

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
219 SOUTH DEARBORN STREET  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604

CHAMBERS OF  
REBECCA R. PALLMEYER  
CHIEF JUDGE

312-435-5600

October 18, 2021

Dear Dirksen Courthouse:

An employee / contractor who was last in the Dirksen Courthouse on Wednesday, October 13, 2021 received positive test results for the COVID-19 virus on a test taken yesterday. The employee / contractor was on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the Courthouse. I understand that this individual was not on any other floors of the building, wore a face covering, and maintained appropriate distancing while in the Courthouse. Individuals who had direct contact with this person have been notified, and the General Services Administration will clean the impacted areas.

Masks, social-distancing, and handwashing all make a difference. But as noted in previous letters, the most powerful tool against this virus is vaccination. That is why we are complying with the President's direction: Employees and contractors of the U.S. District Court and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Illinois are required to be vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. Employees who are not fully vaccinated are required to wear masks at all times in the workplace, required to be tested twice a week, and prohibited from work-related travel.

We are so fortunate that the vaccine is available to us at no charge. All of us have heard about "breakthrough" infections; it's true that vaccinated persons can still test positive. But those numbers remain low, and when vaccinated people do contract the infection, they are far far less likely to have significant symptoms or require hospitalization. The vaccine protects you, but that's not the only reason to get vaccinated: Please do so to protect others with whom you are in contact, including children and persons who are immunocompromised or can't get vaccinated. Remember, kids ages 12-15 are eligible to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, and everyone who is 16 years of age or older is eligible to receive one of the three COVID-19 vaccines available. If you haven't done it, please do so now. If someone you love hasn't done it, tell that person you hope they will do so now.

I appreciate your help in keeping everyone safe.

Yours truly,



Rebecca R. Pallmeyer  
Chief Judge  
Chair, Dirksen Courthouse Building Security Committee