

	RETURN TO PHASE ONE	LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER C36 2020-16J D07 2020-13J P80 2020-14J
		RESCINDS: C36 2020-15J D07 2020-12J P80 2020-13J

Court Address
212 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079

Court Telephone No.
(269) 657-8200

This plan is governed by Administrative Order 2020-14, effective May 6, 2020, and approved by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO). The chief judge of the Van Buren County Courts has consulted with the local health department and determined that the health conditions in our area are deteriorating. Specifically:

1. There is an upward trajectory of documented cases for a 14-day period.
2. The positivity rate is 15% or greater.
3. There have been COVID-19 confirmed or suspected cases in the court facility within a 14-day period and
4. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities and obtained data noted in Region 5 of the [Michigan Statewide Available Bed Tracking for COVID-19](#).
5. The chief judge has consulted with health authorities which includes receiving daily data updates for COVID-19. This information confirms that
 - a. there is evidence of a COVID-19 rebound within the local community and
 - b. there is need to implement additional social distancing measures based upon a resurgence of infections in the local area.

IT IS ORDERED:

- A. In order to protect the health and safety of employees and the public, Van Buren County Courts have enacted the following protections:
 1. Employees will self-screen for COVID-19 symptoms. Employees who feel sick or have any COVID-19 symptoms will not report to work. Employees who feel sick or display symptoms at work will be sent home immediately. Employees may return to work in the office only when the following conditions are met:
 - a. The employee is feeling better, and
 - b. The employee has a written authorization to return to work from their health care provider, or
 - c. In the absence of a written authorization (b), the employee must provide written documentation of a negative COVID-19 test result.
 2. Court employees have been surveyed and those employees who have self-identified as a vulnerable employee and unable to work within the court facilities have been offered appropriate accommodations, including the ability to work remotely if their job lends itself to remote work.
 3. Employees will be encouraged to work remotely where feasible to facilitate social distancing among on-site staff.
 4. Employees in court facilities will maintain social distancing of six feet at all times and wear masks when six-foot physical distance cannot be maintained. The court has taken the following steps to ensure proper social distancing and employee safety:
 - a. Placed physical barriers between workspaces that are not at least six feet apart.

- b. Marked the floor in common spaces to indicate six-foot intervals.
 - c. Required employees to wear masks while in public spaces.
 - d. Required employees handling mail to wear masks and gloves.
 - e. Implemented staggered shifts of employees to reduce crowd size and the risk of people gathering at start and close times.
5. Employees will practice good hygiene through hand washing, frequent disinfecting of used items and surfaces, sneezing or coughing into a tissue or elbow, and avoiding touching their faces.
 6. Employees will not travel for business unless it is essential business travel.
 7. Quarantine and/or isolation requirements will be implemented consistent with the most current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and/or local public health officials.
 8. Employees have been trained regarding COVID-19. The training included good hygiene practices, updated personnel policies, and safety controls at the court facilities.
 9. Court facilities have posted signage emphasizing proper handwashing.
 10. Shared equipment will be cleaned and sanitized before each use. Examples of shared equipment include copiers, fax machines, and telephones used by more than one employee during a single shift or in consecutive shifts. This equipment should be wiped down with disinfectant or a disinfectant wipe between uses.
 11. The court is following the CDC guidance on cleaning and disinfecting if the facility is exposed to COVID-19.
 12. The court will follow contact tracing procedures as noted in the [Michigan Supreme Court Contact Tracing Considerations](#) and is prepared to implement these procedures after receiving notification that the court facility has had confirmed exposure to COVID-19. These procedures will help the court identify individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 and will identify exposure locations that need to be cleaned and disinfected pursuant to CDC guidelines.

B. Van Buren County Courts are enacting the following measures related to public entry into court facilities:

1. The public will be screened by court security prior to entering the court building. The screening will include, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. A touchless/contactless thermometer will be used at the entrance of the courthouse to scan visitors for temperatures above 100.4 degrees.
 - b. Visitors will be asked to complete a questionnaire with the following questions:
 - Have you had close contact with or cared for someone diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 14 days?
 - Have you experienced any cold or flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days (to include fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory illness, difficulty breathing)?
 - Have you traveled internationally or in an area determined by CDC (Center for Disease Control) as a COVID-19 hot spot?

Any individual responding “yes” to the screening questions or has a temperature above 100.4 degrees will be referred by the screening personnel to the ADA Coordinator for Van Buren County Courts. If the ADA Coordinator determines the person cannot safely enter the facility, he/she will be denied access. The court will accept documents for filing from the person. If the person was scheduled to appear as a party in a court proceeding, the court may, as needed,

reschedule the hearing/trial to either a remote proceeding or to a future date when the person may pass courthouse screening.

2. The court will provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to any personnel responsible for in-person screening.
3. Visitors will be limited to the amount of personal items brought into court facilities. Unnecessary items should not be brought into the facility to reduce the number of articles that may need hands on screening.

C. In order to facilitate the business of the court, Van Buren County Courts are enacting the following measures related to court proceedings:

1. Proceedings will be conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible, consistent with Administrative Order No. 2020-6.
2. In person proceedings are limited to those where there is a statutory or constitutional right that has not been waived.
3. In-person court proceedings will be limited to no more than ten people or any number that ensures six-foot social distancing at all times. Face coverings will be required in court in a manner consistent with the SCAO [Return to Full Capacity Guide](#). They will be provided by the court prior to entry.
4. Non-parties will not be allowed into the facilities.
5. Off-site visits with probationers and clients will be discontinued.
6. Non-essential services (i.e. wedding ceremonies) will not be scheduled at this time.
7. Swearing in ceremonies can be conducted one on one or remotely.
8. Pursuant to MCR 8.110(c), members of the public or staff who refuse to wear required face coverings or adhere to social distancing requirements may be asked to leave the court facility.
9. Any member of the public who is asked to leave the court facility must be offered an opportunity to conduct court business virtually, attend court proceedings virtually, file documents in an alternative manner, or confer with court administration to determine alternate arrangements for accessing the court.

Van Buren County Courts are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19. See the court's Emergency Operations Plan for specific information.

Effective Date: 11/18/2020

Date: 11/18/2020

Chief Judge Signature: 

From: [Region5 Info](#)
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Subject: Van Buren Return to Full Capacity - Phase One - Approved
Date: Thursday, November 19, 2020 1:39:42 PM

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Van Buren Return to Full Capacity – Phase One - Approved
C36 2020-16J; rescinds 2020-15J
D07 2020-13J; rescinds 2020-12J
P80 2020-14J; rescinds 2020-13J

This is to advise that we have reviewed the above referenced administrative order and find that it conforms to the requirements of MCR 8.112(B). This order is being accepted and filed.

Jill Booth
Region V Administrator
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