

From: Chief Justice John D. Minton, Jr.
To: Chief Justice John D. Minton, Jr.
Subject: Update From Chief Justice Minton 5-18-21: Supreme Court lifts most COVID-19 restrictions, changes effective immediately
Date: Tuesday, May 18, 2021 12:07:22 PM



[COVID-19](#) • Kentucky Public Health: [COVID-19](#) • KCOJ: [COVID-19 and the Courts](#)

Update for May 18, 2021

Justices, Judges, Circuit Court Clerks and Kentucky Court of Justice Personnel:

Supreme Court lifts most COVID-19 restrictions, changes effective immediately

After the most challenging year in the history of the modern court system, I am pleased to announce that the Supreme Court has lifted most of the COVID-19 restrictions for employees, elected officials and those entering court facilities across the commonwealth. These changes are effective immediately. I am grateful to all of you for the perseverance and commitment to safety that allows us to begin transitioning back to normal operations for the Kentucky Court of Justice.

Today the Supreme Court entered two administrative orders that eliminate most of the health and safety requirements related to COVID-19 and further expand in-person court operations. [Administrative Order 2021-16](#) replaces Administrative Order 2021-06 in its entirety and [Administrative Order 2021-17](#) replaces Administrative Order 2021-07 in its entirety.

You can find a brief summary of the orders here:

Administrative Order 2021-16, Response to COVID-19 Emergency: Health and Safety Requirements

- Allows in-person access to court facilities for any individual with business before the courts, except those who have symptoms of, have tested positive for, or have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Eliminates the mask requirement for fully vaccinated members of the public entering court facilities and fully vaccinated KCOJ elected officials and employees.
- Strongly encourages continued use of masks by members of the public and KCOJ elected officials and employees who are not fully vaccinated.
- Permits judges to require individuals in their courtrooms to wear masks and gives appointing authorities the ability to require the employees they supervise to wear masks in a specific office, courtroom or department.
- Encourages the continued use of remote technology for court proceedings and allows any individual with a scheduled remote hearing to appear remotely.
- Allows judges to conduct in-person court proceedings.
- Allows filings and payments to be made in-person at the local Office of Circuit Court Clerk.

Supreme Court Order 2021-17, Response to COVID-19 Emergency: Court Proceedings

- Lifts most restrictions on jury trials but requires continuances, postponements and recusals for attorneys, parties and jurors who are ill or at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- Allows master commissioners to conduct judicial sales remotely or in person with no limitations.
- Retains the July 1, 2021, start date for show cause dockets for payments of fines and court costs.
- Suspends night traffic courts in Jefferson County until further notice.

Thank you for your continued adherence to the health and safety requirements and your dedication to the court system. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these orders, please email COVIDCourtConcerns@kycourts.net.

John D. Minton, Jr.
Chief Justice of Kentucky
Capitol Building
700 Capital Avenue, Room 231
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Telephone 502.564.4162

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