

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT, SIXTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PASCO AND PINELLAS COUNTIES, FLORIDA**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2021-045 PA/PI-CIR

**RE: ELIMINATION OF FACE MASK AND DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS FOR
COURT FACILITIES IN CONFORMITY WITH THE FLORIDA SUPREME
COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER AOSC21-17, *AMENDMENT 2***

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has provided updated face mask guidance for fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people during the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ The Florida Supreme Court has issued AOSC21-17, *Amendment 2*, in response to the latest declaration of a national public health emergency and change in health guidance by the CDC.

The State of Florida's rates of COVID-19 transmission have been steadily declining. According to the Florida Department of Health² and the CDC 7-day metrics in both Pinellas and Pasco Counties have dropped from the Severe Community Transmission to Moderate. The Florida Supreme Court has noted that effective vaccines are adequately available and that more than 70% of this state's population have been either partially or fully vaccinated.

In order to conform with AOSC21-17, *Amendment 2*, and in accordance with Article V, section 7, Florida Constitution, Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, and section 43.26, Florida Statutes,

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. The courts of the Sixth Circuit shall no longer require the wearing of masks or physical distancing in a courthouse. The term "courthouse" means any portion of a facility or building that houses jury assembly rooms, courtrooms, judicial officers, or court staff or areas where court business is conducted, whether or not that facility or building is formally called a courthouse.
2. Although face masks are not required, any person entering into or remaining in a courthouse may choose to wear a face mask.
3. During an in-person court proceeding a face mask must be provided upon request to a participant or observer. Similarly, participants in such proceedings may request to be physically distanced and the presiding judge will address these requests as appropriate under the circumstances at the time of the request.

¹ See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>.

² See Florida Department of Health http://ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/_partners/covid19_report_archive/covid19-data/covid19_data_latest.pdf.

This Administrative Order shall take effect November 15, 2021.

Administrative Order 2021-029 PA/PI-CIR is hereby rescinded as of November 15, 2021.

DONE AND ORDERED in Chambers at St. Petersburg, Pinellas County, Florida, this _____ day of November, 2021.

ORIGINAL SIGNED ON NOVEMBER 10, 2021
BY ANTHONY RONDOLINO, CHIEF JUDGE

cc: All Judges
The Honorable Bruce Bartlett, State Attorney
The Honorable Sara Mollo, Public Defender
The Honorable Nikki Alvarez-Sowles, Clerk of Court, Pasco County
The Honorable Ken Burke, Clerk of Court, Pinellas County
The Honorable Chris Nocco, Sheriff, Pasco County
The Honorable Bob Gualtieri, Sheriff, Pinellas County
Gay Inskeep, Trial Courts Administrator
Ita M. Neymotin, Regional Counsel, Second District
Ngozi Acholonu, Assistant Regional Counsel
Kimberly Thompson, Chief Operations Manager, Pasco County Clerk's Office
Michele Emmerman, Director of Administrative Services for Pasco County
Diana Sweeney, Deputy Director, Department of Administrative Services, Pinellas County
Jeffrey Steinsnyder, County Attorney, Pasco County
Jewel White, County Attorney, Pinellas County
Dan Biles, County Administrator, Pasco County
Barry A. Burton, County Administrator, Pinellas County
Law Enforcement Agencies, Pasco and Pinellas Counties
Bar Associations, Pasco and Pinellas Counties
Law Libraries, Pasco and Pinellas Counties