



Davidson County Juvenile Court’s Plan for Re-Opening Court: Updated July 21, 2020¹

I. Proposed schedule for re-opening

Davidson County Juvenile Court proposes to have a soft re-opening the week of May 26, 2020, at the Juvenile Justice Center at 100 Woodland Street in Nashville, Tennessee. At the soft re-opening, we will have only trials in dependency/neglect and delinquency cases. We will have dockets with reduced case numbers in parentage and appearance matters. We will then move to dockets with reduced case numbers in all courtrooms the weeks of June 1, June 8, June 15, and June 22, 2020. We will aim to move to full dockets on the week of June 29, 2020 (maintaining the 6’ distancing capacity requirements described in #4 below). These projected dates are dependent on the progress of the Mayor’s Roadmap and monitoring of the virus.

II. Factors to be addressed pursuant to the April 24, 2020 Tennessee Supreme Court Order

1) Admission into the courthouse

- a. We will limit admission to the Juvenile Justice Center (CJC) to attorneys, parties and their children, and persons needing Clerk/Court assistance and their children. We will encourage case parties not to bring extra people to court with them. Witnesses for court hearings (non-parties) will be asked to stay in their car/outside until they are contacted by a party/attorney to come to the courtroom. If building capacity becomes an issue, tables will be set up in the front lobby to restrict entry to individuals who have necessary business with the Court. Face masks are required for entry into the Juvenile Justice Center. Members of the public who do not have face masks will be provided with masks prior to entering the building. Security staff will take each individual’s temperature at the front security checkpoint before allowing

¹ The only section of this Plan that has been amended from the original Davidson County Juvenile Court Re-Opening Plan is Section (II)(1)(a) on page 1 (“Admission into the courthouse”).

entry. Individuals with a temperature over 100.4 F will not be allowed to enter the building.

- b. Juvenile Court employees will enter through the back employee entrance to limit the number of people coming through the front doors.

2) Limitation of the number of persons in the courtroom

6' social distancing requirements will limit the capacity of each courtroom to the numbers below. The Judge/Magistrate will be responsible for making sure the maximum capacity numbers are not exceeded in the courtrooms, with the assistance of the Court Officers.

6' Distancing Capacity in Courtrooms (all capacity numbers include JO, clerk(s), security, parties, and the gallery):

- o Calloway: 11
- o Lewis: 11
- o Rigsby: 8
- o Calhoun: 10
- o O'Neil: 20
- o Robertson: 16
- o Rosenberg: 16
- o Ottman: 14
- o Wade/Glanton: 12

3) Staggering of hearing times

All court dockets except trial dockets (which are already limited to 1-2 cases) will be staggered at 30 minute intervals. The following information has already been shared with the attorneys: "In anticipation of these guidelines, we will be creating a staggered docketing system when the court is reopened. Staggered docketing will be in place for all dockets except for trials. Each docket will be set for a thirty minute time period and will be limited to approximately five cases. Every case on the docket will be called within the assigned 30 minute time period. Therefore, if a case is scheduled on the 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. docket, it will be essential that all parties are present at 9:00 a.m. It will not be possible to move cases to a different time slot on the same day. If the parties are not able to be present during the assigned 30 minute time slot, you may request a continuance to a different day. It will be imperative that we all work together to stay within these time slots in order to maintain social distancing."

4) Management of social distancing in the courthouse and in the courtroom

- a. 6' social distancing will be observed throughout the building. Tape will be used to illustrate what 6' distancing looks like. Benches in the courtroom will be taped to show 6' distancing, with the understanding that some family members might be closer than 6' apart.

b. The lobby areas (all three levels) and Foster Care Review Board Room will be staged as waiting areas for case parties.

6' Distancing Capacity in JJC Waiting Areas (includes sitting on benches and standing):

- o Lower Level Lobby: 10
- o 1st Floor Lobby: 28
- o 2nd Floor Lobby: 24
- o Foster Care Review Board Room (FCRB hearings are being moved to off-site locations): 10-15

5) Handling of witnesses (e.g., having witnesses remain in their vehicles or placing them in separate rooms)

Non-party witnesses for court hearings will be asked to stay in their car/outside until they are contacted by a party or attorney to come to the courtroom.

6) The use of personal protection such as face masks, as well as appropriate use of disinfectants, is encouraged in courthouses to protect court personnel and the public

- a. Employees will be required to wear face masks when they are in open public areas such as the lobby and courtrooms unless there is an extenuating circumstance. Employees will be encouraged, but not required, to wear face masks when they are in their offices. All employees will be provided with washable, reusable face masks.
- b. Youth in detention will be provided with a face mask when they enter the courtroom and will be required to wear the face mask unless there is an extenuating circumstance.
- c. Members of the public will be provided with face masks and hand sanitizer/ mobile hand washing stations as available. Signage encouraging the use of face masks has been posted throughout the JJC.
- d. Cleaning, Anti-Contamination, and Disinfection Protocols: Cleaning of the JJC is handled by Metro General Services. General Services continues to monitor and follow the cleaning and disinfection recommendations set forth by the CDC at the JJC, including routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces such as doors and counters and increased cleaning in high traffic public areas. General Services has provided Juvenile Court with Stearns Mark 11, a disinfectant our Security Director and others are using frequently throughout the day. The General Services contractor responsible for cleaning the building is also using this spray during their normal cleaning procedures. We have also opened all non- security risk doors to limit the number of door handle touches. We have provided each court division with disinfectant wipes, gloves and hand sanitizer to be used at their discretion. Signage describing good sanitation practices has been posted throughout the JJC. Small hand sanitizer dispensers are available on each floor and are refilled on a regular basis by General Services. We have requested additional personnel to assist with anti-contamination/disinfection protocols from the Metropolitan Office of Emergency Management.

7) Screening measures such as touchless thermometers and health questions relevant to COVID-19 may be used for entry into courthouses. However, factors such as availability and cost of such measures should be taken into consideration before inclusion as mandatory requirements in a written plan.

- a. The issue of taking employee temperatures has been deferred pending further guidance from the Mayor's Office and the Metro Civil Service Medical Examiner.
- b. Employees will be required to report to management if they have had a fever within the past 24 hours or if they are having respiratory symptoms. Employees will be provided with information about the Metro COVID-19 hotline, which provides detailed information about when testing and/or self-quarantine is needed.

III. Metro Student Attendance Center (MSAC)

All social distancing, docket staggering, employee-related matters, and general cleaning measures addressed herein with regard to the JJC will also apply at the Metro Student Attendance Center. MSAC is a division of Juvenile Court that is located in a separate building (945 Dr. Richard G. Adams Drive in Nashville, Tennessee). There is one courtroom located at MSAC in which a Juvenile Court magistrate hears education-related court matters. An additional court docket, Safe Babies Court, will be moved to the MSAC building in order to further reduce the number of individuals entering the JJC.