

MUNICIPAL COURT FOR VILLAGE OF HOWARD
BROWN COUNTY, STATE OF WISCONSIN

June 17, 2020

COVID-19 Operational Plan for In-Person Court Appearances.

In recognition of the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff and safety personnel, the following protective measures will be implemented to facilitate resumption of in-person court hearings. This plan is submitted in accordance with the Wisconsin Supreme Court's Order issued May 22, 2020.

1. Sanitation facilities

The court will have hand sanitizer available for persons entering the courtroom. Parties and participants will be required to bring and wear their own face mask. Additional single use masks, if available through the Village Safety Officer, will be provided by the Bailiff if a participant does not bring their own.

2. Mask Wearing Mandatory

The wearing of a face mask shall be mandatory for all persons entering the courtroom, including the judge, court staff, attorneys, parties, witnesses and interested members of the public. Any person who refuses to wear a mask shall not be admitted. If a person seeking entry in response to a summons refuses to wear a mask for an intake hearing, and no additional single use masks are available, that person shall be given one adjourned date for appearance. If masks are available, there will be no rescheduling due to refusal of a participant to wear a mask. Masks may only be removed by a specific presentation of facts and finding by the judge that removal is medically necessary or necessary for the providing of testimony or to determine credibility

A sign on the entrance door shall be affixed to the door in plain view instructing participants that they are expected to bring their own face mask, that a mask will be provided if available, and that no person will be admitted to the main court room facility without a mask.

3. Social Distancing

The number of people to be admitted to the courtroom facilities is limited to 15, plus judicial staff and security. Additional persons seeking entrance shall be required to wait outdoors (or in parked vehicles) until others have left to maintain this number. In the courtroom, space shall be marked for use with spacing according to an accepted social distancing interval. Defendants, attorneys, and witnesses shall remain in each person's designated space until coming forward for an appearance. Only those with a citation will be admitted unless an additional person, such as a translator or physical aid, is necessary. Participants will approach a designated microphone and there shall be single use wipes for decontamination. The Bailiff will control the flow of admittance during the hearing allowing participants to exit and enter to keep social distancing and designated numbers.

A sign on the entrance door shall be affixed to the door in plain view instructing participants to remain six feet distant and that family groups may remain within that distance together, but should as a group remain at least six feet from other groups.

Once 15 people are within the court room facility, the Bailiff will instruct others to wait outside and/or in their vehicles until one or more participants have departed, and then will be summoned to enter by the Bailiff. This number may increase after consultation with a Village Safety Officer or other means indicating more numbers will remain safe.

4. Trial Exhibits

The court will encourage parties to exchange trial exhibits electronically or by mail prior to trial. At time of trial, a table will be designated where marked trial exhibits shall be placed for inspection by one person at a time. The judge will be provided with copies of trial exhibits by the bailiff for inspection on the bench.

5. Trial Seating

Seating shall be configured to comply with social distance requirements. Each area will be provided with sanitation wipes to be wiped between being touched by each appearance.

Initial appearances will not require seating but will have designated spacing in line for appearances. Some seating for those needing accommodation will be provided and instructions given for this at the time of the appearance.

6. Ventilation

Doors will be propped open to reduce need for sanitation wipes or frequent touching of handles by multiple people. Where practical or available, the room shall increase airflow.

7. Pretrial hearings and conference

Pretrial hearings shall be conducted by conference telephone call or other electronic means. Pretrial conferences between parties and the Village Attorney shall be conducted at the Village Attorney's discretion by electronic or telephonic means or in accordance with the safety measures established by the Village Attorney in their own offices.

8. Distribution

Following approval of this operational plan by the Eighth Judicial District Chief Judge, a copy of this plan shall be posted at the public entrance of the courtroom and shall also be posted on the website for the Village of Howard.

9. Simultaneous Hearings

It is the intent of the court to schedule all hearings electronically as well as permit limited in person hearings. Those that appear in person will be addressed first in order to minimize continual contact with others, and those that appear electronically will be

instructed to maintain observation of the hearing proceedings but otherwise mute their audio input to avoid disruptions and to wait to have their matter called.

Simultaneous hearings will continue indefinitely or until a State or Federal declaration has determined that the basis for the pandemic restrictions is no longer applicable in the Village of Howard.

10. Vulnerable Populations

Individuals who are over age 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 compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.

The judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations.

Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by a remote appearance upon request.

11. Payments

In person payments will not be taken at this time during court initial hearings. Parties can mail in payments to 2456 Glendale Ave, Green Bay, WI 54313, use online payment systems through Government Payment EXP at 1-888-604-7888 or go to their website at www.GovPayNOW.com with the Pay Location Code #5234, or utilize the drop box outside the main entrances to the Village Hall Office.

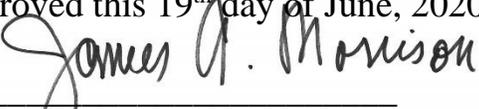
Dated this 17th day of June, 2020

By Order of the Court:

Brian T Stevens

Honorable Brian T Stevens
Municipal Judge

Approved this 19th day of June, 2020

By: 

Honorable James A Morrison
Chief Judge 8th Judicial District
State of Wisconsin

ORDER IN THE MATTER OF APPROVAL OF THE OPERATIONAL PLAN FOR
VILLAGE OF HOWARD MUNICIPAL COURT FOR VILLAGE OF HOWARD IN-
PERSON PROCEEDINGS

WHEREAS, Village of Howard Municipal Court is currently subject to Wisconsin Supreme Court’s April 15, 2020 amended order “IN RE THE MATTER OF REMOTE HEARINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC”; and

WHEREAS, Judge Brian Stevens has submitted to the Chief Judge of the Eighth Judicial Administrative District, the Operational Plan for Village of Howard Municipal Court In-person Proceedings; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Judge of the Eighth Judicial Administrative District has full administrative authority over the municipal courts in the Eighth Judicial Administrative District, under SCR 70.20(2), subject to the administrative control of the Wisconsin Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Judge of the Eighth Judicial Administrative District has the duty, under the Wisconsin Supreme Court’s May 22, 2020 order “IN RE THE MATTER OF THE EXTENSION OF ORDERS AND INTERIM RULE CONCERNING CONTINUATION OF JURY TRIALS, SUSPENSION OF STATUTORY DEADLINES FOR NON-CRIMINAL JURY TRIALS, AND REMOTE HEARINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC”, to review and approve the Operational Plan submitted by the Village of Howard Municipal Court or to require that the Village of Howard Municipal Court follow a circuit court’s or municipal court’s operational plan that the Chief Judge has approved; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Judge has reviewed the Operational Plan for Village of Howard Municipal Court In-person Proceedings and finds that it includes requirements for requiring the use of face coverings for all individuals present in the courtroom, appropriate social distancing, plans for sanitation, cleaning, hygiene, and appropriate signage.

IT IS ORDERED that the Operational Plan for Village of Howard Municipal Court In-person Proceedings is approved and that the Wisconsin Supreme Court's April 15, 2020 amended order "IN RE THE MATTER OF REMOTE HEARINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC" ceases to apply to the Village of Howard Municipal Court.

Dated the 19th day of June, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Morrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Hon. James A. Morrison
Chief Judge, Eighth Judicial District