

FILED IN OFFICE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE EASTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT 2020 MAY 22 P 12:49  
STATE OF GEORGIA

*Dianne Mosley*  
CLERK, SUPERIOR CT  
CHATHAM COUNTY, GA

In Re: ]  
] ]  
Administrative Order Concerning the ]  
Use of Face Masks/Coverings in Public ]  
Areas of the Chatham County ]  
Courthouse and the Chatham County ]  
Juvenile Courthouse ]  
] ]

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER**

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-61(a)(6), and due to the continuing statewide judicial emergency involving the transmission of Coronavirus ("COVID-19"), the Honorable Chief Judge Penny Haas Freesemann of the Superior Court of Chatham County **HEREBY ORDERS** as follows:

**WHEREAS**, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") and public health authorities have advised, and continue to advise, public and private agencies to continue to take necessary and appropriate precautions to reduce the possibility of exposure to COVID-19 and slow the spread of the disease;

**WHEREAS**, on March 14, 2020, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia declared a Statewide Judicial Emergency pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-60 *et seq.*, and said Order was twice amended and extended through June 12, 2020;

**WHEREAS**, the CDC strongly recommends wearing face coverings when traveling outside the home, when gathering in groups in public settings, and where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain;

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of the administration of justice and the health and safety of all persons working for or in the Chatham County Courthouse and the Chatham County

Juvenile Courthouse and all other persons entering or doing business in the courthouses,<sup>1</sup> the Court already has in place certain screening requirements (see In Re: Declaration of Judicial Emergency Order, March 24, 2020); and

**WHEREAS**, this Court will continue to take reasonable and prudent actions to further that mission consistent with public health needs and the health needs of those persons working for or in the courthouses, the members of the public, and all others that enter the courthouses.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, in order to continue to protect the health, safety, and liberty of those who work in the courthouses and of those who are required to appear in the courthouses by subpoena or other means, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that effective **TUESDAY, MAY 26th, 2020**, the courthouses will implement the following steps to help reduce the spread of COVID-19:

1. For the protection of others around them, Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”), including masks or face coverings,<sup>2</sup> shall be worn by all individuals not only upon entering the courthouses, but also in all elevators, courtrooms, common areas, and public areas of the courthouses.

2. If a visitor does not have access to his/her own PPE, a mask will be provided.

3. Within the confines of private workspaces or offices, the individual courts or department heads can develop their own policies to allow no masks, provided social distancing can be observed and the public or other unrelated employees are not placed at risk.

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<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter, “courthouses” shall include the Chatham County Courthouse and the Chatham County Juvenile Courthouse.

<sup>2</sup> Face coverings may include coverings that secure to the ears or back of the head and encompass the mouth and nose. These include homemade cloth ear loop covers, scarves, handkerchiefs, bandanas and neck gaiters.

4. The Court recognizes that masks and face coverings are an inconvenient and uncomfortable matter. However, it needs to be emphasized that you wear a mask for the protection, not of yourself, but for the protection of the persons with whom you come in contact. There will be vulnerable individuals at the courthouses, and you can be carrying the COVID-19 virus although you are not showing symptoms.

5. Any person seeking entry to the courthouses without a mask or face covering shall be denied access by the Chatham County Sheriff or his designees. The person denied entry should call the judge's office or desired destination and determine how to handle their business without coming into the courthouse. If the purpose of the visit is for a court appearance, the Chatham County Sherriff, or his designees, shall notify the primary deputy assigned to the judge and the judge's office of the denied access.

6. The Chatham County Sheriff and his designees are directed to enforce this Order within the common areas and public areas of the courthouse.

7. This Order shall remain in effect until amended or vacated by the undersigned.

**SO ORDERED** this 22nd day of May, 2020.



Penny Haas Freeseemann, Chief Judge  
Superior Court, Eastern Judicial Circuit

Cc: Chief Justice, Georgia Supreme Court  
All Judges and Clerks of Court  
District Attorney  
Circuit Public Defender  
Chairman Chatham County Commission  
Chatham County Sheriff's Office  
Chatham County Public Information Officer