



# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO GAZETTE (EXTRAORDINARY)

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## REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

### PRACTICE DIRECTION

#### **SUPPLEMENT TO THE PRACTICE DIRECTION (COURT OPERATIONS WITH EFFECT FROM MARCH 14, 2022 NO. 20) ISSUED ON THE 11TH MARCH, 2022 AND PUBLISHED IN THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO GAZETTE VOLUME 61 NO. 37**

This Practice Direction is issued pursuant to Part 4 of the Civil Proceedings Rules 1998, Part 20 of the Criminal Procedure Rules 2016, Part 4 of the Family Proceedings Rules 1998, Part 22 of the Children Court Rules 2018, Rule 69 of the Petty Civil Court Rules and Rule 72 of the Non-Contentious Business Rules and is applicable to all divisions of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago including the Supreme Court and the Summary Courts.

The objective of this Practice Direction is to maintain health and safety protocols at court buildings and/or other facilities of the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago by requiring the continued use of face masks.

Accordingly, the following measures shall take effect:

1. This Practice Direction is intended to supersede and/or replace the provisions of any prior Practice Direction to the extent of any inconsistency, but otherwise shall be read in conjunction with any other Practice Direction in force for the time being.
2. Any person who accesses a court building or other facility of the Judiciary is required to comply with health and safety protocols including the wearing of face mask, face shield or face covering; screening of persons, use of hand sanitizers, taking of temperatures and physical distancing.
3. Subject to the following directions, any person over the age of seven entering a court building or other facility of the Judiciary or in a court building or other facility of the Judiciary shall wear a face mask, face shield or face covering.

## PRACTICE DIRECTION—CONTINUED

4. A person may not be required to wear a face mask, face shield or face covering where—
  - (a) the person cannot put on, wear or remove a face mask, face shield or face covering—
    - (i) because of any physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability; or
    - (ii) without severe distress;
  - (b) the person is providing assistance to another person and such other person relies on lip reading to communicate with the first person;
  - (c) the person removes their face mask, face shield or face covering to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to himself or others;
  - (d) the person is entering the court to avoid injury, or to escape a risk of harm, and does not have a face mask, face shield or face covering with him;
  - (e) if it is reasonably necessary for the person to eat or drink, the person removes his face mask, face shield or face covering to eat or drink;
  - (f) the person has to remove his face mask, face shield or face covering to take medication;
  - (g) a court in the course of a hearing orders the person to remove his face mask, face shield or face covering temporarily;
  - (h) a request is made of that the person by a court official to remove his face mask, face shield or face covering temporarily for security and identification purposes, if necessary, for the purpose of receiving services; or
  - (i) the circumstances provided for in guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health.
  
5. No person, even if wearing face mask, face shield or face covering, shall enter a court building or other facility of the Judiciary, if the person:
  - i. tested positive for Covid-19 within the previous 14 days;
  - ii. is awaiting Covid-19 test results after experiencing symptoms of Covid-19; or
  - iii. has been directed to isolate or quarantine and the period of isolation or quarantine has not lapsed; or
  - iv. currently has symptoms consistent with Covid-19 such as a fever, chills, sore throat, or new symptoms of a severe cough, shortness of breath, severe muscle pain, headache, loss of taste or smell, extreme fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, or vomiting; or has been in close contact with someone with Covid-19.
  
6. Any person who fails to comply with any of the above measures may be denied access to a court building or other facility of the Judiciary but may be accommodated via electronic means or services.

## PRACTICE DIRECTION—CONTINUED

7. Any person summoned or selected to serve as a juror must wear a face mask for the duration of their stay in any Judiciary building.
8. A person summoned or selected to serve as a juror who is unable to put on, wear or remove a face mask, face shield or face covering—
  - (i) because of any physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability; or
  - (ii) without severe distress;

may be excused from jury service during the current sitting of the Court and may be deferred to another sitting of the Court.

Dated this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of July, 2022

/s/ Ivor Archie  
Chief Justice