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Supreme Court Updates COVID-19 Precautions to Reflect Local Conditions

Oversight of COVID-19 precautions at Idaho courthouses is largely returning to local judicial districts under an order issued today by the Idaho Supreme Court.

The order comes one day after crisis standards of care ended across much of Idaho and as COVID-19 incidence rates have generally decreased, developments that are both noted in the order itself. “In light of the improving circumstances ... we have concluded that further modification of our safety protocols is now warranted,” the Court’s order states.

The provisions of today’s order generally take effect this Wednesday, Nov. 24. Health and safety precautions at Idaho courthouses will be managed much as they were this summer, with each district’s administrative judge responsible for adequate measures reflecting local conditions.

Jury trials may resume starting the week of Dec. 6 unless a county meets one of two conditions:

- The county’s seven-day moving average incidence rate of confirmed or presumed cases of COVID-19 reaches 25 or more cases per 100,000 population.
- Crisis standards of care are in effect for the public health district the county is within.

If either of the above conditions are present, courthouse visitors in the affected county must wear masks and maintain social distancing. Individual judges at all times have flexibility to order masking or social distancing if necessary in their courtrooms, or to order that a hearing be held online.

Today’s order replaces previous COVID-19 emergency orders issued Sept. 22 and Oct. 6, 2021. With the public’s help, these and similar measures over the last two years have ensured Idaho’s courts remain open to anyone who wishes to bring or defend a claim, while protecting the health and safety of court participants and staff.

The new order can be found on the Idaho Supreme Court’s homepage (isc.idaho.gov) under “State Judicial Emergency Orders Regarding COVID-19.”

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