

As we are seeing a decrease in positive Coronavirus cases nationally and locally, we will be making a few changes to policies and procedures that will be followed by the Fairfield County Municipal Court beginning March 1, 2021:

**Municipal Court Proceedings:**

- Admission to the Municipal Court building beyond the security checkpoint will be open to the public; however, no children will be permitted. All those entering the building will be required to wear a covering over their nose and mouth and the Court will have masks available for visitors who do not have personal access to this protective equipment. SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES MUST BE FOLLOWED.
- Two security officers will remain on duty at the front door to maintain safety and health protocols
- The Court will continue to hear Tuesday and Thursday morning cite-in arraignments and will continue to stress social distancing among those in attendance. Defendants who appear with young children will be told to come back alone at the next available cite-in arraignment day.
- Daily jail arraignments will continue to be conducted via video.
- Settlement conferences and pre-trials will **all** return to in-person and both the attorney and client will be required to be present.
- In-person hearings (pleas, evictions, and small claims) will be scheduled at specific times at least ½ hour apart to ensure social distancing.

**Municipal Court Clerk's Office:**

- The Clerk's Office will reopen to the public for the purpose of conducting in-person business. This includes receipts of payments and filings.
- Law offices will be permitted entrance to the Clerk's lobby to deliver filings and for collection of items in their respective mailboxes.

**Municipal Court Probation:**

- The Probation staff will be at full staff on a regular schedule
- Weekly specialty docket (Special Abilities Court, Drug/Recovery Court, Mental Health Court & Veterans' Treatment Court) status hearings will be held in person when the number of participants allows for proper social distancing.
- Court ordered drug testing frequency will be maintained.

- Probation Officer contact and meetings with probationers will be maintained as directed by the Probation Department. Failure to comply with scheduled meeting times or electronic check-in will result in sanctions for defendants.

### **Law Director/City Prosecutor**

- The Law Director/City Prosecutor's Office is open for in-person business. Visitors will be limited to the office lobby unless they have scheduled a meeting, **in advance**, with a particular member of the staff. Visitors are required to wear a facial covering of the nose and mouth which **must** be worn at all times in the lobby or anywhere in the office. All social distancing guidelines will be followed. We encourage and will continue to conduct business via electronic means to keep visitations to the Courthouse building and our office to a minimum.
- All criminal case hearings and trials will follow the rules and guidelines established by the Court. Office meetings with Prosecutors **must** be scheduled, **with the specific Prosecutor on the case**, in advance.

As has been the case since March, 2020, as additional and/or changing information is released, these policies and procedures are subject to change.