



Revised Georgia Court of Appeals Policy Regarding Masks in the Nathan Deal Judicial Center and Procedures to Conduct Oral Arguments

Effective: Wednesday, October 6, 2021

Following new CDC guidelines, the entry requirements to the Nathan Deal Judicial Center are revised. Effective Wednesday, August 4, 2021, ALL employees and visitors to the Nathan Deal Judicial Center are required to wear a mask covering the mouth and nose while in the building and when interacting with others.

Arrival, Security Screening

- All visitors will be subject to automated temperature screening upon entrance into the building. Any visitor having a temperature of 100.4 or above will not be admitted.
- Any person who enters the building is certifying that he or she is free of COVID-19 symptoms and known exposure that poses a significant threat of infection.

The Georgia Building Authority will continue with the following measures:

- Public areas such as elevators, lobbies and washrooms will be cleaned and frequently disinfected.
- The building contains a state-of-the art ventilation system that includes UV lighting to reduce toxins and bacteria that can enter the air stream.
- Hand sanitizing stations will remain available for use throughout the building.

Procedures to Conduct Oral Arguments

A party arguing before the Court of Appeals has the option of arguing in person or appearing virtually via Zoom. To participate in an oral argument via Zoom, the party need only submit an email request to VirtualArgument@gaappeals.us before 5:00 p.m. on the 25th of the month before the oral argument. For example, if a party has

an oral argument scheduled in October, the deadline to request to appear virtually would be 5:00 p.m. on September 25.

- All parties and spectators in the courtroom during oral arguments must wear masks and practice social distancing.
- Every other row of seats will be cordoned off, and no one may sit in those rows.
- When parties present their oral arguments, they may argue with or without masks, at their discretion. After each person argues, the podium will be sanitized before the next speaker argues.
- After an oral argument has been presented and before the next case is called, counsel tables will be sanitized as well.
- All judges participating in person will sit separated by at least six feet and, like the party arguing, they have the option to wear masks or not.

Operations: The Court of Appeals remains fully operational. There will be sufficient personnel on site to take paper filings from pro se parties.

Questions: If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the Clerk's Office at (404) 656-3450.

Brian M. Rickman, Chief Judge

Steve E. Castlen, Clerk