

PHASE III PROTOCOL

PHASE III TO RESUME APRIL 5, 2021

IN-PERSON CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS SHALL RESUME APRIL 5, 2021
CRIMINAL JURY TRIALS SHALL RESUME JUNE 1, 2021

U.S. DISTRICT COURT	
COURTROOMS	All courtrooms have been outfitted with plexiglass and 6-foot social distancing markers have been placed throughout.
	Each individual vicinage will evaluate and determine its own best practices for coordinating both the cleaning of courtrooms in between proceedings as well as the scheduling of in-custody defendant proceedings within the confines provided by the USMS.
	To the extent possible, each Judge will use his/her own courtroom in lieu of a designated courtroom. To the extent not already addressed, IT shall evaluate and address any logistical and IT-related considerations, as necessary.
PROCEEDINGS	**All proceedings, including initial appearances, arraignments, pleas, and sentencing, shall continue to proceed via Zoom, when possible, as long as the Court's Standing Orders in accordance with the CARES Act permit.**
	Beginning April 5, 2021 , where the defendant has not consented to proceed by way of videoconference for an initial appearance, arraignment, plea, or sentencing, the proceeding shall be held in-person regardless of whether the defendant is in or out of custody.
	Bench trials shall be conducted via Zoom where possible.
	Criminal jury trials are anticipated to resume on June 1, 2021 . No more than one criminal trial per courthouse may be held at the same time. Initially, Judges should select those trials that can be completed within one week and where there is only a single defendant. <u>Note:</u> Memorial Day weekend may be a spreader event so it is recommended that this be taken into consideration when scheduling trials.
GRAND JURY	Beginning April 5, 2021 , Grand Jury proceedings shall resume as normal.
COURTHOUSES	Hand sanitizers and 6-foot social distancing markers have been placed throughout the courthouses.
	The local FSCs shall convene to address courthouse-specific considerations such as maximum elevator occupancy, reopening of gyms, cafes, etc.
CHAMBERS	Each Judge shall determine his/her respective volume of courtroom activity; however, it is still imperative that the number of proceedings remain limited during this Phase.
	It is also imperative that all in-person courtroom proceedings be coordinated through the Clerk's Office in conjunction with the CRDs in each vicinage to ensure appropriate post-proceeding cleaning, social distancing accommodations, and a limitation of the number of proceedings involving in-custody defendants.
	Each respective Judge shall determine his/her in-person staffing of Chambers, including interns.
MISC.	Employees and members of the public are advised to familiarize themselves with the Court's Contact Tracing Protocols posted on the Court's internal and external websites. The Protocols are updated, when necessary, in conjunction with relevant CDC guidance.

U.S. BANKRUPTCY COURT

Clerk's office public counters will remain closed but available on appointment through the Deputies in Charge in each vicinage. Mail will be processed twice a week in each office. Staff will continue to return to the courthouses on staggered weekly schedules to provide critical administrative functions and support for courtroom services as judges' needs dictate. All hearings and trials continue remotely unless otherwise directed by judge.

U.S. AGENCIES	
U.S. PROBATION	<p>Staff will continue to work in small teams with the majority of employees continuing to telework. Teams will return to the office on a rotating basis each week, based on the needs of the agency.</p> <p>Public access to Probation office space will be expanded to include individuals under supervision (IUS) being called to the office for reasons other than drug testing, by appointment only. Drug tests for IUS will continue to occur once a week or less and will be scheduled in half-hour or hourly intervals. A list of names of those IUS reporting on a given day will be provided to CSOs in advance. When the IUS arrives, the attending officer will meet the IUS outside, make sure they have a mask, have them sanitize their hands, and then escort them directly to the Probation Office. Unexpected visitors to the courthouse will continue to be seen outside the courthouse by an officer who will triage the situation and determine if it is necessary to bring anyone into the building. Masks and hand sanitizer will be provided if necessary.</p> <p>Probation Officers will continue to attend court proceedings via the same manner as the court. A duty officer will be available at all times for emergency hearings and proceedings in the appropriate designated courtroom.</p>
U.S. PRETRIAL SERVICES	<p>Public access to offices will continue to be limited. Routine in-person office reporting of defendants will not occur during Phase Three; however, a limited number of defendants (~5 per week) will report to Pretrial Services' office space for matters which are deemed appropriate by officers. A list of expected defendants will be provided to CSOs at the start of each day. After clearing security, defendants will always be escorted by a staff member.</p> <p>Pretrial Services Officers will continue to attend court proceedings via video or teleconference. A duty officer will be available for emergency hearings and proceedings and will coordinate with Chamber's staff should an officer's presence be required for any in-person hearings.</p>
USMS	<p>Staff coverage will remain the same as it was in Phase II.</p> <p>Should the need arise to house prisoners or detainees in the USMS cellblock or holding cells, inmates will be limited to one per cell, masks will be provided to prisoners, and GSA will provide enhanced cleaning of the cellblock area.</p>
GSA	<p>High touch common areas in the building will be cleaned and disinfected multiple times during the day. GSA will direct custodial staff to clean and disinfect courtrooms as directed by the provided weekly calendar. Chambers will be cleaned according to a schedule provided by the Deputy-in-Charge or upon request.</p> <p>GSA is working to ensure the ventilation exchange rates are being performed according to CDC guidance. GSA has increased outside air exchange 2 hours prior to building operating hours and 2 hours after operating hours. The systems are set to exchange the air at a rate of 7 cycles per hour.</p> <p>GSA Regions 2 and 3 have installed Merv (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) 13 or above rated filters in the Camden and Trenton courthouses and the MLK Building in Newark.</p> <p>***District Court is working in conjunction with GSA to provide HEPA rated Air Purifiers in the Lautenberg Building where Merv 13 rated filters are not compatible with the existing HVAC system.</p>

**Unless otherwise noted above, the Phase II protocols will remain in effect.*