer will be made available.

Phase 3 will continue until the Supreme Court issues an Order replacing its May 4, 2020 Order.

Remote Proceedings

In Phase 3 the Court will be able to conduct more proceedings in person. However, if you and/or your client wish to appear remotely for any non-evidentiary proceeding, please notify the Court.

Jury Trials

Jury trials have resumed with offsite jury selection and continued safety precautions.

Municipal Courts

This Order does not cover the Municipal Courts in Christian County.

Questions

Please email questions to the appropriate clerk as follows: Division 1 at cindy.childress@courts.mo.gov; Division 2 at jami.mcmurry@courts.mo.gov; Division 3 at ctn.filings@courts.mo.gov; and Division 4 at ctn.division4@courts.mo.gov.

This Order has been approved by all Judges of the 38th Judicial Circuit.

Date: March 8, 2021

Laura Johnson, Presiding Judge