

COVID-19 Operational Plan for Mid-Moraine Municipal Court

The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court is a multi-jurisdictional municipal court which has jurisdiction over 16 member municipalities located in Ozaukee and Washington counties. The Municipal Court Judge and staff travel to each municipality where court is held in the municipality's common council room, village board room or community center. Individual municipal court size ranges from an average of 15 citations per month (Village of Fredonia) to 300 citations per month (City of Mequon and the City of West Bend). The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court is a local government entity with an administrative office located at 962 W. Paradise Drive, in West Bend, Wisconsin, where all the payments and correspondence is processed for the member municipalities.

The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court recognizes the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, the Judge, and other individuals entering the municipal buildings where municipal court will be held.

The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court will implement the following protective measures:

GENERAL

1. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court Judge, Hon. Christine Ohlis, will use telephonic or audio visual means to conduct proceedings until such time the Chief Judge for the Third Judicial District, Hon. Jennifer Dorow, has authorized the Mid-Moraine Municipal Court to resume in-person hearings to start, but no sooner than Tuesday, June 2, 2020.
2. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court has set forth policies below for holding in-person hearings at the various municipal court locations.
3. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely and will make necessary adjustments to this COVID-19 Operational Plan as needed for the health and safety of all individuals.

JUDGE AND COURT STAFF HEALTH

1. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court has implemented protective measures to allow staff to work at the administrative office located in West Bend, Wisconsin. All work areas have been adjusted to separate staff with working in a private office or creating work areas with partitions which follow the social distancing guidelines.
2. The Municipal Court Judge has instructed staff to stay home if the staff member has any symptoms related to COVID-19.
3. The Municipal Court Judge and staff are required to practice social distancing, practice appropriate hygiene including hand hygiene and cleaning of work surfaces. Hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies are located throughout the office.
4. All staff are encouraged to wear protective masks when dealing with other individuals in person. Masks are not required if social distancing is maintained or if staff are separated by glass or plexiglass.
5. Face masks will be provided to staff members when going to court and gloves, if necessary, to handle money, paper documents and exhibits.

6. The lobby of the administrative office is open to the public with one person being allowed in at a time. The main door to the lobby will generally remain open during regular business hours to allow air circulation (seasonally). There is a glass partition between the court staff and the public so payments and the processing of court documents can be handled in a safe manner. In addition, there is hand sanitizer available to individuals in the lobby and staff will clean the surfaces regularly in the lobby area.
7. Payments will be encouraged to be made using the court's credit card app or by mail.

COURT SCHEDULING

1. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court will encourage the vulnerable population (individuals who are over 65 or individuals with serious underlying health conditions) to contact the court to schedule their case to be heard telephonically or by audio visual means. This information will be reflected on our website.
2. All individuals attending court proceedings will be advised to maintain social distancing by signage and in person.
3. Seating for individuals at the various court locations will be single chairs kept at a minimum of 6 feet apart to maintain social distancing. The number of chairs used in each courtroom will be determined by the size of the room and will not exceed 25% of room capacity or 25 chairs, whichever is less.
4. The number of persons permitted in each courtroom will be monitored and enforced by court staff and court officers.
5. For those individuals appearing after the courtroom has reached maximum capacity, the person will be asked to wait in their vehicle or have their case scheduled to be heard telephonically.
6. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, Judge's bench, Clerk and Court Officer will be arranged so that there is a minimum of 6 feet social distancing between each space.
7. Each courtroom will have plexiglass on the Judicial Assistant's table to provide an additional safety measure when dealing with individuals.
8. Currently due to COVID-19, pretrial conferences with the prosecutors are being done telephonically or electronically. Pretrial conferences may be held in person if social distancing and appropriate hygiene recommendations are followed, otherwise, they will be held telephonically or electronically. All pretrial conferences will be scheduled separately from court intake due to volume so that social distancing recommendations and good hygiene practices are able to be maintained. There are only two exceptions to this due to the low number of pretrial conferences scheduled at that time (City of Hartford juvenile and Village of Fredonia).
9. Juvenile proceedings by law are confidential and will be called separately/individually.
10. Information regarding court proceedings and social distancing requirements have been added to the court's website. This information will also be distributed through social media by the member municipalities.

SCREENING

1. When individuals check in for court, they will be asked if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals who indicate yes to any of these questions will be refused admittance to the building and their case will be rescheduled to a later date.

2. If an individual is refused admittance to the building, all other court personnel will be informed of the absence of the individual so that the matter can be rescheduled.

HYGIENE

1. Hand sanitizer or hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at the entrances to the building and inside the courtroom.
2. Disinfectant wipes or spray will be placed in the courtroom, at counsel tables, and on the Judge's bench.
3. CDC flyers outlining appropriate hygiene, social distancing, and public safety will be posted at the various municipal court locations.

FACE MASKS

1. All persons who are present in the courtroom and the court-related confined spaces shall wear face coverings, unless the Judge specifically determines on the record that it is necessary for a witness not to wear a face covering during the witness's testimony in order for the Judge to weigh the witness's credibility. This requirement will be posted at the entrance of the municipal building and on our website and will be enforced by the Municipal Court Judge.
2. Any individual entering the municipal building without a cloth face covering or a disposable face mask will be provided one.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the municipal building will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet.
2. Areas at the municipal locations will be monitored for social distancing compliance.
3. Some municipalities will be marking the floor using tape or cones 6 feet apart so that individuals can maintain social distancing while checking in for court.

CLEANING

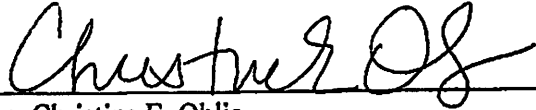
1. The municipal building where court is held will be cleaned by the municipality before court starts.
2. Court staff will be provided cleaning supplies from the municipalities (or we will bring our own) and staff will make sure that all surfaces are cleaned frequently during court proceedings.
3. A Notice will be posted at the entrance of the municipal building of the availability of hand sanitizer and disinfecting spray.

OTHER

1. The Municipal Court Clerk and Chief Deputy Clerk have gone to each court location to review the courtroom set-up and discuss how to make sure protective measures are put in place so that court can be held safely. These meetings were held with court personnel and/or administrative members of the municipality.
2. Following approval of this COVID-19 Operational Plan, a copy will be posted on our website and distributed to the member municipalities.

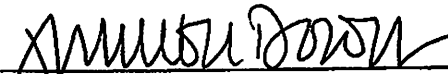
3. The Mid-Moraine Municipal Court is set to start in-person hearings on June 2, 2020, if approved.

Submitted this 27th day of May, 2020.



Hon. Christine E. Ohlis
Municipal Court Judge

Date: May 27, 2020



Hon. Jennifer R. Dorow
Chief Judge Approval