

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE SEVENTEENTH
JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Administrative Order 2021-38-Temp

COVID-19 EXPOSURE AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

(a) Pursuant to Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes, the chief judge of each judicial circuit is charged with the authority and the power to do everything necessary to promote the prompt and efficient administration of justice.

(b) Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215 authorizes the chief judge to require that all judges of the court, other court officers, and court personnel comply with all court and judicial branch policies, administrative orders, procedures and administrative plans.

(c) Pursuant to Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(4), the chief judge of each judicial circuit is vested with the authority to and must “regulate the use of all court facilities.”

(d) Local COVID-19 health conditions have steadily worsened over the past several weeks and Broward County is currently an area of high transmission.

(e) The health, safety, and well-being of courthouse visitors, court employees, and judicial officers continue to be a priority, and this administrative order and attached policy is intended to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the courts, its participants and the public by establishing procedures to notify the public and stakeholders who may be affected by exposure to COVID-19 in courthouse facilities.

(f) In accordance with the authority vested in the Chief Judge by Article V, section 2(d) of the Florida Constitution, section 43.26, Florida Statutes, Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, it is hereby **ORDERED:**

- (1) All courthouse stakeholders were consulted regarding the attached procedures and all have agreed to follow these procedures, and will enforce this policy within all common areas of any courthouse facility and all courtrooms in the 17th Judicial Circuit.
- (2) Each stakeholder shall develop their own COVID-19 policy within their offices in all courthouse facilities.
- (3) The attached “COVID-19 Exposure in Courthouse Facilities” policy is hereby implemented.

DONE AND ORDERED, in Chambers, Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida, this 6th day of August, 2021.

/s/ Jack Tuter
Jack Tuter, Chief Judge



17th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

COVID-19 Exposure in Courthouse Facilities

Purpose and Application

While vaccinations are now widely available, the COVID-19 virus is still very much a major disease threatening the health and safety of the community. The Administrative Office of the Courts of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit (AOC) is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all persons utilizing public areas of courthouse facilities, including courtrooms. This policy is intended to address COVID-19 exposure in all 17th Judicial Circuit courthouse facilities and applies to all courthouse stakeholders and their employees, including agencies with office space in any courthouse facility and agencies which otherwise regularly appear before the court for business. Each stakeholder agency with office space in any courthouse facility shall implement a COVID-19 policy inside their offices or other areas under their direct control.

Effective Date

This Policy, as recently updated, is effective August 6, 2021.

Policy Statement

All stakeholder supervisors utilizing any courthouse facility must complete the attached form and deliver to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) via email at COVID@17th.flcourts.org within 24 hours if they are informed that someone within their agency:

- Is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms; or
- Has tested positive for or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the past 14 days.

For more complete information on COVID-19 symptoms, visit the CDC web page on [Symptoms](#).

Exposure Guidelines

The following exposure guidelines apply to all employees of AOC and stakeholder agencies.

Tier 1

- **Positive COVID-19 Test**: A person who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days must self-isolate and should consult a health care provider for further guidance. Employees of AOC and/or stakeholder agencies should promptly consult with their immediate supervisor.

Tier 2

- **Experiencing COVID-19 Symptoms**: The person should self-isolate and should consult a

healthcare provider for further guidance and potential testing. Employees of AOC and/or stakeholder agencies should consult with their immediate supervisor. If the person is tested for COVID-19 and the test results are negative, the person should continue to follow any applicable COVID-19 policy implemented by their employer. All persons are strongly encouraged to share any negative test results with their employer if employed by a courthouse stakeholder agency, or if not employed by a courthouse stakeholder, the Trial Court Administrator or designee. If the person is not tested, or tests positive, the person should comply with all applicable CDC guidelines and consult with their immediate supervisor prior to returning to a courthouse facility. For more information on quarantine and isolation, visit the CDC web page on [Quarantine and Isolation](#).

Tier 3

- Exposure to a Person who has tested positive for COVID-19: The person should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for at least 14 days following a potential exposure, and comply with any policy implemented by their employer. If symptoms develop within the 14 day monitoring period, the person should follow the procedure in Tier 2 above.

Tier 4

- Exposure to a Person who has been Exposed to a Person who has Tested Positive for COVID-19: The person should monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for at least 14 days following the potential exposure, and comply with any policy implemented by their employer. If symptoms develop within the 14 day monitoring period, the person should follow the procedure outlined in Tier 2 above.

Procedures

All stakeholders shall promptly notify the Trial Court Administrator via email to COVID@17th.flcourts.org if any of their employees test positive for COVID-19 (Tier 1) or are experiencing symptoms (Tier 2). Notification should not include any personal identifying information, except for the last date the person was present at any courthouse facility, and the locations where such person was present. The Trial Court Administrator, or designee, will post a generic notification to the Circuit's website, www.17th.flcourts.org, with information regarding the approximate location of the potential exposure or positive case and the approximate last date the individual was on site. Except as to effectuate the purpose of this policy, any information received by any person pursuant to this policy shall be held in the strictest of confidence.

Questions

Any person with questions relating to this Policy and its applicability should direct such inquiries to their individual supervisors.

FACILITY NAME & ADDRESS	
Locations within facility, i.e. suite/room affected	
Exposure date & last date on site	
When disinfecting occurred or is expected to occur	
Individual is Positive or Symptomatic	
When was FMD notified	