

Policies and Procedures  
For the  
Courts of Charlotte County, Virginia

A meeting of stakeholders in the judicial system of Charlotte County, Virginia met in May of 2020 to discuss the transition of the operation of the courts from emergency status to routine operation, pursuant to the Judicial Emergency Orders issued by the Virginia Supreme Court. Recognizing that the courthouses see the largest influx of the public into a county owned facility and that the judges of the courts have been tasked with the responsibility to ensure that the courts can operate safely and in compliance with CDC and OES guidelines, the following policies and procedures are now adopted for the courts of Charlotte County. **These policies and procedures are to be read in conjunction with all Orders entered by the 10th Circuit and District Chief Judges, the Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court, and the Governor of Virginia.** In addition, any judge then presiding may make modifications to these policies and procedures as necessitated for the administration of justice in a particular case or for a particular docket.

1. Face masks shall be required upon entry into the courthouse and when in non-courtroom spaces of the courthouse. Face masks shall be required while in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations courtroom. The county shall make available face masks for those who do not have their own. The clerks of each court shall keep the county informed of the estimated number of masks needed for the dockets.
2. Upon entry into the courthouse, bailiffs will make appropriate inquiry of all to ensure those who are admitted entry have not been exposed to COVID-19. Questions shall be posted near the entry of each courthouse. Bailiffs have the authority and, once equipment is available, are encouraged to take the temperature of all who seek to enter the courthouse. The denial of entry due to responses to questions or due to an elevated temperature shall be based upon CDC guidelines.
3. Only those with legitimate business in the courthouse shall be admitted entry. For those with court cases, entry shall only be permitted ten minutes prior to the scheduled case. Only parties and witnesses shall be permitted entry into the courtroom. However, the press and advocacy groups, as space permits, also will be allowed. Prior to entry into the courthouse, each person must provide his or her name, phone number, purpose for visit, and time of entry. This list shall be maintained by the CCSO until further notice.

4. Proper social distancing, as defined by the CDC, shall be observed at all times. The courtrooms shall have marked seating where people are only permitted to sit.
5. Hand sanitizing stations shall be in place throughout the courthouse. Soap shall be installed in all restrooms. Additional cleaning of frequently touched surfaces and visited areas shall take place during the days when court is held.
6. Dockets for all courts shall be staggered throughout the day to limit the number of people in the courthouse. It is important that cases start and finish on time to properly maintain the staggering. Attorneys shall not use the courthouse as a meeting place for witnesses and clients. Those meetings shall take place at a time prior to the court time and at another place. All paperwork associated with a case shall be completed and signed prior to the set time of the case.
7. Appearance by incarcerated defendants shall continue to be over video, unless other arrangements are made, to minimize the exposure of the jails to COVID-19.
8. The use of the pretrial conference system should be reduced. Requiring the appearance of individuals, parties and staff, in the courtroom shall be for necessary hearings, motions, and trials, and not simply to continue the matter to another pretrial conference.
9. Clerks are encouraged to print out CMS reports to capture cases that have been continued over the last several months that may not have a future date listed. These cases should be brought to the attention of the judge and to counsel, if involved.

This 27th day of May, 2020.

Chief Judge, 10th Judicial Circuit

Virginia: Charlotte County Circuit Court  
Received and Admitted to Record this the  
28th day of May 2020  
at \_\_\_\_\_ M. Inst. #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nan R. Colley  
Nan R. Colley, Clerk

Copies to: JDR, GDC, Green,  
CCSD, DSS, Co. Admin.,  
Court Security + posted  
5/28/20