

JUL 26 2021

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

TAMMY H. DOWNS, CLERK
By: 
DEP CLERK

IN RE: COURT OPERATIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SIXTEEN

The Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus is spreading rapidly in the Eastern District of Arkansas; approximately half of eligible Arkansawyers have been fully or partially vaccinated against the virus; and our Court has many cases that are ready for jury trial in the coming weeks and months. www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/novel-coronavirus This combination of circumstances requires our Court to modify how we continue to do the people's law business. Here is the new drill:


- Masks are required in all public areas of all our courthouses* for all persons regardless of vaccination status;
- Masks are strongly encouraged any time two or more individuals are in close proximity regardless of the individuals' vaccination status;

* This includes the entirety of the Richard Sheppard Arnold Courthouse in Little Rock, and the Court's space in the Jacob Trieber Federal Building, United States Post Office, and United States Courthouse in Helena, and the Court's space in the E.C. "Took" Gathings Federal Building and United States Courthouse in Jonesboro.

- The presiding Judge in any proceeding has discretion to alter these general masking rules in the courtroom as the Judge decides is best in the circumstances;
- When practicable, hearings and non-trial proceedings will be held by video conference or teleconference;
- Start dates for jury trials (civil and criminal) will be staggered during the week, and coordinated by the Clerk of Court, to limit the number of people in our courthouses at any one time; and
- Rearranged courtrooms, simulcasting, vigilant distancing, and frequent handwashing will continue.

All the active and senior United States District Judges and United States Magistrate Judges for the Eastern District of Arkansas concur in this Administrative Order, except that Judge Rudofsky would strongly encourage (but not require) vaccinated individuals to wear masks in public areas.

So Ordered.



D.P. Marshall Jr.
Chief Judge

