

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
VERMILION COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2022-2
REGARDING FACIAL COVERING MITIGATION MEASURES IN
THE RITA B. GARMAN VERMILION COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

The Circuit Court for Vermilion County in the Fifth Judicial Circuit of Illinois adopts the following administrative order pertaining to court operations within the Rita B. Garman Vermilion County Courthouse [the Courthouse] during the 2019 Novel Coronavirus [COVID-19] pandemic:

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, the Illinois Supreme Court entered an Order - *In re: Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency, MR. 30370*, directing all courts to establish and periodically update procedures to minimize potential exposure to and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on judicial operations, while continuing to provide access to justice; subsequent to that date the Court has issued additional orders for resuming court operations;

WHEREAS, on February 24, 2022, the Illinois Supreme Court entered amended Order - *In re: Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency, MR. 30370*, which amended order provides in relevant part:

Each circuit court may adopt rules requiring the wearing of masks in courthouses pursuant to appropriate public health guidance. Absent such local rules, the wearing of masks within courthouses is permitted, but not required. Persons choosing to wear a mask may be directed by a judge to remove it if deemed necessary for court purposes, such as when addressing the court or testifying.

WHEREAS, the Presiding Circuit Judge for Vermilion County has been granted temporary emergency administrative authority to enter orders affecting the general operation of the Courthouse pursuant to authority granted by the Chief Circuit Judge under Supreme Court Rule 21(b);

WHEREAS, since March 2020, the Circuit Judges of Vermilion County have considered changing national, state, and local public health data and the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], the Illinois Department of Public Health [IDPH], and local public health agencies based upon that data, and adopted measures designed to protect the health and welfare of all employees and patrons of the Courthouse, while fulfilling the judiciary's mission to protect the rights and liberties of the People by providing equal access to justice;

WHEREAS, the Circuit Judges of Vermilion County have considered changing national, state, and local public health data and the recommendations of the CDC, the IDPH, and local public health agencies based upon that data, and determined that public health conditions include decreasing COVID-19 infection rates within the County to such a degree that court operations

should be modified relaxing certain COVID-19 mitigation measures; all with the continued goals of protecting the health and welfare of all Courthouse employees and patrons, while fulfilling the judiciary's mission to provide essential services to the citizens of the County, and attending the court's administrative responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, the Circuit Judges of Vermilion County **FINDING** it is now necessary and appropriate to amend prior administrative orders entered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic while taking into account the mandate of the court to provide access to justice and protect the health and welfare of all Courthouse employees and patrons, and pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 21(b) and the court's inherent authority, acting through the Presiding Judge, adopt the following provisions as the order of the court:

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. **Effective Date.** This administrative order is effective February 28, 2022 and its precautionary measures shall remain in effect until amended or modified by further order of the court.
2. The provisions of Administrative Order Nos. 2020-1 through 2020-12, 2020-17, 2021-1, 2021-3, 2021-5 and 2021-6 are hereby supplemented, and to the extent inconsistent herewith superseded.
3. **General Restrictions upon Entry into the Courthouse.** The General Restrictions for entry into the Courthouse as provided in prior Administrative Orders and which are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Administrative Order remain in effect, specifically including that all persons seeking entry into the Courthouse, including, but not limited to all State and County employees and elected officials essential to court operations (judges, court administration staff, deputy circuit clerks, state's attorney's staff, public defender staff, court security, court reporters and specialists, probation services staff, building and grounds staff, information technology staff, and the like), attorneys, litigants, witnesses, and vendors should not enter the Courthouse if they:
 - a) have new flu-like symptoms including fever, cough, or shortness of breath (excluding such symptoms caused by chronic conditions);
 - b) currently have been directed to quarantine or isolate at home by any medical provider or public health official; or
 - c) reside or have regular close contact with a person currently subject to a quarantine or isolation direction issued by a medical provider or public health official and are not themselves fully vaccinated.
4. **Face Coverings.** Subject to the discretionary authority of the judges presiding over particular hearings/courtrooms to implement their own guidelines and practices, which may require facemasks/face coverings in particular hearings/courtrooms, no person, regardless of

vaccination status, shall be required to wear a facemask/face covering or mask at any time when located within the indoor public spaces of the Courthouse. Nothing in this Administrative Order shall be construed to prohibit the wearing of a facemask/face covering by anyone choosing to do so within the indoor public spaces of the Courthouse. However, persons choosing to wear a facemask/face covering may be directed by a judge to remove it if deemed necessary for court purposes, such as when addressing the court or testifying.

Subject to the discretion of all elected and appointed officials, Courthouse personnel may be required to wear a facemask/face covering in their office or work space.

These provisions with respect to face coverings shall extend to and apply to all persons entering the Vermilion County Administration Building or any other facility for grand jury proceedings.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals choosing to wear facemasks/face coverings within the indoor public spaces of the Courthouse, including the courtrooms. Facemasks shall continue to be made available to all persons entering the Courthouse for their personal use if they do not have one of their own.

5. Miscellaneous.

- a) The court may issue further orders as necessary to address circumstances and conditions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including re-assessing the provisions of this Administrative Order to determine if additional measures are required to protect court personnel and the public, and/or whether public health conditions warrant the easing of precautionary measures.
- b) It is further ordered that this Administrative Order be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of Vermilion County and be made available to the public.
- c) The Clerk of the Circuit Court shall post this Administrative Order on her website.
- d) This Administrative Order shall be posted upon the County's website.
- e) All other general administrative orders not in conflict with this Administrative Order remain in full force and effect.

Dated: this 24th day of February, 2022



Thomas M. O'Shaughnessy, Presiding Circuit Judge