

A special message to our jurors as the Covid-19 pandemic subsides

In 2020 the world was introduced to a new contagious virus: Coronavirus Disease or COVID-19. Due to the previous declaration of a national emergency, our court suspended all jury matters temporarily until protocols could be put into place to protect our citizens and staff as well as administering justice. Beginning last summer by closely following, monitoring and reinforcing the guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), local and U.S. health authorities and taking strict precautionary measures to limit the potential spread of the virus we were able to continue with the essential judicial proceedings with no issues of COVID-19 spread in court hearings or amongst jurors.

The Federal Court takes the public health and your safety very seriously. Our jury team continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation in real time and is responding as conditions evolve. Following guidance from the CDC, in May 2021 N.C. Governor Roy Cooper and the Department of Health and Human Services lifted all mass gathering limits and social distancing requirements. **Our Court will be following that protocol but welcomes you to wear a mask if you still desire to do so.**

We also understand that still some individuals may be unable to serve at this time due to Coronavirus-related issues and will need to be excused. ***ALL requests to be excused or to be postponed MUST BE IN WRITING by doing so on your questionnaire, through eJuror or written letter to the Court and should be submitted IMMEDIATELY if:***

- *You were diagnosed with COVID-19 and have not recovered;*
- *You have had contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 who has not completed a quarantine period;*
- *You have been asked to self-quarantine by any doctor or other medical provider and are still within the self-quarantine period;*
- *You have been experiencing a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or are presently suffering from an elevated body temperature or chills;*
- *You are a person at a high risk of infection; or*
- *You are a person living with others who may be at a high risk of infection.*

We thank you for your patience and for your cooperation as we work together to stay safe and stay healthy.

WE CANNOT EXCUSE OR DEFER YOU OVER THE PHONE. IF YOU ARE REQUESTING AN EXCUSE OR DEFERRAL, YOU MUST DO SO BY COMPLETING YOUR QUALIFYING QUESTIONNAIRE WITH A REQUEST. YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED IF IT HAS BEEN GRANTED OR DENIED.

We are extremely grateful that because of the courage and sacrifice of so many individuals, we can continue the administration of justice through the Federal Court system.