

Rutherford County Juvenile Court Building Closed to Public

In accordance with Governor Lee's Executive Order 22, County Mayor Bill Ketron is following Governor Lee's Executive Order 22 and has advised that all county offices will be open for business with a limited staff and the buildings will be closed to the public from April 1, 2020 until April 19, 2020.

In the Supreme Court Order IN RE COVID-19 PANDEMIC of March 13, 2020 and the Order entered March 26, 2020, extending the March 13, 2020 order, Ordered:

- ***“Judges are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that core constitutional functions and rights are protected. Additionally, court clerks are charged with ensuring that court functions continue. See Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 18-1-101 (2009); 18-1-105 (Supp.2019).***
- ***Nevertheless, all judges and court clerks should minimize in-person contact by utilizing available technologies, including alternative means of filing, teleconferencing, email, and video conferencing. Juvenile Court will still be open to review any emergency pleadings which are filed with the Clerk of the Court.”***

Due to Mayor Ketron's instruction, the Juvenile Court of Rutherford County is open but will be operating with a limited staff in the office. A Juvenile Court staff member and the Judge will be available by either phone calls placed to the office number at 615-217-0061, fax at 615-217-7130 or their individual emails.

Rutherford County Deputies who are assigned to the Juvenile Justice Building will allow individuals authorized by the Judge or their designee for the purpose of Court proceedings in the lobby.

The Sheriff's Office controls the lobby and all individuals are expected to comply with any requests made by them to comply with county buildings being closed to the public and for practicing social distancing.

Per the Sheriff's Office, lobby access will be as follows:

- Those individuals are to remain in the lobby and will not be allowed to come and go from the building during a hearing
- The deputies have sole discretion on keeping the individuals to a minimum
- The deputies have sole discretion on advising where all individuals shall sit while in the lobby as to enforce social distancing
- Once proceedings have concluded all individuals are to exit the building immediately.

- If there is an immediate need for copies of documents, the Court will assure that the Clerk of the Court stamp files and/or certifies and returns to the Court any necessary documents.
- The Court will pass all necessary documents to the attorney(s) or *pro se* litigants

Per the Judge, courtroom access will be as follows:

- Limited to attorneys, parties, witnesses, court deputies, court officers, judicial staff, court clerk and other necessary persons as determined by the Juvenile Judge
- No one will be allowed in the courtroom until the Court is on the record
- Attorney(s) and *pro se* litigants will be allowed into the courtroom first and directed where to sit
- All necessary individuals will be allowed into the courtroom one at a time by a Court Officer and directed where to sit
- Social distancing will be enforced
- Gloves will be given out for all participants, due to the exchange of documents

Any questions can be directed to the Juvenile Court Office at 615-217-0061. The Court appreciates your cooperation while we continue with protecting the constitutional rights of all individuals and maintaining access to justice during these problematic times.

Donna Scott Davenport
Rutherford County
Juvenile Court Judge