

7TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OPERATING PLAN FOR JURY TRIALS-

This is meant to be a general plan albeit with specifics that may be subject to change as the case and circumstances require. (This plan was completed after consultation of the Clerk of District Court, the District Attorney, Public Defender, Court security, County Commissioners, and the Natrona County Health Dept.)

I. Jury Summonses

- A. 60 jurors will be summonsed for each jury trial
- B. Pre-Screening questions will be asked of each juror and if affirmative responses, jurors will be excused for the trial.
 - 1. Have you traveled to any place where there are Covid-19 outbreaks recently.
 - 2. Have you been diagnosed with Covid-19
 - 3. Have you been exposed to anyone diagnosed with Covid-19
 - 4. Are you in a vulnerable risk group as defined by CDC
 - 5. Do you live with or give care to anyone in a vulnerable risk group
 - 6. Are you currently experiencing any symptoms of Covid-19
- C. Sub-panels of 15 people will be called on a staggered basis at 8:30; 10:30; 1:30 and 3:30 (if necessary).
 - 1. Jurors must wear masks in courthouse as directed by the judge and will be encouraged to bring one with them. If the individual does not have a face covering, a disposable mask will be provided. Gloves will also be available.
 - 2. Individuals feeling feverish will not be allowed to enter.
 - 3. Jurors will be asked the above screening questions again.
 - 4. Any jurors exhibiting symptoms or who answer affirmatively to the questions posed will not be allowed to enter
 - 5. Parties and witnesses will be screened at security for symptoms of Covid-19 as well.
 - 6. The Sheriff's office will be responsible for screening any in custody defendant or witness prior to transporting them to the Courthouse.
- D. Jurors will be seated in courtroom 1A in compliance with social distancing guidelines.
- E. Public will be allowed as space permits due to social distancing.

The gallery of the courtroom has been marked to identify appropriate social distancing in the seating. Once the spots are filled, no other observers will be allowed to enter the courtroom. Security will monitor the courtroom to ensure compliance with social distancing.

- F. The public and jurors shall not be allowed to communicate.
 - G. Sanitizer will be provided outside the courtroom and should be used by persons entering and leaving the courtroom.
 - H. No person shall congregate or linger in the hallways or in front of the courthouse.
 - I. In the courtroom, counsel tables, witness location, the judge's bench, clerk, court reporter and bailiff's seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.
- II. Voir dire
- A. Every person in the courtroom shall wear face coverings as directed by the judge.
 - B. The parties will remain at their tables for voir dire but counsel may stand and conduct voir dire using the microphone at their table
 - 1. Counsel and their clients/representative will be allowed to sit at same table to allow for consultations. The Court will advise the jury that it is necessary for the parties to be in close contact. The parties will have face coverings.
 - 2. Counsel should limit the number of people at counsel table and in the courtroom to those that are essential to their case.
 - C. The court will establish time limits for voir dire. Any bench conferences with jurors will take place in the jury deliberation room for courtroom 1A to ensure social distancing can be maintained unless technology allows otherwise. Bench conferences can also now be done (because of updated technology) with counsel at tables and the juror can be at the bench at a distance of 6' from the Court.
 - D. After the panel has been passed for cause, they will be excused until further direction of the Court.

- E. The courtroom gallery will be cleared and cleaned and the next panel will then be seated to repeat the process. The entire courtroom will be cleaned/sanitized each night.
- E. After the appropriate number of jurors are passed for cause, the parties will exercise peremptory challenges. (Jurors will not be returned for this process so counsel needs to make sure to take appropriate notes to exercise their peremptory challenges.)
- F. After the peremptory challenges are exercised and the parties agree upon the jurors selected, the Clerk will call the jurors and notify those selected to return to Court for trial at a time set by the Court.

III. Trial proceedings

A. Jurors returning to Court

1. Each time jurors return to court they will be screened as noted above.
2. They will then be taken to the Flex courtroom, which will be the designated jury room where they can appropriately social distance. The flex courtroom will remain locked during the entire trial.
3. Bathrooms in the jury rooms will be available for their use.
4. Appropriate hand sanitizers will be available in the bathrooms and outside the jury room.
5. Jury notebooks will be provided to each juror by the bailiff and appropriate steps will be taken to minimize contact with those notebooks by others.

B. Parties and evidence presentation

1. The parties will remain at their tables for the presentation of evidence. Parties should be aware that they, or their representatives will not be able to enter and exit the courtroom unless there is a break in the proceedings. This is due to the necessary seating of the jury panel.
2. All exhibits will be provided in electronic form to the Court and opponent no less than 10 days prior to trial. Any exhibits not

capable of being reduced to electronic form must be in protective covering to avoid contamination.

3. No exhibits will be passed to the witness or jurors so if any party wishes to emphasize an exhibit, the party should utilize an easel and enlarge photos etc. The parties should provide an exhibit notebook which will remain at the witness table for each witness to use to identify exhibits.
4. Witnesses will enter and exit the courtroom through the back hallway escorted by security to avoid contact with jurors and public. Hand sanitizer will be required when they enter and then they will get a pair of gloves that they will use when handling the exhibit notebook
5. The witness will be sworn in by the jury box and then will take the fourth seat closest to the jury on the top row in the jury box. A microphone and table will be next to the witness. Microphone covers will be replaced after each witness and the witness chair will be wiped down.
6. Due to new technology all bench conferences will be done using the side bar headphones. If necessary, the jury will be excused and returned to the jury room.

C. Jury Deliberations

1. The jury will deliberate in the Flex Courtroom and be advised to maintain social distancing at all times during deliberation.
2. If the jury wishes to view exhibits, they will either be brought back into the courtroom with the parties and the Court will show the exhibits on the screen. Any physical exhibits will be placed on the table in the jury room and they can view the exhibit but will be instructed not to touch any exhibits without proper protection.