



Summary of Standards and Protocols Applicable for Visitors to Proceedings in Washington, D.C.

Public Access for Scheduled In-Person Proceedings

In-person Court proceedings in Washington, D.C. are open to the public and press. Trial participants (petitioner, respondent, counsel, witness, interpreter, and court reporter) are allowed entry before other individuals. Other individuals may enter on a first-come, first-served basis until the courtroom has reached physical distancing capacity. When courtroom capacity is reached, no additional visitors are admitted. Trial participants, trial observers, members of the press, and general public are included in the definition of “visitor.”

Entry Requirements

Before entering the courthouse, all visitors are asked to self-certify that the answer to each of the COVID-19 health screening questions is “no.” Signage with the questions is located on the exterior of the courthouse near the entrance doors. If the answer to any of the screening questions is “yes,” the visitor should not enter the courthouse. Visitor access is restricted to designated areas in the Court.

COVID-19 Vaccination or Negative Test Result

Upon arrival, visitors are required to show proof of full vaccination or a negative test result from a test taken within 72 hours. The Court will not handle, retain, or copy these documents.

Contactless Check-in for Contact Tracing

To support contact tracing, prior to entry into the courtroom, visitors must register attendance via QR Code. The QR Code will be posted outside the courthouse so that all visitors may access the registration form from a mobile device. The presiding judge may also disseminate the QR Code to trial participants in advance of trial.

Face Coverings

The Washington, D.C. courthouse is currently in an area classified as “Low” for COVID-19 Community Level. While the COVID-19 Community Level is “Low,” masks are not required in the Washington, D.C. courthouse. Generally, the face covering policy to enter the courthouse applies regarding entering the courtroom. The presiding judge has the discretion, however, to implement stricter requirements for visitors to the courtroom.

If the COVID-19 Community Level is classified as “High,” in Washington, D.C., all visitors, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask in the Washington, D.C. courthouse.

All visitors are responsible for providing their own properly fitting mask and wearing it at all times when in the courthouse.

Courtroom Procedures

Court visitors are required to maintain appropriate physical distancing. Signage and demarcations provide physical distancing directions for gallery seating.