

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

IN RE: COURT OPERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2022-6

In response to the ongoing pandemic caused by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the rapid spread of various highly infectious COVID-19 variants, and the guidelines and recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Court signed a series of Administrative Orders (Administrative Orders Nos. 2021-5, 2021-6, 2021-10 and 2022-1) regarding the wearing of masks within the various Courthouses of the Western District of Arkansas. Pursuant to these orders, individuals who were not fully vaccinated for COVID-19, including employees, were required to wear masks or facial covering while in all common areas of the Courthouses.

Since the issuance of these Orders, the number of individuals being vaccinated for COVID-19 has increased and the number of reported COVID-19 cases has declined nationwide. In response, the CDC has relaxed its guidelines and recommendation regarding the wearing of masks. In light of the CDC's revised recommendation and the low numbers of COVID-19 cases within the district, the following Order will be implemented in all divisions in the Western District of Arkansas:

1) The mandate requiring that masks or facial coverings be worn when entering or while in all common areas of the Courthouses of the Western District of Arkansas is hereby lifted.

2) Nothing in this Order prohibits an individual from wearing a mask or facial covering while in the district's Courthouses.

3) It continues to be within the discretion of the presiding judge in any court proceeding to require individuals attending the proceeding to wear a mask or facial covering.

4) The Court's Administrative Order Nos. 2021-5, 2021-6, and 2021-10 dated May 26, 2021 and July 30, 2021, respectively, are hereby rescinded.

5) This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until further Order of the Court.

IT IS SO ORDERED, this 14th day of December, 2022.



SUSAN O. HICKEY
CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE