

FILED DEC 01 2020

By 

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE OSAGE NATION
PAWHUSKA, OKLAHOMA

In re:

COVID-19 Precautionary Measures
through January 31, 2021

Notice of Court Closure December 4, 2020
through December 9, 2020

No. AO-2020-08

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

The Chief Justice issues this administrative order following the continued evaluation of the risks posed by exposure to COVID-19 and the need to preserve the health and safety of court personnel and the Osage community.

COVID-19 remains a national public health emergency, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Oklahoma State Department of Health, and Wahzhazhi Health Center strongly recommend measures to slow the spread of the disease and to reduce the possibility of exposure to the virus. These recommendations are not consistently practiced or applied, which create an unnecessary and unacceptable risk of exposure, resulting in the increased spread of COVID-19 throughout the community.

Emergency Court Facility Closure

Due to the exposure of COVID-19 to Court personnel, the Court facility will be closed Friday, December 4 through Wednesday, December 9, 2020. Court personnel shall work with the presiding judge to continue any matters scheduled during this closure.

Upon reopening, the following measures shall remain in place **through January 31, 2021** or until withdrawn by Administrative Order, whichever occurs first.

1. Court Facility

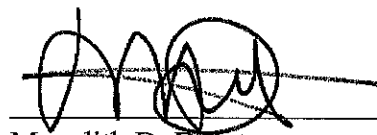
- a. There will be limited access to the building where the Court offices are located. Signs will be posted directing individuals to the public's entrance.
- b. Court offices will remain closed to the general public except by appointment only. Court customers who wish to do business at the court must call the Court Clerk's Office at (918) 287-5400 to schedule an appointment. Court personnel shall take reasonable steps to resolve court patron inquiries and shall only schedule appointments when the inquiry cannot be resolved remotely.

- c. Persons may not congregate in the lobby for court business and must wait outside the Court building.
 - d. Court personnel shall minimize physical contact with each other.
 - e. All Court personnel shall always wear masks in the office, except for brief periods when eating or drinking.
2. Filing: Except by appointment, filings and other business with the courts shall occur in accordance with the attached *Notice*.
3. Court Appointments: Court Clerks must take all reasonable steps to address any inquiries remotely and shall only schedule appointments when the inquiry cannot be resolved without the individual coming to the Court facility.
- a. Only one person at a time may conduct business at Court offices by appointment. Individuals accompanying the person doing business at the Court must wait outside of the Court building. An exception will be made for companions providing physical assistance or interpretive services to the person doing business at the Court, and for attorneys of record, domestic violence advocates, victim advocates, and court-appointed special advocates accompanying the party.
 - b. All persons will be required to use hand sanitizers prior to approaching Court offices.
 - c. Persons doing business at the Court shall wear a face mask prior to approaching the Court offices. Disposable masks will be available.
 - d. Court personnel must wear masks when interacting with members of the public who do business at the Court. Court staff shall use hand sanitizers prior to and after interacting with the public and prior to and after hearings.
 - e. Court personnel shall wipe down the Clerk's service window and other surfaces that come into contact with a member of the public.
4. Scheduled Hearings/Trials:
- a. Trial Court judges shall continue to issue all necessary orders after balancing the interests of justice and public health and safety.
 - b. All hearings shall be conducted by telephone or videoconference, when available.
 - c. Only named parties to a matter may attend telephonic or videoconference hearings. Non-parties will be directed to exit the phone call or videoconference.
 - d. To limit the number of parties waiting for a docket in the lobby, all future hearings shall be scheduled by assigning a date and time unique to a case, allotting sufficient time for the presiding judge to conduct the hearing.
 - e. Judges who conduct hearings on a regular court day should use their discretion on whether to preside over the hearing at the Court offices or conduct such hearings telephonically or by videoconference, taking precautionary measures to protect public health and safety.

- f. Hearings for newly filed cases shall be scheduled 60 days out unless the law requires an earlier date.
- g. No jury trials shall be conducted.
- 5. Personal appearances/attendance:
 - a. To minimize exposure to Judicial Branch personnel, physical Court appearances by parties shall not be permitted. All parties shall make arrangements to appear by telephone or videoconference, when available. If a party cannot appear by telephone or videoconference, the party should contact the Court Clerk's office as soon as possible.
 - b. The court room will be sanitized when persons other than Court personnel are present in the court room.
- 6. The Court Administrator is authorized to close the court offices on an emergency basis upon a determination that a health risk exists and to take appropriate measures to secure the safety of the court staff and court patrons.
- 7. The following persons are not permitted to enter the Judicial Branch offices, including the court room: (1) Persons who have recently been diagnosed with or are currently experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or loss of sense of smell; (2) Persons who have had close contact in the last 14 days with any person who has been diagnosed within the last month with COVID-19; and (3) Persons who have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor, hospital, or health agency.

If a person is denied entry to the court for any of these reasons, they may contact their attorney, or contact the court clerk for more information.
- 8. This order supersedes and replaces AO-2020-07.

SO ORDERED: December 1, 2020

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meredith D. Drent', is written over a horizontal line.

Meredith D. Drent
Chief Justice

Attachment: Notice – COVID-19

NOTICE

In accordance with AO-2020-08, the Judicial Branch Offices located in the round building at 1333 Grandview, Ave will remain closed to the public through January 31, 2021, except by appointment only.

All business with the Osage Nation Courts and communications with the Clerk's Office shall be by mail, E-mail or fax until further notice.

If you wish to **request documents or forms**, please either mail your request to 1333 Grandview Ave., Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 74056; E-mail it to: courtfilings@osage-tribe.org; or fax it to 918287-5574.

If you wish to **make a payment** on a fine, court costs or restitution, please mail your payment (money order or cashier's check only) to 1333 Grandview Ave., Pawhuska, Oklahoma 74056.

If you wish to **file a pleading**, please mail it to 1333 Grandview Ave., Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 74056; E-mail it to: courtfilings@osage-tribe.org; or fax it to 918-287-5574.

If you wish to **file a new case**, please mail your petition to 1333 Grandview Ave., Pawhuska, Oklahoma, 74056; E-mail it to: courtfilings@osage-tribe.org; or fax it to 918-287-5574. If you are **filing a new case which requires a filing fee by mail**, the filing fee (money order or cashier's check only) should be included with your petition.

If you are **filing either a pleading or a new case electronically** (by E-mail or fax) please read and follow the directions in Administrative Order No. 2013-06, Electronic Filing Rules, which can be found at <https://www.osagenation-nsn.gov/who-we-are/judicial-branch/administrativeorders>. If you are **filing a new case which requires a filing fee electronically**, the filing fee (money order or cashier's check only) should be included with the original petition when it is mailed within five (5) days of electronic filing per the Electronic Filing Rules, Administrative order No. 2013-06.

All hearings will be conducted by telephone or videoconference when available. If you are requesting an emergency order by petition or motion you **must provide a current telephone number** when filing your petition or motion by any method – mail, E-mail or fax. If you cannot appear by telephone, contact the Court Clerk's office to discuss options.

If you have questions, feel free to contact the Clerk's Office at 918-287-5400.