

**CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN**  
**FOR THE**  
**CITY OF FENTON MUNICIPAL COURT**

The City of Fenton Municipal Court hasn't had an in-person docket since March, 2020 due to COVID-19. We continued all dockets until July for all cases filed with our court prior to June 15, 2020. All new case filings are being scheduled for August, 2020. Since the Supreme Court urged courts to utilize alternative means to resolve cases, we developed a plan.

Beginning May 26, 2020, the prosecuting attorney began submitting recommendations for all active, pending, warrant and lieu of bail cases. Letters were included with the recommendations notifying defendants of the option to resolve their case(s) by mail without an appearance. If the defendants choose not to take the recommendation provided by the prosecutor, he/she can schedule with the clerk an appointment to speak with the Judge and/or prosecutor by phone or via Zoom.

**Notice and Procedure for the Court Session was Implemented in the Following Manner:**

1. Recommendations and letters are being sent to each defendant or attorney, if applicable. A sample of the letters are attached. In these letters, defendants are notified that they could either take the recommendation and plead guilty or schedule a time on July 13, 2020 or August 10, 2020 to speak with Judge and/or prosecutor.
2. Notice of court session was posted on the city's website and on the front door of the City Hall.
3. The court's phone line has been and will continue to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for defendants to call with any questions regarding their case(s).
4. Payments can be sent by mail, paid online, or by calling 1-800-444-1187.
5. Pleas resulting in probation will be accepted via zoom and/or by mail. Dispositions will not be docketed until the proper signed paperwork has been filed with the court.
6. All other Minimal Operating Standard, as applicable, are being followed.
7. Trials will not be held via zoom and will be continued to a later date.

**Phase Three and Phase Four Procedures**

The City of Fenton Municipal Court will continue to use zoom and/or phone for hearings even after phase three and four. Once phase three begins, in-person dockets will be held for the following circumstances:

1. Trials and probation revocation hearings
2. For those who cannot attend court via zoom or other virtual platforms.
3. For those who simply choose to attend in-person; and
4. For pleas resulting in probation or possibly incarceration.

It is the intent of this court to follow all social distancing guidelines and directives by the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, the Missouri Supreme Court, State, County and Local government and the CDC as follows:

- 1. The courtroom will be reconfigured to allow no more than 10 people, including court personnel, in the courtroom at a time. In the event that there is a line, defendants will not be allowed to congregate, but will be required to wait outside (or in their vehicle depending on the weather conditions). There will be social distance markers on the sidewalk leading into the building.**
- 2. As defendants arrive for court, they will be required to answer and complete the St. Louis County Department of Public Health questionnaire. In the event any questions are answered as positive, such defendant will be given a continuance and not allowed entry into the building.**
- 3. Masks will be required to enter the building and the courtroom. Notice of mask requirement will be provided via mail and be posted on the city's website and front door.**
- 4. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the entrance/exit of courtroom and in the courtroom.**
- 5. As defendants arrive, they will check in and be asked to sit in their vehicle and/or outside. The staff will call and/or text when the Judge and/or Prosecutor is ready to speak to the defendant.**
- 6. Masks will be worn by all employees.**
- 7. Chairs will be sanitized and spread apart 6 feet to social distance.**
- 8. Additional procedures may be adopted to ensure the safety and well-being of all during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- 9. In the event any of this were to change, the court will immediately contact the Presiding Judge and Hope Whitehead, the Judicial Administrator.**