

**CITY OF MARYLAND HEIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**

Cancels: NA
Expires: Indefinite

Index as:

Coronavirus
COVID-19
Infectious Disease
Municipal Court

**CITY OF MARYLAND HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL COURT CORONAVIRUS
PANDEMIC (COVID-19) CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Special Order is to establish policy and procedure regarding the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic as it directly affects the Maryland Heights Municipal Court operations. As the court begins to operate again this Special Order will provide guidelines and operational directives that will allow citizens and employees who enter the court environment to feel safe and understand that the health and welfare of everyone is being taken into consideration. This special order is designed to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by establishing guidelines and criteria beginning with the entry into the Government Center.

INFORMATION

Infected people can spread COVID-19 through their respiratory secretions, especially when they cough or sneeze. According to the CDC, spread from person-to-person is most likely among close contacts (about 6 feet). Person-to-person spread is thought to occur mainly via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how influenza and other respiratory pathogens spread. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Based on this information, the Maryland Heights Municipal Court is going to attempt to limit the officers, employee's, attorney's, defendants, witnesses, etc. exposure to COVID-19. This will be accomplished through a variety of different safety measures outlined below. Additionally, city personnel will follow the CDC's social distancing guidelines and sanitization procedures for office areas, courtroom and equipment.

Social Distancing guidelines:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

GOVERNMENT CENTER ENTRY

1. Signage will direct defendants upon their arrival at the Government Center to attend Municipal Court.

May 27, 2020

2. A tent and table will be set up outside the public front entrance to the police department. At least two department personnel (2 officers/1 officer and 1 jailer) will be present at the entrance.
3. The questions asked of anyone desiring to enter the courtroom will address the following COVID-19 criteria for possible exposure or a person experiencing the disease:
 - Have you experienced a fever, trouble breathing, persistent cough, body aches, chills, sore throat, and/or loss of taste or smell in the last 24 hours?
 - Have you been in contact with anyone who has been diagnosed, tested positive or are under investigation for possible COVID-19 exposure during the last 14 days?
 - Temperatures will be taken of everyone prior to entering the building.
 - If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions or the temperature of the person is above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, the defendant will be provided with a continuance for their court date and dismissed.
4. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided by the police department for Maryland Heights employees that will consist of one pair of disposable latex medical gloves, respiratory protection, and eye protection (medical personnel will also wear an isolation gown as part of their equipment). Masks will be provided for defendants if they do not have one in their possession.
5. Officers, bailiffs and/or jailers will obtain the cellular telephone number and vehicle description of defendants who will be notified by telephone (call or text message), or in person at their vehicle, when the court is prepared for them to enter.

COURTROOM PROCEDURES

1. A maximum of 25 defendants will be allowed in the courtroom at one time and only one defendant will be allowed to stand in front of the judge at a time. The seating will be situated accordingly. The courtroom will be a safe place to appear for defendants and attorneys.
2. After each session of court, when all 25 people have been dismissed, the court will then be placed in recess and will be cleaned and disinfected by department personnel.
3. Markings will be placed on the wall and floor six feet apart in various locations providing guides for proper social distancing.
4. The walk through metal detector will remain in its normal location and hand sanitizer will be available as well. Court personnel will monitor the lobby area to ensure the defendants are not congregating and are maintaining social distancing while entering and exiting the building.
5. The check in location for court will be inside the courtroom entrance and hand

sanitizer will be available at this location.

6. Stanchions will be placed in front of the judge keeping defendants at least 10 feet back and any papers or documents will be handled by the bailiffs. Hand sanitizer will be available at this location.
7. Attorney's will enter through the same procedures listed above and will be directed to the hallway by the door in the southeast corner of the courtroom. They will wait there until called in to see the Prosecutor or the Prosecutor's Assistant.
8. No payments will be accepted on the night of court. A notice will be posted on the City's social media account(s) regarding this information.

SAFETY

In any situation or scenario where a member of the police department or courts comes into contact with a communicable disease the supervisor and officer will follow the outlined procedures in General Order 208.00, Infectious and Contagious Disease Policy and Special Order 2020-11 (First Responder Exposure Plan).

By order of:



COLONEL WILLIAM CARSON
Chief of Police

Distribution:
All Personnel

Attachments:
Map of the Courtroom

Maryland Heights
Municipal Court Room

