

COVID-19 Pandemic

District of South Carolina

Guide for Courthouse Visitors

The District of South Carolina has been working diligently to implement a number of changes to promote social distancing and safety at our courthouses.

The following guide summarizes critical considerations to take into account before visiting the courthouse. It also outlines what to expect upon arriving at the courthouse and how to conduct business in the courtroom.

What to Do Before Arriving at the Courthouse

Adhering to the following is critical to keeping the entire Court community safe and healthy:

- Conduct a daily health self-assessment that includes a temperature check:
 - ✓ Have you had a fever or chills, cough, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell senses, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea within the last 14 days?
 - ✓ Has anyone in your household had any of these symptoms within the last 14 days?
 - ✓ Have you or anyone in your household been asked to self-quarantine by a physician, hospital or health agency within the last 14 days?
 - ✓ Have you or anyone in your household or anyone who is a close contact been diagnosed with or been told they may have COVID-19 within the last 14 days?
- Any person answering yes to any of the above questions should consult with the Court before coming to the courthouse. The Court will make reasonable accommodations and reschedule appearances and hearings as needed.

What to Expect Upon Arriving at the Courthouse

- Although Court offices will remain closed to the public, you may enter the building for the limited purposes of participating in or observing in-court proceedings or for delivering payments and pro se filings to the Court's drop box.
- Anyone coming into the courthouse must wear a face covering or mask. Visitors without a mask will be provided one by the Court as available.
- Everyone should continue to maintain a safe physical distance of six feet from others.
- Elevator capacity is temporarily reduced to ensure social distancing. The capacity of each elevator will be noted with floor decals and wall signs.
- Consistent reminders have been placed throughout each building.

What to Expect while in the Courtroom

- A face covering or mask must be worn at all times unless the wearer is speaking for the record.
- After each hearing, participants are asked to wipe down counsel tables and chairs, and change out microphone covers, using the supplies provided on each table.
- Some courtrooms have already been outfitted with protective barriers and marked to indicate proper social distancing, and more are in the process of being outfitted and marked.
- Social distancing of at least six feet from others must be maintained.
- Meetings where appropriate social distancing may not be practical should be avoided.
- As recommended by the CDC, everyone should avoid touching his or her face, and should wash hands often and for at least 20 seconds to help prevent the spread of disease.
- Use hand sanitizer, particularly after touching shared equipment or commonly touched points like door handles.

Thank you for your assistance in taking precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.