

**Based upon the current situation with COVID-19, pursuant to the Florida Supreme Court's Administrative Orders SCO20-23-Amended , and SC20-32, the following designates how all Seminole County courts will proceed until July , 2020, or until further order:**

**\*\* EVERYONE ENTERING THE COURTHOUSE IS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS \*\***

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

1. All individuals entering the Criminal, Civil or Juvenile courthouse are required to exercise six feet social distancing. All persons are to stand as designated by the deputies or court personnel when outside or inside the courthouse and comply with all markings.
2. MASKS are MANDATORY. All courthouse visitors are required to wear masks when entering and while inside the courthouse. Courthouse employees do not have to wear a mask in their private chambers or office, if, social distancing is possible. Should a visitor refuse to wear a mask, s/he shall be prohibited from entering the courthouse.
3. EVERY courthouse visitor at each of the courthouses, other than courthouse employees, whether reporting to court, the clerk's office, the State Attorney's office, Public Defender's office, Mediation or court administration, will be required to fill out the **COVID-19 Form** before entering the courthouse. Upon entering the courthouse, all individuals, other than courthouse employees or court personnel, should have the presiding judge name and case number for their case if they are appearing in court. All individuals, other than courthouse employees, are required to fill out **COVID-19 Form** in order to enter the courthouse. Once completed the form will be filed in the court file of the appropriate case under seal, if necessary. Should a courthouse visitor have answers that indicate they may be a risk or refuse to answer the form, that person shall be prohibited from entering the courthouse.
4. Upon entering the courthouse, all individuals, other than court personnel or courthouse employees, MUST submit to a temperature check. The temperature must be 100.4 or less to enter the courthouse. Should a person's temperature be 100.4 or higher, that person's temperature will be marked on the **COVID-19 Form** and s/he is prohibited from entering the courthouse. This information will be provided to the presiding judge to notify the judge. If the temperature is 100.4 or less, they may enter the building. Court personnel and courthouse employees will be required to self-check and report any issues to their supervisor. Should a person refuse to complete the **COVID-19 Form**, this will be provided to the presiding judge and s/he will be prevented from entering the courthouse.
5. Each courtroom at the Criminal Justice Center, Downtown Civil courthouse and Juvenile Justice Center will be marked to designate the space for each person to sit to ensure the 6ft social distancing. Each judge should maintain the social distancing requirements in the courtroom.
6. Should a courthouse visitor fail to comply with any part of this COVID-19 Operational plan, the Seminole County Sheriff's office is permitted to use the necessary means to enforce the operational plan, prohibit an individual from entering the courthouse or assist a person in exiting the courthouse based upon his or her noncompliance.

### **Criminal Justice Center-Circuit and County**

1. All in-custody initial appearances, arraignments, VOP arraignments, early resolution cases, and bond hearings shall move forward and are to be conducted by remote appearance via video conferencing at the jail. As of June 1, 2020, initial appearances will be conducted at CJC in Studio F remotely, except for weekends they shall be conducted in Courtroom 1A. The public defender will appear remotely at the jail. All private counsel will appear via the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor remotely to Studio F. Otherwise, any other in-custody proceedings will take place in either Courtroom 1B or 5D by video-conference.
2. A plea for an in-custody defendant may be conducted via videoconferencing at the jail and the courtroom. Please have all felony plea forms signed by the time of the plea to present to the judge.
3. All out of custody defendants may enter a plea and if they are required to have fingerprints for any conviction, they will report to the place designated by the judge to submit to fingerprints within the courthouse or the jail.
4. Beginning June 1, 2020, all misdemeanor arraignments for all out of custody pro se defendants may take place in Courtroom 1A, at CJC, at 9:00 am and 10:30 am. The docket will be divided according to alphabet. Every defendant will be required to exercise social distancing while in court.
5. Beginning June 3, 2020, traffic hearings for represented individuals may be conducted by videoconferencing in Courtroom 1A. Each agency will have designated days and times for its traffic hearings. Attorneys are responsible for having the client attend by video. Each attorney may contact the court to determine how to proceed by video-conference. Beginning July 6, 2020, all other traffic hearings may move forward remotely. All defendants must provide an email address to appear remotely. You must contact the court as to how to proceed.
6. All out of custody pro se defendants' appearances for all criminal VOP arraignments, docket reviews, calendar calls and felony arraignments may move forward with social distancing after June 10, 2020, or until further order of the court.
7. Any docket soundings and pre-trial conferences for any out of custody of defendant after June 1, 2020 and before July 17, 2020, may move forward for all defendants represented by counsel remotely by videoconferencing. All defendant's appearance will be waived at that time. The attorneys will be responsible for informing their client of what occurs and any future court date. The attorneys will be required to exercise social distancing and appropriate safeguards. The attorneys are to contact the court to determine how docket sounding or pretrial conferences will move forward. All in-custody docket soundings will proceed via videoconferencing at the jail and Courtroom 1B or

5D. Please review the Clerk's website for your date. Contact the judicial assistant or review the judge's website for any further assistance.

8. Adult drug court will be conducted via videoconferencing. All attorneys for any problem-solving court client should contact the case manager or the court to determine how to proceed.
9. BEGINNING JULY 20, 2020, JURY TRIALS WILL BEGIN. Speedy trial is suspended until July 20, 2020 or any future date designated by further order of the court. Social distancing will be exercised for jury duty. Please check-in online for jury service.

#### **Juvenile Justice Center -Juvenile /Probate**

1. All Emergency Guardianship matters, Shelter, Detention, and Risk Protection Order Hearings shall proceed via video-conferencing or telephonically during weekend duty. Otherwise Monday through Friday, those hearings are to take place at the Juvenile Justice Center as set forth and agreed to by the parties.
2. All other hearings are to be continued until after July 2, 2020.

#### **Civil Courthouse**

1. All contested civil family cases may be rescheduled until after July 2, 2020. Otherwise, it is with in the discretion of each individual judge in the civil family divisions as to whether any motion, stipulation, or hearing may move forward. Please review the website or contact the judicial assistant to determine how each individual judge is proceeding during this time.
2. Beginning June 1, 2020, small claims pretrial conferences may move forward by videoconferencing. The parties may contact the judicial assistant as to how to proceed.
3. For all uncontested divorces for parties without an attorney, please file the required paperwork as instructed by the County Self Help Center at <https://flcourts18.org/selfhelp/> and email [Seminoleselfhelp@flcourts18.org](mailto:Seminoleselfhelp@flcourts18.org) on how to proceed further.
4. All Baker Acts, and Marchman Acts hearings are to proceed via video conferencing or telephonically.
5. BEGINNING JULY 20, 2020, JURY TRIALS WILL BEGIN. Social distancing will be exercised for jury duty. Please check-in online for jury service.
6. Please contact each judge as to how s/he is proceeding on all other civil matters.

#### **Injunctions**

- Beginning June 1, 2020, all injunction petitions and proceedings may move forward in-person or by video-conference. If it is a domestic violence injunction at the Downtown civil courthouse, it may be heard in Courtroom A. Should the petition be heard at the Criminal Justice Center involve stalking, cyber-stalking, sexual violence, dating violence, and/or repeat violence the hearing may be heard in the designated courtroom of the judge assigned. Every party and witness will be required to exercise social distancing while in court. Each person will be required to sit in the designated seats set 6 feet apart in the courtroom. To ensure the safety and health of all persons, courtrooms will be frequently disinfected. Please refer to your notice for the courtroom location or contact the clerk or the court. **Please send your name, case number and contact phone number to [seminole@flcourts18.org](mailto:seminole@flcourts18.org).**

\*\*Please contact each division's judicial assistant or review the judge's website to determine how to proceed on any hearing and if said case may be heard remotely.

**\*\*Florida Self-Represented Litigants (Pro-Se)** – Please register for the E-Portal so you can electronically receive and file documents. <https://www.myflcourtagency.com/default.aspx>

**\*\*Any person exhibiting symptoms of cough, fever, or shortness of breath or any symptoms consistent with COVID-19, should not enter any court facility and please contact the court as to how to proceed.\*\***

**Please understand everyone in the judicial system is doing their best to continue to represent the citizens of Seminole county in compliance with the administrative orders, while promoting public safety and well-being during this difficult time. Thank you for your patience in our continued efforts to serve you.**