

**COVID-19 PANDEMIC MINIMUM STANDARD HEALTH PROTOCOL FOR IN PERSON  
PROCEEDINGS**

The Municipal Court of China Grove, Texas implements the following health and safety standards for the benefit of the Public, Judges, Prosecutors, Court Staff, City Hall Staff, Police Officers, and Elected Officials:

1. **Remote Proceedings (Zoom):** At the discretion of the Court and upon request, remote hearings can be utilized for the safety of those identified above in extraordinary circumstances and with good cause shown; and, for those of the Vulnerable Population. Vulnerable Population includes individuals over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy.
2. **Social Distancing:** Individuals having citation(s) set for a court docket will be scheduled to ensure that the number of individuals appearing will be set in a manner that limits the number of individuals appearing to assure social distancing. A limited number of people will be allowed inside the building at any given time and guests that are not required to be in the Court may be asked to wait outside.
3. **Masks:** will be required of all individuals entering or occupying the court facilities during Court in accordance with CDC Guidelines unless the person is not recommended to wear a mask by the CDC or Texas Dept of State Health Services. Those who may be exempt from wearing masks may request for Remote Proceeding. Those that refuse to wear a mask without exemption could be denied entry and may simply pay their citation(s) at the window, by phone, or online.
4. **Screening:** Court bailiffs will screen individuals prior to being allowed to enter the court facilities for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure. Those that do not pass screening will not be permitted to enter the building.
5. **Hygiene/Cleaning:** Hand sanitizer dispensers, tissues, and cleaning products will be available at various locations around the court facilities for public use and use is encouraged.
6. If constitutionally permissible, Judge may permit witnesses to testify remotely if the witness has symptoms of or has recently been exposed to or had a recent positive test for COVID-19; or is in the Vulnerable Population.
7. Jury trial safety measures will include shared spacing for individuals at the witness stand, gallery seating, jury selections seating, and party seating. All said stations will be cleansed frequently during proceedings.
8. Jury deliberations will be held in a room which will assure social distancing and masks must be worn by jurors.

Effective: April 13, 2021



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Judge Lawrence G. Morales