



Plains Municipal Court

William H. Gregory, Judge
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PLAINS MUNICIPAL COURT ORDER 2020/02 COURT REOPENING GUIDELINES:

As Municipal Court reopens, certain general practices will be followed to ensure the health and safety of both court employees and the public. This COVID-19 policy and general practices are designed to meet the unique needs of the Plains Municipal Court and its challenges of resuming operations on August 12, 2020 in the wake of the public health emergency caused by COVID-19. Guiding Principles of the Court

- **Reduce the transmission of COVID-19 among court employees and the public.**
- **Maintain healthy court operations and facilities for the public.**
- **Maintain a healthy work environment for court employees.**
- **Exercise flexibility when applying these guidelines to ensure each litigant receives a fair hearing as required by law.**

REOPENING THE CITY OF PLAINS MUNICIPAL COURT OPERATION PROCEDURES

Municipal Court will strive to coordinate our efforts with other departments to ensure uniform practices throughout the facility. Municipal Court staff will isolate persons who become symptomatic while in the facility until they are able to leave and remove others from any rooms they have occupied and execute the appropriate safe hygiene practices for that space.

Provide Notice to the Public of Increased Health and Safety Measures In addition to sending out rescheduling letters to defendants of their new court date and time, Municipal Court is also including a COVID-19 notice that includes the procedures, 'of the court taking certain health and safety measures to limit the transmission of COVID-19.'

Due to CDC social distancing guidelines. We hope you understand that these charges are not to inconvenience you, but to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to handle their judicial matter safely and efficiently.

We ask that you follow the guidelines below for a safe, effective and efficient experience:

- **Please do not bring children, spouses or other family members to your scheduled hearing time.**
- **As you approach the court entrance please adhere to six feet distancing waiting patiently for the line to move. We will only be allowing three people in the courtroom at a time.**
- **Court security will be using temperate scanners to ensure that defendants with temperatures higher than CDC guidelines are not allowed in the courtroom.**
- **Every person entering the building will be required to wear a mask.**
- **Every person entering the building will be required to use hand sanitizer provided by the court before entering the courtroom.**
- **In addition, if you are over 60 years of age and are not comfortable coming to court, please call our office for one courtesy reset.**

PROVIDE A SAFE ACCESS TO COURTROOM

Plains Municipal Court has a process to screen individuals for COVID-19 before entering the courtroom by asking a series of questions to each individual upon entry to the building.

If a visitor answers yes to any of the questions, they will be denied entry. The reason will be stated on the form and their court case will be rescheduled to a later date.

REOPENING OF THE PLAINS MUNICIPAL COURT OPERATION PROCEDURES

Municipal Court is committed to prevent individuals from congregating as much as possible while waiting to access the courtroom. We have designed a process to facilitate social distancing while individuals wait to enter the courtroom, sit in the courtroom. Flow Municipal Court has designed a flow plan to control the route that people will take through the building to access the courtroom that encourages social distancing.

It includes the following:

- **Upon arrival they must sign in and leave a phone number so they can be screened and be called when it is their turn.**
- **They will be asked to wait in their vehicle until they are called. ► Staff notifying visitors of no more than one other person to be with them during the time they are in the courtroom.**
- **We will be handling one case at a time during this time.**

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY COURTROOM AND STAFF

Court staff and defendants will maintain 6 feet of social distancing inside the courtroom. Court clerk and Police Chief and Police Officers will assist in rotating visitors in and out of the courtroom as quickly as possible to limit contact.

Municipal Court staff are to sanitize the courtroom after each session as follow:

- **Spray the entire court room with disinfectant spray (includes workstation and equipment)**
- **Wipe down chair handles, keyboards, pens, pencils, stylus, door handles and any other surfaces prone to touch**
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using disinfectant spray or wipes including the seating areas.**

Staggering Scheduling Municipal Court will have no more than five (5) defendant at a time in the Courthouse.

PLAINS MUNICIPAL COURT REMINDS STAFF AND PUBLIC TO:

- **Wash Their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol.**
- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- **Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.**
- **Clean and disinfect your office and frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe daily.**
- **When in contact with the public or while working with other staff and a distance of 6 feet or more cannot be maintained, a mask shall be worn in order to decrease the possible spread of a virus.**
- **Employees who exhibit signs of illness such as cough, sneezing, red eyes temperatures are to be checked with a no-contact thermometer.**
- **During court sessions and interactions with the public, court staff are to wear the following PPE: mask and/or face shield (gloves are optional).**

As always, we continue to have the following payment options available:

- Money order by mail—City of Plains, P.O. Box 190, Plains, GA 31780
- Credit/debit card by phone 229-824-5445
- Credit/debit card online at www.PayGov.com

Please stay safe and we look forward to serving you.