

Covid-19 Operating Plan

Judicial District: Fifth Judicial District--Park County Circuit Court

Courthouse: Park County Courthouse--Circuit Court Cody/Powell

Address: 1002 Sheridan, Cody, WY 82414

Judges: Hon. Bruce B. Waters

*List every judge
who regularly
conducts
business in this
courthouse*

Proposed Start Date of Select

In-Person Proceedings: Immediately for the Clerk's office. As needed for the courtroom.

This does not include jury trials. Pursuant to the Wyoming Supreme Court's Third Order Amending March 18, 2020 Temporary Plan to Address Health Risks Posed by the Covid-19 Pandemic, no jury trials should be held until a Covid-19 Jury Trial Operating Plan is submitted to the Wyoming Supreme Court, and in any case, not before August 3, 2020.

Please identify measures your courthouse is implementing in each of the following categories:
(Please refer to the Covid-19 Reopening Guidelines for guidance)



Scheduling

(All judges conducting business in the courthouse should coordinate their schedules to minimize the number of people appearing for proceedings at one time. Examples include regular virtual meetings among judges to discuss schedules, calendar sharing, coordination between judicial assistants, etc.)

The Park County Courthouse in Cody and the annex in Powell are both currently open to the general public. Access to the courthouse in Cody was limited by the county to a single entrance with people using "one-way" hallways. Beginning May 26, 2020 the county lifted those restrictions. The District Court and Circuit Courts are located on different floors of adjoining buildings. People going to District Court have no need to pass through the areas where the Circuit Court is located. Conversely, those needing to access the Circuit Court do not have to pass through any areas occupied by the District Court. The two courts do not share waiting areas. Coordinating calendars is not needed. The few in-person hearings which might be held would have minimal impact on the use of the entire building.



Social Distancing

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☐ Among Court Staff

(e.g. Staggered work shifts, plexiglass at clerk's window, seating arranged 6' apart, etc.)

In Circuit Court, clerks will be encouraged to use face coverings and gloves when working. Individual clerk seating areas are more than six feet from each other. Some clerk's work in separate rooms not utilized by the general public. The number of clerks working in the main office is generally limited to three and there is adequate space and pathways available within the main office to limit direct contact between clerks.

☒ Among Public

(e.g. Remote check-ins and scheduled arrival times, floor markers and signage indicating 6' of distance, one-way traffic flow markers, seating arranged 6' apart, etc.)

Members of the public will be limited to one person at a time in the main office. Those waiting to enter the main office will be encouraged to wait in a hallway maintaining the six foot distance. Hand sanitizer is available to anyone entering the main office. Signs will require the use of hand sanitizer before entering the main office. Tape will be place in six foot increments in the hallway leading to the clerk's office.

For the courtroom, those attending hearings will be expected to wear face coverings. Prior to a hearing, witnesses will be asked to remain in the parking lot until called in to testify. Litigants and their attorneys will be asked to maintain social distancing in the courtroom to the extent practicable. The total number of people in the courtroom will be limited to not more than fifteen. Family groups will need to maintain social distancing in the courtroom.

☒ Hygiene

(e.g. hand sanitizer and Kleenex dispersed throughout courthouse, handwashing flyers posted near all faucets, hand soap readily available near all faucets, sneezing and coughing etiquette flyers posted throughout courthouse)

Hand sanitizer dispensers are located throughout the courthouse and at the entrance to the court clerk's office. Appropriate signs are posted encouraging social distancing. Drinking fountains have been marked "out of order." Court staff have disinfecting wipes that will be used for the counter and various surfaces in the courtroom.

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☒ Screening

(e.g. Flyers posted outside courthouse directing individuals with Covid-19 symptoms not to enter, temperature checks of all individuals entering courthouse)

For a time, the county was providing formal screening at the courthouse entrance. The county has discontinued that practice. Appropriate signage is posted throughout the courthouse. The Wyoming Supreme Court required notice has also been posted in the circuit court areas.

☒ Vulnerable Populations

(e.g. allow remote appearances by attorneys and litigants who fall into at-risk categories whenever possible, if at-risk individuals must attend in-person proceedings the court should make every effort to schedule such appearances at times when there are few other individuals in the courthouse)

As for the courtroom, the court will continue to allow attorneys and litigants to appear remotely whenever possible. Those persons considered "at-risk" will be able to reschedule whenever possible. If attendance were required, every effort would be made to reschedule the person for a time when few people are expected to be in the courtroom.

☒ Face Coverings

(e.g. supplying court staff with face coverings, requiring face coverings in all public areas of the courthouse)

Face coverings, hand sanitizer, gloves and disinfecting wipes have been and/or will be provided when available. Staff is encouraged to wear face coverings of their own design if they wish.

☒ Cleaning

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(e.g. creating a schedule of regular cleanings of courtrooms, bathrooms, and other public areas; send court staff regular reminders to sanitize commonly touched surfaces such as keyboards, phones, and door handles)

The county continues to clean and sanitize the courthouse, courtroom and court offices in accordance with county policy. Circuit court staff regularly utilizes disinfecting wipe on surfaces as they deem necessary and appropriate.

☒ Other (if applicable):

(consider and address other circumstances unique to your courthouse and community if necessary)

The circuit court intends to open the clerks office to the public as soon as possible/practical. As the courthouse is open, some people are ignoring the signs and showing up at the clerk's office even though we are closed to the public. Other people wait in public areas and expect the clerks to come to them and deliver documents and forms. The public and the clerks will both be better served by opening the clerk's offices.

In-person courtroom hearings will be limited and only utilized when necessary.

The Circuit Court understands the District Court Judges prefer keeping their offices closed indefinitely. That may be perfectly appropriate for that court. It is not appropriate for the Circuit Court. The Circuit Court staff (and judge) believe the Circuit Court can be opened and still maintain safeguards which are sufficient to protect both the staff and the public.

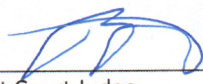
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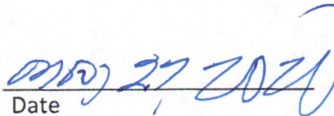
Signatures:

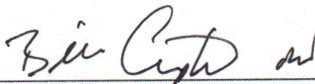
Every judge (or a representative if multiple judges) regularly conducting business in the courthouse must approve and sign the courthouse operating plan, as well the city or county health official.

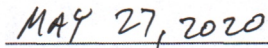
X _____
District Court Judge

Date

X  _____
Circuit Court Judge

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Date

X  _____
City or County Health Official

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Date