



## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

Eastern District of Tennessee

900 Georgia Avenue  
Chattanooga, TN 37402

**Travis R. McDonough**  
United States District Judge

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June 5, 2020

J. Douglas Overbey  
United States Attorney  
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Knoxville, TN 37902

Elizabeth Ford  
Federal Community Defender  
800 South Gay Street  
Suite 211  
Knoxville, TN 37929

*Re: Precautions Against Covid-19 for In-Person Hearings*

Dear Doug and Beth:

Beginning June 12, I will resume in-person hearings, primarily sentencing hearings. Please share the following requirements with your assistants and panel attorneys.

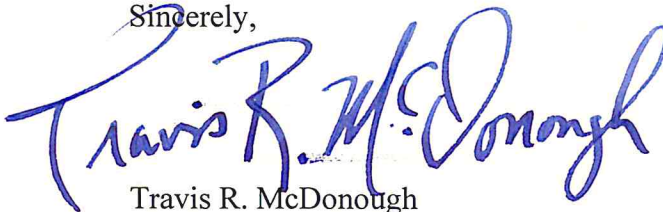
- In-person hearings will take place in the third-floor courtroom. The furniture in the courtroom has been rearranged to provide additional distance between participants.
- Each side will have one attorney per case within the bar. Government attorneys will sit at the table opposite the jury box (to my right). Defense attorneys will sit at the table nearer the jury box (to my left). The defendant will sit just inside the door adjacent to the jury box, not at a table. Witnesses will sit in a middle pew behind defense counsel, not on the witness stand. One chair will sit behind each counsel table. Additional attorneys will remain either in the gallery in the limited public seating or outside the courtroom.
- Defense counsel and the defendant will be able to communicate privately from a distance via Court-provided headsets. Each headset will be cleaned and will receive new disposable components after each use.
- Attorneys will stand at their tables, not at the lectern, to address the Court.
- Attorneys will present evidence digitally, directly from their computers to the Court's evidence-presentation system. The Court will not accept paper. Attorneys should not

plan to rely on the document camera. If the Court must allow an attorney to use the document camera in order to protect a defendant's rights, the attorney will thoroughly clean the system immediately, causing unnecessary delay in what is already sure to be a very long day.

- Every person within the bar will maintain at least a six-foot distance at all times. Attorneys will not approach the bench, staff, or the witness.
- Every person in the courtroom, including attorneys, will wear a mask at all times. Attorneys will provide their own masks.
- Much of the courtroom's public seating will be unavailable. Spectators will sit in the back several pews on the left and right sides. The front portion of pews on either side will remain empty. Middle pews will also not be available.
- Court Security Officers will endeavor to limit public attendees to those interested in a particular case. For example, family members of a defendant will be urged not to enter the courtroom until that defendant's case is called. In order to allow for an orderly transition, there will be a short recess between cases. Defense lawyers should explain this to family members before the hearing. I will not hesitate to reduce the number of people in the courtroom if attendance exceeds a comfortable number.
- Disinfectant will be available at counsel tables. Before leaving the courtroom, attorneys will use these supplies to clean their areas thoroughly.
- Attorneys are welcome to bring their own water, but the Court will not provide it.

Of course, if a defendant would prefer a hearing by videoconference, I will gladly consider such a motion, consistent with the parameters we have established over the past few weeks. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact my chambers.

Sincerely,



Travis R. McDonough