



**Face Coverings (Amendment to MJ 591)**

**Hamilton County Juvenile Court located at 800 Broadway and the Assessment Center located at 264 William Howard Taft**

Effective June 2, 2021, Juvenile Court employees or other persons entering 800 Broadway to access Juvenile Court proceedings and services are **not required** to wear a facial covering/mask except when in the presence of a child in the work environment unless advised otherwise by a parent, guardian, and/or custodian. Since the vaccine is not yet widely available to children under the age of 18 years, the Court is taking this precaution to protect the safety and well-being of children in the Court's work environment. The work environment includes the workplace (800 Broadway Building and the Assessment Center) and anywhere work is being conducted (which may include, but is not limited to, the following: a client's home, a school, a partner or community provider agency's location; during a transport; or anywhere in the field where staff may meet with youth and families to conduct business). Individuals entering 800 Broadway who are not vaccinated are encouraged to wear a mask, and individuals who want to wear a mask for medical reasons shall be permitted to do so. The Court will provide a mask if a person does not have access to their own facial covering.

**Youth Center located at 2020 Auburn Avenue**

All Youth Center employees and any other persons entering the Youth Center **are required** to wear a facial covering/mask. The Ohio Department of Health's Director's Order signed May 17, 2021, which rescinded the vast majority of COVID-19-related health orders, states, "This order does not apply to jails, prison facilities, nursing homes, assisted living facilities . . . ." Due to the congregate care nature of a detention facility and the fact that most residents are children who may not have had access to the vaccine, the Court is implementing protocols to protect the safety and well-being of the residents and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within the facility.

In an effort to reduce the risk of exposure during transport or when in contact with the public at 800 Broadway, court proceedings for residents will be held remotely or in-person at the Youth Center as indicated in the Court's entries and notices.

The Court will monitor health orders related to youth, schools, and congregate care facilities and will consult with public health officials and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center to determine when it is appropriate and safe to modify the current protocols.

**Temperature Checks (Amendment to MJ 589)**

Effective, June 13, 2021, Juvenile Court employees and any other person accessing or appearing at 800 Broadway shall no longer be subject to medical screening, including temperature checks and screening questions.

**Public Access (Amendment to MJ 591)**

Public access to the Juvenile Court 800 Broadway Building is no longer limited. In an effort to control the flow of people, maintain social distancing and comply with best practice safety guidelines issued by Public Health and the CDC, the Court requests that

non-essential parties and the public participate in hearings remotely when possible to permit necessary parties to attend hearings in-person.

**Court Hearings (Amendment to MJ 587, 588)**

Hamilton County Juvenile Court will no longer restrict in-person hearings, as was necessary during the early stages of the health pandemic. The Court will continue to utilize remote hearing capabilities when appropriate and ordered by the Court.

**Acknowledgement of Personal Service (Amendment to MJ 587)**

When parties and attorneys are appearing in-person, they may sign the entry indicating receipt of service or acknowledge receipt orally. The Court will continue to generate service and mail entries to parties and attorneys appearing remotely.

**Residents at the Youth Center (Amendment to MJ 587)**

For any child admitted to the Youth Center, a hearing will be conducted on the next business day or within 72 hours of admission, whichever is earlier. The Court continues to implement significant strategies and interventions to prevent admission of children into detention and to facilitate early release through judicial and administrative processes.

In accordance with the guidance provided by Governor DeWine and the Department of Youth Services, the Court suspended in-person visitation for residents at the Youth Center but provided alternative methods for parent/child interaction including regular phone calls and visits using audio/visual technology. Attorneys and mandated investigators may continue contacting the Youth Center to schedule in-person, non-contact visitation with residents. Due to space and social distancing requirements, a date and time will be provided based upon availability. The Youth Center will continue to facilitate phone communication and video conferencing with parents, guardians, custodians, mandated investigators, Guardians ad Litem/Court Appointed Special Advocates and attorneys upon request. The Youth Center will continue to evaluate further expansion of visitation for parents, guardians, and custodians in accordance with guidance from the CDC, Public Health and Cincinnati Children's Medical Center.

**Supervised Visitation Orders for Children in the Custody of the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services (Hereinafter HCJFS) (Amendment to MJ 587, 592)**

Prior orders regarding modified supervised visitation for children in the custody of HCJFS are rescinded. All in-person visitations have resumed for children in HCJFS custody when approved by case plan or authorized by order of the Court, except in circumstances where the visitation or placement provider's restrictions prevent in-person visitation. Any deviation from the statutory and case plan requirements for each individual case shall be brought to the attention to the assigned Magistrate or Judge and will be handled on a case by case basis.

**Responsibilities of a Guardian ad Litem (Amendment to MJ 587)**

Guardians ad Litem and Court Appointed Special Advocates have resumed in-person visits with children, except in circumstances where the visitation or placement provider's restrictions prevent in-person visitation, as set forth in Rule 48 of the Ohio Rules of Superintendence for the Courts, Rule 30 of the Rules of Practice for the Hamilton County Juvenile Court, and the orders contained in the appointment entry of the Guardian ad Litem or Court Appointed Special Advocate. Requests for relief from such requirements may be made to the assigned Judge or Magistrate.

**Access to Court for Filing (Amendment to MJ 588, 590)**

The Hamilton County Juvenile Court Clerk's Office will accept any in-person filings at 800 Broadway between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. The Court will continue to accept filings by alternative means, such as fax or email, and with a page limit of 15 pages per document. Case plans, semi-annual review documents, and any document over 15 pages shall be filed in-person. The Court will no longer utilize a secure drop box as an alternative filing method as this was rarely used by attorneys and parties during the pandemic.

Law enforcement may continue to file delinquency and unruly complaints at the Youth Center located at 2020 Auburn Avenue. All delinquency and unruly complaints initiated by parents, guardians, custodians or private individuals shall be filed at the Clerk's Office located at 800 Broadway using the filing methods described above.

**Child Support Enforcement: Extension of Time for Objections to Administrative Orders (Amendment to MJ 588)**

The Hamilton County Child Enforcement Agency may continue to set administrative orders of child support as well as administrative modifications of previously established child support orders. When the Child Support Agency sets or modifies a child support order administratively, any party who wishes to object to that order and obtain a hearing will have 14 days from the date of the Order to file such objections.


**Objections/Motions to Set Aside Magistrate Decisions/Orders (Amendment to MJ 588)**

Oral arguments on Objections and Motions to Set Aside will be scheduled at the discretion of the assigned Judge and in the manner set forth in the Court's entries.

Any other orders pursuant to MJ 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, and 592 not addressed or amended above are hereby rescinded.

*IT IS SO ORDERED.*

5/27/2021  
Date

  
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Melissa Powers, Administrative Judge