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IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF RENO TOWNSHIP  
COUNTY OF WASHOE, STATE OF NEVADA

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE MATTER OF  
THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2022-02**

Pursuant to NRS 4.157(c) and JCRRT 21, the Chief Justice of the Peace of Reno Township enters this Administrative Order in response to the State of Emergency declared by Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak on March 12, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, Governor Sisolak’s Declaration has not been rescinded, and over the course of the pandemic the Court has issued numerous administrative orders in response to guidance and directives issued by federal, state, and local authorities. The previous administrative orders entered by this Court primarily addressed two issues: (1) the requirement to wear an appropriate face covering while on the premises of Reno Justice Court and (2) policies and procedures regulating which Court proceedings would be conducted remotely (via video conference) as opposed to in-person as well as procedures for parties to request exceptions to presumptively remote proceedings.

The Court has been operating pursuant to the dictates of Administrative Order 2021-04 since August 10, 2021. Although the state-wide State of Emergency Declaration is still in effect and the pandemic is not over, the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners rescinded the local state of emergency in December 2021. Moreover, the Court takes notice that – save and except requirements to wear masks indoors – nearly every public or private entity within the County is operating pursuant to pre-pandemic standards. Teachers and students are going to

1 schools. Patrons and employees are going to bars, restaurants, and retail establishments.  
2 Theaters, stadiums, and casinos are permitted to fill to their capacities, and almost every  
3 governmental agency within the state permits in-person access to serve the publics' needs.  
4 Indeed, the Court has been able to safely permit in-person access – in one form or another – for  
5 almost the entirety of the pandemic.

6 Further, a COVID-19 vaccine has been available free of charge to any adult within the  
7 County for almost a year and has been available to any child over the age of five since November  
8 of 2021. Although the vaccine does not fully protect an individual against a COVID-19  
9 infection, all publicly available data indicate that the vaccines significantly reduce the risk of  
10 severe infection, hospitalization, or death. Moreover, additional therapeutic treatments for  
11 COVID-19 continue to be approved by the Food and Drug Administration and have been shown  
12 to further reduce the risks of severe infection, hospitalization, and death.

13 Therefore, the Reno Justice Court bench has determined that it is necessary and  
14 appropriate to further expand in-person access to the Court, as in-person proceedings are  
15 conducive to the efficient, effective, and orderly administration of justice; reinforce the dignity  
16 and importance of Court proceedings; and advance access to justice for individuals who do not  
17 have the means to fully participate in or understand remote proceedings due to a language barrier,  
18 disability, or lack of access to or the understanding of the technology required to participate in a  
19 remote proceeding.

20 THEREFORE, and effective Monday, January 31, 2022, the Court hereby ORDERS as  
21 follows:

22 (1) Administrative Order 2021-04 is rescinded and supplanted by the terms of this Order.

23 (2) All parties, counsel, and other individuals are prohibited from entering Reno Justice

24 Court without a mask or other appropriate face covering. Individuals are also

25 prohibited from entering the Court if they meet any of the criteria below:

- 1 a. They are under instructions to quarantine or isolate by any doctor, hospital,  
2 or health agency.
- 3 b. They have an active case of COVID-19.
- 4 c. They are currently experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19,  
5 including fever, chills, unexplained persistent cough, headaches, muscle/body  
6 aches, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting.

7 (3) The Court remains open for all in-person access including public viewing of any in-  
8 person or remote proceedings from the courtroom galleries and access to the Court's  
9 first-floor customer-service windows.

10 (4) As specified below, most Court proceedings will be scheduled as a mandatory in-  
11 person appearance for parties, witnesses, and counsel while other proceedings will  
12 continue to be held via video conference (Zoom):

- 13 a. In all criminal case types, trials, preliminary hearings, motion hearings,  
14 review hearings, hearings for orders to show cause, specialty court  
15 proceedings, arraignments for out-of-custody defendants, pre-trial  
16 conferences, mandatory status conferences, and plea-and-sentencing hearings  
17 will be conducted as mandatory in-person proceedings. All status hearings in  
18 criminal cases will be mandatory in-person proceedings. However, counsel  
19 may still waive their client's appearance consistent with the requirements of  
20 Administrative Order 2021-01, and in-custody defendants will appear via  
21 video conference from the Washoe County Detention Facility unless the  
22 Court specifically orders a defendant's personal appearance. The Court's  
23 morning criminal calendar for in-custody arraignments, first appearances, bail  
24 hearings, etc. will continue to be held by video conference with the Washoe  
25 County Detention Facility. Attorneys and witnesses appearing for this

1 calendar (in-custody arraignments, first appearances, and bail hearings) may  
2 choose to appear either in-person or via video conference.

3 b. All traffic citation matters, including pre-trial conferences with the District  
4 Attorney, will be set as a mandatory in-person proceeding for parties and  
5 counsel.

6 c. Trials in “formal” civil actions (those initiated by a formal complaint and  
7 summons) and small claims trials will continue to be set as mandatory in-  
8 person proceedings. Eviction matters and protection order proceedings will  
9 continue to be set as remote proceedings via video conference (Zoom).  
10 However, any party, attorney or witness may, in his or her discretion,  
11 voluntarily choose to appear in-person and the matter will proceed as a  
12 “hybrid” proceeding with some individuals participating in-person and others  
13 participating via video conference.

14 (5) As to any matter set as a mandatory in-person proceeding, counsel or a self-  
15 represented party may request that any attorney, party, or witness involved in the case  
16 participate via video conference (Zoom) pursuant to the following procedures.

17 a. **By written request served upon the other party:** Counsel (or a self-  
18 represented litigant) may request a remote appearance by an attorney, his/her  
19 client, a witness, or any other participant by filing and serving upon all other  
20 parties a written request at least ten (10) judicial days prior to the proceeding.  
21 Any objection to the request must be filed and served upon the requesting  
22 party at least five (5) judicial days prior to the proceeding, at which time the  
23 request will be submitted to the presiding judge for a decision. Any written  
24 request filed with the Court must be in a form substantially similar to that  
25 which is attached to this Order as **Exhibit 1**; must specifically identify the

1 individual who wants (or multiple individuals who want) to participate by  
2 video conference (Zoom); must include a reason or justification for the remote  
3 appearance; and must include an e-mail address for every individual who  
4 wants to participate via video conference, so the Court is able to send log-in  
5 instructions to the individual/individuals. The presiding judge may in his or  
6 her discretion consider untimely requests and objections but may take the  
7 timeliness of the request or objection into consideration in ruling on the  
8 request.

9 **b. By written stipulation approved by the Court:** The parties may file a  
10 written stipulation agreeing to the appearance of any attorney, witness, party,  
11 etc. by video conference, but any such stipulation is not effective unless and  
12 until it is approved by the presiding judge. Any such stipulation must be  
13 signed by all parties and filed at least two (2) judicial days prior to the date of  
14 the proceeding. Any such stipulation must specifically identify the individual  
15 who wants (or multiple individuals who want) to participate by video  
16 conference (Zoom); must include a reason or justification for the remote  
17 appearance; and must include an e-mail address for every individual who  
18 wants to participate via video conference, so the Court is able to send log-in  
19 instructions to the individual/individuals.

20 (6) Individuals who need to file documents in Court are strongly urged to do so by  
21 utilizing the Court's electronic filing system. In-person filing is still available via the  
22 Court's first-floor customer service windows for parties who do not elect to create an  
23 e-file account. However, as of the effective date of this Order, the Court will no  
24 longer accept pleadings, motions, etc. that are submitted to the Court via e-mail,  
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unless the party is attempting to file a document into a criminal case prior to the filing of the initial criminal complaint.

(7) Exceptions to this order – including the requirement to wear a mask during any Court proceeding – may be made on a case-by-case basis upon the parties’ request or *sua sponte* by the presiding judge.

(8) This Order shall remain in effect until it is modified or rescinded by a subsequent order.

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January 2022.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SCOTT E. PEARSON  
CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE PEACE  
RENO JUSTICE COURT  
DEPARTMENT 4

# EXHIBIT 1

1 **IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF RENO TOWNSHIP**  
2 **IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WASHOE, STATE OF NEVADA**

3  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
5 Prosecution/Plaintiff, Case No.  
6 vs. Dept. No.  
7 \_\_\_\_\_  
8 Defendant. /  
9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 **REQUEST TO APPEAR BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**

11 The undersigned requests that the following individuals be permitted to appear by video  
12 conference (Zoom) at the \_\_\_\_\_ (type of proceeding) currently  
13 set for \_\_\_\_\_ (proceeding date and time):

14

Name	Role (Attorney, Party, or Witness)	E-mail Address

15  
16  
17  
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19 The above individual(s) cannot appear in-person for the following reasons: \_\_\_\_\_

20 \_\_\_\_\_  
21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 Respectfully submitted by:

23 \_\_\_\_\_  
24 Name (Print or Type)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

25 \_\_\_\_\_  
26 Signature

Attorney for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(N/A if Self-Represented)



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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I served a true and correct copy of foregoing **Request to Appear by Video Conference** upon the following individual (or individuals):

I served the above individual (or individuals) in the following manner:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print or Type)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Attorney for: \_\_\_\_\_  
(N/A if Self-Represented)