



NEW YORK STATE
Unified Court System

OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

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COVID-19 Safety and Operational Protocols (revision September 14, 2022)¹

Effective September 14, 2022, the following direction and procedures are in effect in all Unified Court System (UCS) facilities and apply to all judges, non-judicial personnel and all other individuals entering and conducting business in a UCS facility.

A) Symptomatic or COVID Positive Persons Shall be Prohibited from Entering Court Facilities

- 1) A “Symptomatic Person” is any individual who:
 - a) has any COVID-19 symptoms, e.g. cough, sore throat, temperature of 100.0° or higher, shortness of breath within the last 24 hours.²
- 2) A “COVID Positive Person” is an individual who:
 - a) has been diagnosed with or tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 5 days;³ or
 - b) has been directed to isolate and/or self-monitor after testing positive for COVID-19 by any doctor, hospital or public health official/agency and has not obtained medical clearance to appear in public.
- 3) No Symptomatic or COVID Positive Person may enter any UCS court or facility.
- 4) Symptomatic or COVID Positive Persons having business before the court must contact the court by telephone or email and follow instructions on how to proceed.
- 5) Uniformed court personnel may inquire to ensure that court visitors understand and are in compliance with this directive.

B) Symptomatic or COVID Positive Persons Entering Court Facilities (not UCS Judges and Employees) - If a court visitor who self-identifies as a Symptomatic or COVID Positive Person as described in section A enters a court facility, court personnel shall take the following steps:

¹ These COVID-19 Safety and Operational Protocols are regularly updated and posted on www.inside-ucs.org as a guide for judges and non-judicial personnel on the latest UCS COVID-19 directives and guidance. While these protocols contain an overview of UCS COVID-19 protocols, they are not meant to contain every COVID policy currently in effect. For instance, it would be difficult to present all of the current human resources policies and guidance in a summary document such as this. Likewise discontinued protocols and “normal” procedures that have been reimposed are not presented, e.g., there are no longer any social distancing guidelines. Where necessary, these protocols offer reference to controlling memoranda or directives that contain farther and detailed information.

² The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that individuals who test positive for COVID-19 may end their isolation after 5 days if they have been fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication). For individuals running a fever with flu like symptoms, but testing negative for COVID-19, the CDC recommends staying at home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medications.

³ A positive “Self-Test” is considered presumptive positive – meaning the individual is a potential COVID risk and should be consulting a healthcare professional and taking the precautions necessary to ensure they are not placing others at risk.

- 1) court uniformed personnel shall be notified;
- 2) uniformed personnel shall notify the visitor of the procedure described in section A, and request that the visitor leave the court facility immediately and call the contact number for further information; and
- 3) If the visitor declines to leave the building, a uniformed supervisor shall assess the situation and take appropriate steps (including contacting local medical assistance).
- 4) Return from Isolation: Any person returning from isolation after testing positive for COVID-19 entering a UCS facility must wear a well-fitting, non-cloth mask in all areas and at all times in a UCS facility for 5 calendar days from the end of their isolation.⁴

C) Symptomatic or COVID Positive Person (UCS Judges and Employees)

- 1) If a judge or non-judicial employee self-identifies as a Symptomatic or COVID Positive Person as described in section A, **prior to their work shift**, the judge or employee:
 - a) shall not come to work;
 - b) shall notify a work supervisor of the circumstances; and
 - c) should take the necessary precautions to isolate pursuant to the current COVID-19 protocols, or contact a health care provider and follow the recommendations of that health care professional, e.g. further isolation, testing, masking, return to work.⁵
- 2) If a judge or employee self-identifies as a Symptomatic or COVID Positive Person, regardless of vaccination status, as described in section A when they are **present at work**, through the onset of COVID-19 symptoms or any other means:
 - a) the judge or employee shall immediately notify a work supervisor of the circumstances, go home and take the necessary precautions to isolate pursuant to the current COVID-19 protocols, or contact a health care provider, and follow the recommendations of that health care professional e.g. further isolation, testing, masking, return to work;⁶ and
 - b) the supervisor shall immediately notify uniformed court personnel.
- 3) Leave for Isolation⁷: Any UCS employee who tests positive for COVID-19 or is otherwise required to isolate is entitled to have (substantiated) absences covered by paid leave, i.e. *Leave for Quarantine*.⁸ Questions regarding this leave benefit should be referred to the Division of Human Resources at HR-FFCRA@nycourts.gov.
- 4) Return to Work: Any judge or non-judicial employee returning to work from isolation after testing positive for COVID-19 must wear a well-fitting, disposable, non-woven mask in all

⁴ See *Modifications to COVID-19 Quarantine Protocols and Clarifications* (Nancy J. Barry/Justin Barry), August 16, 2022.

⁵ See *Modifications to COVID-19 Quarantine Protocols and Clarifications* (Nancy J. Barry/Justin Barry), August 16, 2022.

⁶ See *Modifications to COVID-19 Quarantine Protocols and Clarifications* (Nancy J. Barry/Justin Barry), August 16, 2022.

⁷ See *Guidance Regarding Revised COVID-19 Safety and Operational Protocols: Isolation and Quarantine Requirements for Individuals that Test Positive for COVID-19 and Individuals Exposed to COVID-19*, (Carolyn Grimaldi), January 6, 2022.

⁸ In order to substantiate the granting of paid leave for quarantine to cover any absences, employees must submit verifiable test results from a lab. Leave for quarantine paperwork should be sent to hr-ffcra@nycourts.gov.