

## **SECTION G HEARING PROTOCOLS DURING COVID-19**

### **Before arriving at the courthouse each day,**

All participants must answer the following questions by emailing chambers at eFile-Brown@laed.uscourts.gov.

- 1) In the past 24 hours, have you had any signs or symptoms of fever, such as chills, sweats, feeling “feverish” or having a temperature that is elevated for you or 99.5F or greater?
- 2) Have you experienced any of the following symptoms in the last 48 hours:
  - Cough, shortness of breath, or chest tightness
  - Sore throat or unexplained loss of smell/taste
  - Diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- 3) In the last 14 days have you:
  - Traveled outside of the United States?
  - Been in contact with anyone who has a confirmed COVID 19 diagnosis?
  - Been notified that you may have been exposed to COVID 19?
  - Been exposed to anyone that has an open COVID 19 test?
  - Have you been diagnosed with COVID 19?

All participants must answer these questions between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. the mornings of the proceeding by emailing chambers by 8:00 a.m. In the event that any participant is not permitted to enter the courthouse, the Court will schedule a telephone conference with counsel to discuss how to proceed. An additional screening, including temperature check, will occur at the public entrance of the courthouse.

### **In the courthouse,**

1. Face masks must be worn at all times. A minimum social distance of six feet should be maintained. Upon arrival, all participants shall proceed directly to the courtroom. Remain outside the courtroom and socially distance until your case is called.
2. No more than 2 people may use the elevator at a time.

### **In the courtroom,**

1. Counsel, along with their clients and client representatives, must remain at their designated counsel table at all times except when speaking at the podium.
2. Face masks must be worn at all times.
3. Plexiglass shields have been installed along the Judge’s upper and lower bench as well as the witness stand. Additionally, a plexiglass shield has been placed on counsel table dividing it in half. All participants must remain behind the plexiglass partitions.
4. Counsel will not be permitted to approach the witness stand and should be prepared to

display all exhibits electronically. Counsel may contact the case manager at (504) 589-7680 to discuss the capability of the courtroom's evidence presentation equipment.

5. Physical handling and transfer of exhibits is discouraged. A hard copy or flash drive of all exhibits expected to be admitted during the duration of the proceeding shall be given to the case manager before the start of trial or hearing.
6. Counsel are strongly encouraged to avoid unnecessary handling of items in the courtroom. Hand sanitizer, gloves and Kleenex will be placed at various points throughout the courtroom. Counsel should apply hand sanitizer prior to adjusting any microphone or using the evidence presentation equipment.
7. All water pitchers have been removed from the courtroom. The Court is currently providing bottles of water. At the end of the day, counsel shall remove all bottles or containers from counsel table.
8. Witnesses must be on call or scheduled for their appearance to reduce exposure and unnecessary waiting. Counsel should instruct witnesses to remain outside the courtroom and socially distance from others with a face mask on at all times while awaiting to be called to testify. Any witness on stand-by may be allowed to wait in the Court's jury room upon request to the Court by the party who will call the witness.
9. Wipes will be provided at the witness stand. The witness shall wipe down the stand and plexiglass after he/she is excused. The witness should also remove the cover on the microphone when exiting the witness stand. Any subsequent witness will replace the microphone cover. Microphone covers will be made available by the Court. All high-touch surfaces, including but not limited to, chairs, tables, podiums, door handles, etc., will be wiped down and disinfected at the end of each day.
10. The Court should be advised immediately if a participant becomes unavailable to appear in person due to COVID-19. In that event, a link will be provided to allow participation by Zoom. In the event that a witness must appear by Zoom, counsel must have a laptop or computer available in the courtroom.