

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SPECIAL ORDER OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE
ORDER NO. 8275

Regarding Update to Special Order of the Chief Justice No. 8149, COVID-19
Visitor Health Precautions

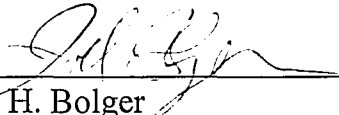
Under the authority of Supreme Court Order No. 1957, this Special Order updates Special Order 8149, regarding visitor health precautions.

IT IS ORDERED:

1. All visitors to Alaska Court System courthouses must take precautions to keep other members of the public and court staff safe.
2. Visitors may be required to undergo a screening protocol, which may include questions about:
 - a. whether the visitor has recently suffered flu-like symptoms;
 - b. whether the visitor has been directed to quarantine, isolate or self-monitor at home for the COVID-19 by a medical provider; and
 - c. whether the visitor has been diagnosed with or had close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19.
3. The screening protocol may include body temperature screening using a non-contact thermometer.
4. Based on guidance from the CDC, visitors who have been fully vaccinated are not required to wear face coverings/masks. Visitors who are unvaccinated must wear a face covering/mask unless they have a medical exemption. This includes courtroom proceedings. Children under the age of 2 are not required to wear face coverings.

5. During courtroom proceedings, the judge may authorize removal of face coverings/masks as necessary, including for purposes of witness testimony, defendant identification, or making an appropriate record, provided that other protective measures are in place such as Plexiglas barriers.
6. Visitors must continue to adhere to social distancing if they are unvaccinated or the vaccination status of individuals around them is unknown. This includes courtroom proceedings. However, with the consent of the affected participants, the judge may authorize participants who have an ongoing professional relationship to sit or confer without maintaining the usual social distancing. This includes criminal defendants and their attorneys and prosecutors and their case officers.
7. Court officers or employees may exclude visitors who refuse to cooperate with this Order, and those who fail the screening protocol.
8. If there is a municipal ordinance or local emergency order requiring face coverings or masks, the courthouse in that location shall also follow that ordinance regarding visitors.

DATED: June 1, 2021



Joel H. Bolger
Chief Justice

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