

ORIGINAL



FILED

SEP 26 2022

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF DOUGLAS COUNTY

Annetta D. Stemberge, Clerk
 Superior & State Court
 Douglas County, GA

STATE OF GEORGIA

IN RE: FIFTH REVISED ORDER :
 REGARDING COVID 19 :
 PROCEDURES FOR THE :
 DOUGLAS JUDICIAL CIRCUIT :

ORDER OF THE COURT

Pursuant to OCGA Sections 38-3-61, 38-3-62, 15-16-10, and order of the Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, the undersigned has the duty and responsibility to ensure the safety of persons entering the courthouse in conjunction with the Sheriff. As of this writing, public health authorities report 1.05 million deaths in the United States due to Covid 19. Several months ago, the Centers for Disease Control issued a Covid Data Tracker to inform the public regarding the status of the

pandemic in each community of the United States. This tool informs both the public and decision makers of community spread and measures that should be taken in response. This court has been monitoring the status of Covid 19 in Douglas County on a daily basis, and in July 2022 our community moved into a High transmission rate, which caused it to enter an Order pursuant to its authority requiring those who are symptomatic not to enter the courthouse until medically cleared and others to wear masks while in the courthouse.

At all times, the court has followed public health guidance provided by the CDC and Cobb Douglas Community Health; although the court is aware that there are as many opinions about Covid 19 as there are people. However, the court is charged with the duty to ensure the safety of all, despite differing views, and it is daily occurrence in the legal system for medical and scientific experts to guide the decisions of juries, and jurists.

In the past several days, the status of Covid 19 has moved from High, to Medium, to Low transmission rates. Hospitalizations and deaths

from Covid 19 continue to remain much lower than they were during the height of the pandemic. The President has stated “the pandemic is over,” although it is also reported that 500 Americans die every day from the disease. For those who have lost loved ones, suffered the disease, or continue to be affected, it may never be over. Some will continue to wear masks, obtain vaccinations and boosters, and avoid crowds. The undersigned has been vaccinated and boosted, but has also had Covid 19 on two occasions this year. However, there is a difference what can be mandated, and what should be. Accordingly,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED, AND DECREED that all previous Orders regarding courthouse safety guidelines and protocols are VACATED. Each Judge continues to have the authority to manage his/her courtroom as he/she sees fit, and each department head may do so within their office space, but there will be no requirements imposed upon the public entering the public spaces of the courthouse related to Covid 19. The court urges, but does not order, that members of the public show good common sense and avoid exposing others to the illness

who may not be able to overcome it due to age or other medical condition.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Sheriff, and Court Administrator shall cause any signage or website messaging inconsistent with this Order to be removed. The Court Administrator shall cause a copy of this Order to be disseminated as indicated below.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order is effective IMMEDIATELY, September 26, 2022.

SO ORDERED this September 26, 2022.



WILLIAM H MCCLAIN, Chief Judge
Douglas Judicial Circuit

JUDGE'S DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Georgia Supreme Court
Chairman Romona Jackson-Jones
Sheriff Tim Pounds
Capt. Trent Wilson
Judge Cynthia Adams
Judge Deah Warren
Chief Judge Eddie Barker
Judge Brian Fortner
Chief Magistrate Susan Camp
Judge Barbara Caldwell
Judge Christina Peterson
Chief Judge Michelle Harrison
Judge Talia Nurse
District Attorney Dalia Racine
Solicitor General Sonya Compton
Clerk Annetta Stembridge
Public Defender Monica Myles
Court Administrator Dawn Crew