

**Amended Minimum Standard Health Protocols
for the District Courts, County Court at Law Court, Justice of the Peace Courts and Municipal
Courts of Bowie County, Texas**

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of **Bowie County** will implement the following measures in response to the Texas Supreme Court's Emergency Order Number Thirty Six:

1. All judges will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration regarding best practices as deemed appropriate by the Presiding Judge of the Court. All judges are encouraged to conduct proceedings remotely as deemed appropriate by the Presiding Judge of the Court.
2. Judges may begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings immediately at the direction of the presiding Judge of the court. The separate courts will evaluate and coordinate their schedules on an ongoing basis to minimize the number of in-person hearings being conducted at the same time in the same courthouse. District and County Court at Law Courts are encouraged to schedule in-person hearings on Mondays and the remainder of the week will be used for the Courts conducting jury trials. Justice of the Peace Courts and Municipal Courts will schedule as appropriate for the particular matter and courtroom space being utilized.
3. These protocols will be reviewed monthly based on the Coronavirus activity in Bowie County as reported by DSHS.

Judge and Court Staff

1. Judges and Court Staff will be permitted to proceed face covering optional at the discretion of the Presiding Judge of the Court. Everyone will be required to continue to practice social distancing and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all times.

Face Coverings and Social Distancing

1. All non-court staff who are permitted in the courtrooms and adjacent hallways will be required to maintain adequate social distancing.
2. All individuals entering the courtrooms will be offered disposable face coverings for use while in the court room or awaiting hearings in portions of the Courthouse while awaiting hearings or testifying. Individuals in the courtrooms during in-person proceedings may be face covering optional at the discretion of the Presiding Judge of the Court.

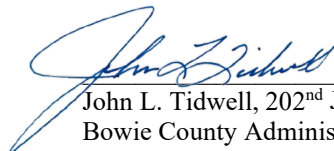
Screening

1. All courts will inquire into and permit all communication necessary to attempt to ensure that no parties, counsel, court personnel, witnesses or other participants of any in-person proceeding have (i) tested positive for Covid-19 in the previous 10 days; (ii) have had symptoms of Covid-19 in the previous 10 days; (iii) have had any recent known exposure to Covid-19 within the previous 14 days.

Jurors

1. All judges shall excuse or reschedule any prospective juror who provides information regarding their recent Covid-19 illness or recent exposure and the Judges will excuse any prospective juror who provides information regarding a particular vulnerability to Covid-19 and requests to be excused or rescheduled.

April 13, 2021



John L. Tidwell, 202nd Judicial District of Texas
Bowie County Administrative District Judge