

RESUMING DALLAS COUNTY OPERATIONS

Plans to Reopen the Dallas County Courthouse and Courthouse Annex to the Public

Background

The Dallas County Commission closed the Dallas County Courthouse and Courthouse Annex (hereinafter referred to collectively as the "Courthouse or Dallas County Courthouse") to the public on April 1, 2020. Prior to that date, departments were utilizing personal protective equipment and operating on rotating schedules to facilitate social distancing due to the pandemic. In accordance with the "Stay at Home" order of April 1, departments began to operate with as few employees working as few hours as possible to ensure that critical county functions were maintained and employee safety was maximized. In both phases, essential personnel have continued to work on a full-time basis. Dallas County has increased cleaning and sanitation of all areas of the Courthouse and all persons entering the Courthouse have undergone a temperature check.

Preparation Phase

Dallas County has already begun, and will continue to implement plans for the reopening of the Courthouse. We are bringing back staff as appropriate, while continuing to be closed to the public except for certain appointments. Other preparations include installation of plexiglass barriers and crowd-control stanchions to manage the flow of the public through buildings; installation of stanchion-mounted signage to assist in communicating instructions; and performing necessary deep cleaning or disinfecting of buildings, all in order to provide a more cohesive transition into phase 1. During our preparations, our staff has been, and will continue to be, required to keep a minimum six foot distance, wear PPE's, and be subject to daily temperature checks. Work stations have been, or will be, reconfigured as necessary.

Phase 1

On May 18, 2020, we will allow access to the common areas of the Courthouse utilizing the front door of the Courthouse facing Lauderdale Street for both entrance and for exit, except that an accommodation will be made for persons with disabilities needing access to the Courthouse by way of the rear door where the access ramp is located. This will allow Dallas County to limit the number of close-contact interactions by persons desiring to enter the Courthouse. All persons entering the Courthouse will be subject to a temperature check and will be required to wear PPE's which will be furnished to them if they do not have them when entering the Courthouse. We will continue to rotate staff, except for essential personnel, as determined by department heads and the Dallas County Commission.

It is our intent to initially restrict the number of customers conducting county business at any one office or location to ten people or fewer. We expect that the reason that many people will be entering the Courthouse will be to visit the Tag and License and Vehicle Registration Department

and the Driver's License Issuance and Renewal Department, and it is our intent that not more than ten people be in line to conduct their business at these departments. We recognize that other visitors may have business to conduct in other areas of the Courthouse and the Courthouse Annex, including the Sheriff's Department and the Probate, District and Circuit Courts. Therefore, while limiting the number of persons entering the courthouse, discretion will be exercised in determining the appropriate number of persons who will be admitted to conduct business within the Courthouse. The County Commission, the Probate Judge, and the County Administrator will have the authority to either restrict or to enlarge the number of persons who will be allowed to enter the Courthouse.

We will continue to follow appropriate recommendations of the Office of the Governor, the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Dallas County Health Department and Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Association of County Commissions of Alabama (ACCA) and its Self-Insurance Pools, including the following:

Part A. Courthouse Modifications

1. Posting a sign at the front of the Courthouse stating that individuals who have a fever or other symptoms of Covid-19 should not enter and that people should maintain a 6-foot distance at all times.
2. Providing one access door, located at the front entrance of the Courthouse facing Lauderdale Street, to both enter and to exit the Courthouse for employees and visitors. For persons with disabilities, access will be made available through the rear entrance of the Courthouse using the access ramp.
3. Placing plexiglass barriers in any area where visitors may have close contact with county employees while conducting county business.
4. Sanitizing the entrance/exit doors at least three times per day, and continuing with cleaning and sanitation of all public areas daily.
5. Placing signage or markers throughout the courthouse and other county buildings to maintain the social distancing guideline of not less than six feet at all times.
6. Frequent cleaning and sanitizing of point-of-sale equipment.

Part B. Courthouse Protocol and Procedures for Employees and Visitors

1. Limiting entrance to the Courthouse and other county buildings only to those who have official business to conduct.
2. Taking the temperature of anyone entering the building, and if it exceeds the government

guidelines, not permitting them to enter the building.

3. Requiring all persons entering the Courthouse to wear facemasks and gloves and providing them when necessary.
4. Encouraging individuals to use hand sanitizer upon entering the facility and ensuring that all individuals, including employees, have access to hand sanitizer.
5. It is our intent to initially restrict the number of customers conducting county business at any one office or location to ten people or fewer. We expect that the reason that many people will be entering the Courthouse will be to visit the Tag and License and Vehicle Registration Department and the Driver's License Issuance and Renewal Department, and it is our intent that not more than ten people be in line to conduct their business at these departments. We recognize that other visitors may have business to conduct in other areas of the Courthouse and the Courthouse Annex, including the Sheriff's Department and the Probate, District and Circuit Courts. Therefore, while limiting the number of persons entering the courthouse, discretion will be exercised in determining the appropriate number of persons who will be admitted to conduct business within the Courthouse. The County Commission, the Probate Judge, and the County Administrator will have the authority to either restrict or to enlarge the number of persons who will be allowed to enter the Courthouse.
6. Requiring visitors and staff to observe the government's social distancing guidelines at all times. Any smaller enclosed area, such as an office, supply room or breakroom should not have more than one person in the space at a time unless the six feet social distancing guideline can be maintained.
7. Use of the elevators will be limited to two (2) persons per elevator.
8. Encouraging customers to make non-cash payments, and where documents need to be signed, ensuring that any writing utensil furnished by the county is sanitized after each use.
9. Encouraging employees to report any safety and health concerns to their supervisor and encouraging all employees and supervisors to monitor and/or make them aware of any changes to federal law or guidance concerning EEOC, DOL and any other government agencies concerning the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the population and workplace.

Part C. Other Matters

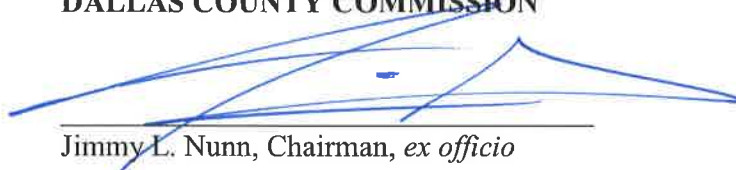
1. Advising our Judges that if they have a full court docket, it may be wise to have those who have business with the court to check-in upon arrival, provide a cell phone number, and wait in their vehicle until their time to appear to reduce traffic within the courthouse building.

2. Notifying the public of these plans through local media, social media posts, and on Dallas County's website.

Phase 2

When deemed appropriate by the Commission, we will remove the barricades and crowd control stanchions, while maintaining the plexiglass barriers. Employees and visitors will continue to be provided hand sanitizer, and other personal protective equipment as may be deemed to be necessary. Evaluation will be made as to the number of persons allowed to enter the Courthouse based upon the advice and recommendations of all appropriate federal, state, and local authorities.

DALLAS COUNTY COMMISSION



Jimmy L. Nunn, Chairman, *ex officio*