

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Angelina County Justice Court, Precinct One, Lufkin, Texas

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, visitors, court staff, judge, Constable, and individuals entering the court's spaces identified as the court room, office space for clerical activity, Constable's office and space available to the general public. It should be noted that the residency and logistics of the court is unique in that the court is located within the Angelina County Jail complex and shares a common entry into the building complex with a large public lobby and the jail master control area. The Justice Court, Precinct One, will implement the follow protective measures.

General

1. The judge, court staff and Constable will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings in accordance with the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration, and Texas Justice Court Training Center, regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. Judge and court clerks will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. Judge will maintain regular communication with the local health authority, local Administrative District Judge, County Judge, and Texas Justice Court Training Center and adjust this operating plan as necessary as varying conditions guidance develop within the county.
4. Judge will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than June 1, 2020.
5. Judge and Constable will continually assess the needs for security and protection of the Court, staff, and the general public utilizing the court.

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judge and court clerks who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6F, or with new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as coughs, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or having known close contact, or suspected with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the court spaces and should seek medical advice.
3. Judge and court and court clerks will be required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendation during in-person hearings. Judge and office staff may wear face covering within office spaces and courtroom at any other times they believe to be necessary.

Scheduling, Screening, and Use of Public Office Spaces

1. Court schedules/dockets/hearings will be established to reduce occupancy in the courtroom.
2. Court hearing requiring in-person attendance will be set at 30 minutes apart to allow appropriate cleaning of the courtroom.
3. Witnesses for in-person hearings should remain outside the jail complex to avoid common areas, such as the jail complex lobby area and entrance area of the jail complex.
4. All litigants scheduled/docketed for in-person hearing will be notified as follows:
 - (1) Entry to the jail complex will be remained locked in accordance with jail policy. Entry to the jail complex requires all persons to press the intercom button to gain entry.

- (2) All persons entering the building will be screened for fever.
- (3) All persons having business with the Court will be required to wear a mask.
- (4) No more that 10 people will be permitted in the lobby area of the court.
- (5) No more than 2 people (1 person per party) will be permitted in the public space of the court office at a time.
- (6) All persons in the lobby area of the court shall adhere to the social distancing guidelines. Maintain a distance of 6 feet between persons.
- (7) No cash will be accepted. Any payment made to the court must be by check or money order.
- (8) Persons having any of the following symptoms, will not be permitted into the courtroom or the court's office public space area:

Cough	Sore Throat
Shortness of Breath	Loss of Taste or Smell
Chills	Feeling Feverish
Muscle Pain	Headache
Measured Temperature of 99.6F or more, or known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19	

5. Litigants/counsel table, witness stand, judge's bench, and bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way to ensure there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each person.

Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over the age of 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood

pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are comprised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.

2. Judge will include information on orders or notifications of case setting or hearings, and other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and recommendations. A notice with this information will be posted on the court's website and in conspicuous locations around the court's public spaces.
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by allowing the vulnerable individual to appear by telephone or video conference from home, attorney's office, or other suitable location. Within the discretion of the judge, affidavits of a vulnerable individual may be considered.
4. **NOTE: In evictions suits in Justice Courts, the parties may represent themselves or be represented by their authorized agents, who need not be attorneys.**

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitation dispensers will be placed at the entrance to the courtroom and the court's office public space area.
2. Tissues will be available in the courtroom at the litigants/counsel table, witness stand, and judge's bench.
3. The Department of State Health Service's "**Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer**" will be posted in multiple locations in the lobby waiting area, entry to court office space, and including entry to the courtroom.
4. A permanent solid glass "spit screen" is present at the public counter that separates the court clerks and the general public.

5. A temporary "spit screen" will be installed on the judge's bench.

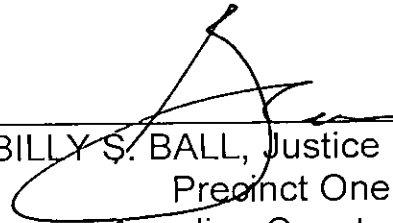
Cleaning

1. Hygienic cleaning of the jail complex entry, lobby area and the common lobby area shared by the court will continued to be cleaned and sanitized by jail trustees at the direction of the Warden.
2. Continuous hygienic cleaning and sanitizing of the court room and office work spaces will be done by a jail trustee assigned to the court. All cleaning and sanitizing over-site of the court's work spaces and courtroom will be provided by the judge and chief court clerk.
3. Cleaning/sanitation supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus will be utilized in the court's work spaces and courtroom.
4. Protective clothing and cleaning supplies for jail trustees assigned to cleaning activities for the lobby and public restrooms in jail complex (there are no public rest rooms located in the court's work spaces) will be provided by the Warden.

I have conferred and consulted with the Local Administrative District Judge, Warden, court staff, Constable, local health authorities, hospital medical personnel, other Justice of the Peace of this county, and the legal staff of the Texas Justice County Training Center.

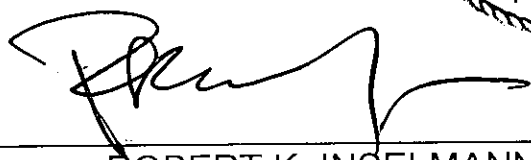
I will ensure that the Justice Court, Precinct One, Angelina County developed this Operating Plan with considering the best interest and safety of it's staff and the public for which it serves utilizing the orders, guidance, and directions as provided by the Texas Supreme Court, Court Appeals, Office of Court Administration, Texas Justice Court Training Center and Local Administrative District Judge, and will conduct proceedings consistent with this plan.

Date: May 18TH 2020


BILLY S. BALL, Justice of the Peace
Precinct One
Angelina County, Texas



Date: May 18 2020
Reviewed and Approved:


ROBERT K. INSELMANN.
217th District Court
Local Administrative District Judge
Angelina County, Texas