

Notice from Chief Judge Sara Lisznyi regarding the court response to
COVID-19

Effective Monday, June 21, 2021 and until further notice:

On Monday, June 21, 2021, all county courts were moved into Phase IV of reopening by the State Court Administrative Office. Since May 6, 2020 the courts have been following a four-phase approach to reopening as mandated by the Michigan Supreme Court. Previously, the courts had moved to Phase III on June 16, 2021.

Phase IV requires the courts to follow local public health guidance and MIOSHA guidelines. Proceedings will still be conducted virtually to the maximum extent possible. However, in-person court proceedings, including jury proceedings, are permitted to resume.

The public may be required to wear a mask pursuant to local public health guidance and MIOSHA guidelines and judges retain the discretion to require individuals in the courtroom to wear masks generally or in specific cases, particularly cases involving persons who are at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Any person desiring to wear a mask shall be allowed to do so.

At this time all problem-solving dockets, Circuit Court felony sentencings and District Court preliminary examinations are taking place in person. Each court will determine which additional hearings will take place in person and proper notice will be given.

If you are scheduled for a court hearing you will be notified whether you should call in or come to court. If you are not sure what to do, please call the appropriate court.

- for Circuit Court, call 517-437-4321

- for Probate Court, call 517-437-4643

- for District Court, call 517-437-7329

- for Friend of the Court, call 517-437-4111

All members of the public who are allowed to attend proceedings in person must still self-screen before entering the court building

Screening questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Do you have a fever greater than 100.4 degrees?
- b. Do you have a cough or worsening cough (excluding chronic cough due to known medical reason)?
- c. Do you have shortness of breath?

Or

- d. Do you have at least two of the following symptoms:
 - Fever
 - Chills
 - Repeated shaking with chills
 - Muscle pain
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - New loss of taste or smell

- e. Have you had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone with a COVID-19 diagnosis?
- f. Have you traveled internationally in the last 14 days?

Any individual responding “yes” to the screening questions will not be allowed to enter the courthouse until they can pass the screening questions.

Anyone who is not allowed to enter will be offered an opportunity to conduct court business virtually, attend court proceedings virtually, file documents in an alternative manner, or confer with Court Administration to determine alternate arrangements for accessing the court.

All individuals with court business are encouraged to still do as much of it as possible by telephone or mail. Payments to District Court may still be made by mail or online at <https://e.courts.michigan.gov> or by telephone, 517-437-7329.

For additional information visit the county website at <https://www.co.hillsdale.mi.us>. Please contact the appropriate court office with any questions you have. In case of an emergency, please call 911.

The Hillsdale trial courts are regularly meeting with local public health officials to monitor local public health conditions related to COVID-19 and are continuously evaluating data to adjust local policies and COVID-19 mitigation measures, as local conditions fluctuate.