

IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT
OF THE CITY OF DACULA, GEORGIA

GUIDELINES FOR
RESUMING COURT OPERATIONS
AND IN-PERSON HEARINGS

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-01

STANDING ORDER

The advent and spread of the novel Coronavirus and Covid-19 pandemic created an emergency situation requiring isolation and cancellation of scheduled court dates. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia declared a judicial emergency on or about March 14, 2020 and subsequently extended the judicial emergency. On May 11, the Chief Justice entered an order directing that local courts provide guidelines for reopening and for in-person hearings in accordance with Centers for Disease Control guidelines for personal protection and for reducing the spread of the virus. In keeping with the directives of the Chief Justice, the Municipal Court enters this Standing Order to implement the following guidelines for resuming in-person hearings in the Municipal Court:

1. Court schedules are being modified to limit the number of persons called in to the building by limiting the numbers of those summoned and staggering appearance times. For this reason, only Defendants, their attorney(s), and subpoenaed witnesses should attend a court hearing. Do not bring any non-essential members (children, spouses, or other family members) to your scheduled hearing time. If you have a childcare issue or other family issue then please contact the Court, at 770-963-7451, as soon as possible so that your Court date can be reset or other arrangements can be made.

2. Defendants 21 and under may have one parent or guardian attend the court hearing with them.

3. All court staff and Defendants will be required to wear a face mask. You must bring your own face mask. Please notify our office at the number above if you are unable to obtain a face mask for your court hearing.

4. Upon arrival please park in the center parking lot in front of City Hall. Your notice of hearing contains a time specific to your case. Please remain in your vehicle or outside the building until your case time is reached. Please enter the building through the door designated for Municipal Court.

5. The courtroom, common areas, and the lobby of City Hall will be measured out to reflect 6' social distancing marks. City employees will be present to assist you with the procedures for check in and court hearings. Please listen to these directions and adhere to the signs and markings that will be set in place.

6. As you enter the building, your temperature will be taken. You will also be required to submit a written questionnaire provided by the court regarding Covid-19 health matters. Please complete the written questionnaire prior to arriving and bring it with you to court.

7. In order to reduce everyone's risk of exposure, there will be a very limited number of chairs for sitting. If you need a chair or standing is difficult, please let us know in advance when you check in or by

calling the office at the number listed above for us to make arrangements for you. Please follow the directions given by the court staff and employees to the procedures that you will need to follow inside of the courtroom.

8. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable attending your court hearing or you are not feeling well, in most cases, you may pay your fine online or by phone prior to the scheduled court date. All major credit cards are accepted. If you do not wish to use a credit card, the court accepts cash, money orders, cashier checks or personal checks. Please call 770-963-7451 or visit www.daculaga.gov for automated ticket and payment information. Online payments must be made 24 hours prior to the scheduled court date. If you not well on the date of your hearing, or if have symptoms of Covid-19 or if you are in an at risk group, please call our office at the number listed above, and we will continue your case to a later date.

9. The Courtroom remains open to the public as required by law. The above guidelines are intended to be in compliance with public health guidance and with the requirements of the United States and Georgia constitutions and applicable statutes and court rules. These guidelines are intended to allow all of us to move forward together by practicing social distancing and other daily habits to reduce our risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19. Please remember: to practice social distancing (specifically, staying 6 feet away from others when you must go into a shared space); frequently wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available; wear face coverings (mask or cloth); avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; stay home when sick; and avoid frequently touched objects and surfaces.

10. This Standing Order and the guidelines outlined herein shall continue in full force and effect, and all court proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with the guidelines outlined herein, until this Order is amended or modified by further order of this court.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 38-3-63:

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the City Administrator or his designee shall post this Order on his public notification site and in the City Hall;

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the City Administrator or his designee shall immediately notify and serve Chief Justice Harold D. Melton of the Supreme Court with a copy of this Order, such service to be accomplished via email to Tee Barnes, the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Georgia, at barnest@gasupreme.us; and

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the court's staff shall give notice of the issuance of this Order to the affected parties, counsel for the affected parties, and the public.

SO ORDERED, this 18th day of May, 2020.



Hon. William F. Brogdon, Chief Judge
City of Dacula, Georgia Municipal Court