

Guidelines for Access to Magistrate Court for COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in compliance with the guidelines set forth by Houston Superior Court Judge Edward D. Lukemire, the following measures shall be implemented to ensure the safety of all litigants, Court staff, and the general public present at the Magistrate Court of Houston County.

- **Access.** A limited number of persons will be allowed into the building at any one time. All entrants will be screened before being allowed into the building. Screening shall include:
 - Taking each person's temperature using a no-touch thermometer.
 - Every visitor and litigant will be asked if he or she is experiencing fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, or other symptoms of respiratory infection.
- **Social Distancing.** Everyone entering the courthouse and the courtrooms will be required to exercise social distancing. All attorneys, parties, and witnesses, not living in the same household, must maintain a 10' distance from each other. This means a limited number of people will be allowed into the building at any one time.
- **Personal Protective Equipment.** Anyone who intends to enter the courtroom is expected to wear a protective face mask. Please be prepared to bring your own protective mask. If you do not have a mask, then one will be provided as long as they are available.
- **Trial Appearance.** Upon arrival, all parties and attorneys shall check in with the deputies at the court's front entrance and provide a contact phone number. Litigants should then return to their cars and wait to be called for their hearing. As each case is called for trial, parties will be notified by phone and may then enter the building and the courtroom.
 - Please call the Court if you are ill and unable to attend your trial or hearing.

These requirements are based on the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to slow the spread of the Coronavirus. These guidelines are being implemented to provide a safe and healthy environment for the public and the parties litigating in the Magistrate Court. Thank you for your cooperation.

Judge Robert E Turner
Judge Angela W. Sammons