

Jury Trial- COVID-related protocols

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Lancaster County Court of Common Pleas has made it a priority to protect the health and well-being of employees and those we serve as we provide citizens access to justice during the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are the COVID-related protocols to be used during Jury Trials:

- Proper social distancing will be enforced at all times.
- Plexiglass shields will be installed on the bench, counsel tables, and witness stand.
- Temperature Checks - All participants involved with a jury trial will have their temperature checked and will be asked screening questions before entry into the Courtroom each day.
- All jurors must wear face masks and face shields throughout their jury service. Jurors will be provided a disposable face shield and mask.
- Absent unique circumstances and approval by the presiding judge, all trial participants, including staff assisting with jurors, must wear face masks at all times. If a mask cannot be worn, chambers must be contacted prior to the trial.
- During trial while in the courtroom counsel should plan to communicate with their client(s) in writing except during recess. If direct verbal communication is necessary, face masks and face shields shall be worn.
- All witnesses must wear a face mask and face shield prior to being seated on the witness stand. Unless plexiglass has been installed around the witness stand, each witness will be instructed to remove their face mask once seated on the witness stand. A face shield will continue to be required. Once plexiglass is installed, the witness will be asked to remove their mask and shield. After testifying, the witness will be required to wear their mask and shield before leaving the witness stand.
- Exhibits may not be passed among jurors, but should be available to display using PowerPoint or some other method not requiring contact with the jurors. This must be arranged by counsel prior to the start date of the jury trial.
- It is incumbent on counsel to notify the Court if space or accommodations are needed for spectators during a jury trial. Due to limited space in the courtrooms and limited video equipment we must ask everyone to refrain from bringing spectators unless absolutely necessary. If counsel believes that certain spectators must attend, you must notify both the assigned Judge and Court Administration (Jennifer Mulrone) **in advance** so that they may plan accordingly to provide an additional courtroom and equipment to stream the proceedings.

Any questions regarding COVID-related protocols should be directed to the presiding judge. Modifications, alternations and/or additions to the protocols will not be permitted except in very rare circumstances and only with the express permission of the presiding judge.

12/8/2020