

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
GENERAL ORDER 21-0006**

February 17, 2021

IN RE: PLAN FOR THE SAFE RESUMPTION OF JURY TRIALS AND COURT OPERATIONS

Due to the significant health risks generated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Court has been required to restrict certain aspects of its operations, such as jury trials. To conduct in-person operations safely, the Court will adopt a testing protocol to help ensure that those who work in the Courthouse do not pose a direct threat to the health and safety of other Courthouse workers or visitors to the Courthouse. It is, therefore, hereby ORDERED:

1. The Clerk of the United States District Court is authorized and directed to enter into an agreement with SHIELD Illinois to establish a saliva-based COVID-19 screening program. In light of the dangers created by asymptomatic spread of the virus, the Court deems this non-invasive testing program to be job-related and consistent with the Court's operational requirements.
2. Because the testing protocol will be fully effective only if all employees participate, it is also hereby ORDERED that all employees, contractors, and staff of all agencies and court units at the Dirksen and Roszkowski Courthouses participate in this program. Specifically, all employees who report to work at either of these Courthouses will be required to provide a saliva sample for screening-based testing, at a frequency determined by the employees' contacts with the public, but no more often than twice a week. Test results will be provided only to the employees. The employee must, however, report their positive test results to their employer.
3. It is ORDERED, further, that potential jurors and persons selected for petit jury service will be tested. The Court will inform jurors of the testing program. The Court will seek their consent to be tested and have their results shared with the Court's Jury Department. If an empaneled juror tests positive for the virus, the Jury Department will subsequently notify the judge assigned to the case that a juror tested positive. Empaneled jurors shall be tested twice a week.

4. It is ORDERED, further, that any individual whose participation in a hearing or trial will exceed two days will be required to submit to testing or will be required to participate remotely only. The Clerk's Office will subsequently notify the judge assigned to the case that an individual covered under this paragraph tested positive.
5. All positive test results will be reported to the Illinois Department of Public Health in accordance with the Illinois Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690.200(a)(5)).
6. Any individual who has religious or medical objections to the saliva-based testing protocol is directed to notify the Chief Judge of the District Court in writing, setting forth the specific concerns to enable the Court to propose a reasonable accommodation.
7. This Order does not supersede the requirement to wear a face mask within the Courthouse. All other safety measures such as physical distance, regular handwashing, and limited elevator traffic remain in effect during the pendency of this Order.

ENTER:

FOR THE COURT:



Chief Judge

Dated at Chicago, Illinois this 17th day of February 2021