



Administrative Policies
And Procedures
Tennessee Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts

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Approved by: Michelle J. Long

Subject: COVID-19 Response Policy

- I. **Authority:** Tenn. Code Ann. § 16-3-803; In Re: COVID-19 Pandemic, No. ADM2020-00428 (Tenn. March 13, 2020; March 25, 2020; April 24, 2020; May 26, 2020; November 17, 2020, December 7, 2020; December 22, 2020; January 15, 2021, February 12, 2021; May 14, 2021; August 26, 2021 and February 16, 2022).
- II. **Purpose:** Maintain continuity of operations and workforce productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic while also ensuring the health and safety of Administrative Office of the Court's ("AOC") employees, along with the AOC's external collaborators and stakeholders.
- III. **Application:** This policy shall apply be applied consistently throughout the divisions of the AOC during the COVID-19 pandemic and until revised or repealed by the AOC Director.
- IV. **Definitions:**

"Close contact" is someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>).

"COVID-19" is a coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by a new coronavirus first identified in December 2019 (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cdcresponse/about-COVID-19.html>).

"Employee" is any person who works for the AOC in a full-time or part-time status.

"Office" (also referred to herein for additional clarity as "AOC office") refers to the fifth, sixth, and seventh floors of the Nashville City Center Building where the AOC leases work space. Employees as defined herein who work in other

locations such as courthouses must follow the COVID-19 policy, Tennessee Supreme Court Orders and/or local court orders in place.

- V. Policy:** It is the policy of the AOC to prevent and reduce transmission of COVID-19 among employees, maintain healthy business operations, and maintain a healthy work environment. Certain protective and reporting measures remain in effect for employees at this time to ensure the AOC continues to provide a healthy and safe work environment.
- VI. Hygiene:** The following are hygienic measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) that are recommended for employees who enter and work from the office (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>):
- (a) Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing;
 - (b) The CDC states that vaccines reduce the risk of people spreading COVID-19 and state that it is effective at preventing COVID-19, especially severe illness and death. The CDC defines “fully vaccinated” as 14 days after your final dose. However, if you are not fully vaccinated, we strongly recommend you wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose and practice social distancing for your protection. Additionally, anyone may choose to wear a mask. (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>);
 - (c) You are encouraged to regularly clean and disinfect your work space at the office. The AOC will provide cleaning products for your use inside the office;
 - (d) You are encouraged to monitor your health daily by taking your temperature before you leave home. Stay home if you have a temperature of 100.4 F or greater or if you have any symptoms of illness. Follow CDC guidelines if symptoms develop (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>);
 - (e) An employee who has tested positive for COVID-19, been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or has been told by a public health department or health professional to quarantine, shall stay home and shall not report to the AOC office or field/off-site work space (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>);
and
 - (f) No employee should enter the AOC office or field/off-site work space if they do not feel well. A non-exhaustive list of COVID-19 symptoms include a temperature 100.4 F or higher, cough, body/muscle aches, headache,

difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, etc. (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>). (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-risk.html>).

- VII. Self-Reporting Procedure:** An employee who tests positive for COVID-19, has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or has been told by a public health department or health professional to quarantine, shall immediately report that information to their AOC division director who will then contact the AOC Deputy Director. The AOC Deputy Director will immediately contact AOC human resources to review the report and determine necessary precautions and send notifications to affected employees in accordance with the recommended CDC contact tracing guidelines (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/contact-tracing.html>).

Employees should familiarize themselves with the CDC guidelines about traveling during COVID-19 (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-risk.html>). To help protect fellow employees, an employee who travels is asked to discuss with their division director their return to the AOC office or field/off-site work space.

- VIII. Reporting Another Employee:** If an employee learns another employee has tested positive for COVID-19 but has failed to self-report their positive test results to their division director, that employee should immediately report that information to the AOC Deputy Director.
- IX. Confidentiality:** To the extent provided by law, reports of positive cases of COVID-19 will be treated as confidential. Names of affected individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will be held in strict confidence.
- X. Notification:** At a minimum, human resources will notify all AOC employees that a report has been received that an employee who has been in the office or field/off-site work space has tested positive for COVID-19 and will conduct contact tracing to notify all employees who may have been in direct contact with the individual in accordance with CDC guidelines (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/contact-tracing.html>).
- XI. Return to the Office:** An employee who tests positive for COVID-19, has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, or has been told by a public health department or health professional to quarantine, may be required to receive permission from AOC human resources to return to the AOC office or field/off-site work space after recovery and/or after the expiration of the quarantine period. Alternatively, an employee may provide a physician's note stating the employee can return to work.

- XII. Enforcement:** Violation of this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination. Additionally, any form of harassment or discrimination directed at an employee for compliance with this policy will not be tolerated. Such conduct violates Personnel Policy 2.08, Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and will be investigated.