

Chief Judge, Twelfth Judicial District

**12th JUDICIAL DISTRICT- ORDER
RESCINDING CJAO 21-03
REGARDING FACIAL COVERINGS
AND CJAO 20-08 REGARDING JURY
TRIALS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING**



**CHIEF JUDGE
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
2022-02**

On August 27, 2021, the Twelfth Judicial District entered an Order regarding jury trial procedures and social distancing. On October 8, 2021, the Twelfth Judicial District entered an Order mandating face coverings in all court facilities and proceedings. These orders were in response to the overwhelming numbers of rising infections and due to the highly contagious nature of the COVID variants. Since that time, I have continued to monitor the prevailing COVID indicators in Colorado and the San Luis Valley. Currently, key COVID indicators reflect a significant decrease in the primary disease indicators in our community.

The CDPHE prepares statewide tables of One and Two-Week Cumulative Incidence rates as well as the current Epidemic Curve. These tables are updated daily and can be viewed through the CDPHE website at <https://covid19.colorado.gov/data/incidence-epidemic-curve>. All six counties in the San Luis Valley show a One and Two-Week Cumulative Incidence rate of “low”. Additionally, the Current Epidemic Curve shows that the San Luis Valley has shown “sustained decline” for the most recent two-week period (February 21, 2022-March 6, 2022). According to the San Luis Valley Public Health Partnership website there are currently 52 “newly reported” cases, with a regional One-Week Positivity Rate of 4.28%. In comparison, on January 7, 2022, there were 276 “active” cases, with a regional One-Week Positivity Rate of 12.86% and on January 24, 2022, there were 667 “active cases” and a regional One-Week Positivity Rate 20.48%.

On further review, the current data points demonstrate a remarkable reversal in the impact of the COVID variants in our community. Clearly, these numbers represent a significant decline in our indicators, and they continue to trend downward. While COVID remains a constant presence in our community, these current figures confirm that COVID no longer represents an unreasonable risk to those persons accessing the Courts of the 12th Judicial District. Members of the public, our staff, stakeholders, and Judges are now safe to come to the courts without necessity for face coverings and social distancing.

The provisions of this Administrative Order 2022-02 shall apply to all civil, D&N, and criminal jury trials held in the 12th Judicial District.

Pursuant to the authority granted in Chief Justice Directive 95-01 and Chief Justice Order dated July 24, 2020; it is hereby ORDERED as follows:

The Courts of the Twelfth Judicial District will no longer require facial coverings in the courthouses or probation offices. Facial coverings are not required during a jury trial, unless by determination of the presiding judge they are deemed necessary. Additionally, social distancing during jury trials will not be required.

The Court recognizes that COVID-19 remains a constant presence in our communities. As it has throughout the pandemic, the Court will continue to monitor COVID-19 data and rely on the guidance of local health officials. This order is subject to review and revision in accordance with ongoing pandemic trends and public health guidelines. I reserve the right to modify, revise, or vacate this order at any time to meet the health and safety needs of the public. This order is effective March 7, 2022.

Dated this 8th day of March 2022.

BY THE COURT:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Gonzales', written over a horizontal line.

Michael A. Gonzales
Chief Judge, 12th Judicial District