

United States Courts
District of Vermont

Staff Safety / Hygiene Protocols

May 18, 2020

Masks or Cloth Face Coverings Required

- Each employee shall be required to wear a mask or other cloth material that covers his or her mouth and nose while in the workplace, except to the extent an employee is using break time to eat or drink. The court will provide such masks or cloth face coverings to employees, or the employee may choose to wear their own. In the event the court is unable to provide masks or cloth face coverings to employees because of shortages or supply chain difficulties, the court will compensate employees for the reasonable and necessary costs employees expend to purchase or on such materials to make their own masks or cloth face covering.
- In workplace settings where employees are working alone in segregated spaces (i.e. DIRTT offices, private offices, segregated cubicles at least 6 feet or 2 meters apart, etc.), employees may remove their masks. However, employees shall wear a mask or face covering from the time they enter the courthouse until the time they arrive at their office/work station and at any time they are leaving their work station and moving around common areas (i.e. in hallways and stairwells, going to the restroom or break room, etc.). For employees working in congregate settings (i.e. public counters, courtrooms, meeting rooms, or similar settings), those employees shall wear a face covering as above.
- Nothing in these rules shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition.
- If a person declines to wear a mask or cloth face covering because of a medical condition as described above, such person shall not be required to produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition.

Controlling contact between employees and other employees or visitors

- Social distancing means avoiding large gatherings and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others.
- All courthouse visitors will be required to wear cloth face coverings while on premises. Nothing in these rules shall require the use of a mask or cloth face covering by anyone for whom doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety due to a medical condition.
- If a person declines to wear a mask or cloth face covering because of a medical condition as described above, such person shall not be required to produce medical documentation verifying the stated condition.
- In-person meetings should be avoided as much as possible. Where in-person meetings occur, they should be limited to a maximum of ten people, each attendee should always have a mask covering their mouth and nose, and a safe social distance should be maintained.
- Safe social distancing should occur in court common areas. For example, break rooms, supply rooms, and file rooms should have no more than one employee in them at a time.

- Safe social distancing should occur in areas serving the public. For example, if staff are assisting someone at the public counter, other staff should avoid that area for the duration of the interaction.
- Employees should not go into other employee's offices or work areas unless necessary and with permission from the employee or a supervisor.
- Plexiglas partitions are to be utilized at public counters to delineate physical space between employees and visitors.

Eliminating transmission points

- **Frequent cleaning of all touch points.** Staff are requested to clean/disinfect common internal areas (front counter, break rooms, doorknobs) at the beginning of each day and/or between use (public terminals, credit card kiosks, copiers, etc.).
- Disposable wipes and/or disinfectant spray and towels will be provided so that commonly used surfaces (for example, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks, other work tools and equipment) can be wiped down.
- Staff should consistently utilize secondary doors and access points to minimize incidental contact. For example, IT staff in Burlington should consistently utilize the side door to their 5th floor offices and avoid the front door. Similarly, operations staff located on the 2nd floor should consistently utilize the clerk's office door located closest to their office.
- Staff should consistently utilize employee restrooms located on the floor of their office.
- Common touch points should be reduced by leaving common internal doors open where possible (eg. break room doors, supply room doors).
- Employees should clean their personal workspace at the beginning of each day.
- Employees should not use other workers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, when possible. If shared, clean and disinfect equipment before and after use.
- If a sick employee is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, the CDC and GSA cleaning and disinfection protocols will be followed.

Guidelines for essential employees

- Employees who are ill should stay home.
- Where possible, employees should take their temperature before they go to work. If they have a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, they should stay home.
- Hand sanitizer will be available to employees who are also encouraged to wash their hands frequently with soap and water.
- Whether at work or at home, all employees are advised to follow the [CDC guidelines for preventing transmission of COVID-19](#) including:

Washing hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, avoiding touching mouth and nose, avoiding close contact with others, cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, using cough and sneeze etiquette, and staying at home when sick.