

## Idaho Supreme Court Orders on Access to Courts Amid COVID-19

*The following is information from the Idaho Supreme Court regarding its [emergency orders involving the coronavirus pandemic](#).*

The public comes to our courthouses for many reasons. Many dedicated employees work in these buildings as courthouse staff and judges. Others, including defendants, jurors and witnesses, are not there as a matter of choice, but because they were ordered to be there. Above all, Idaho's courts must be open and accessible to all citizens, and even amid the coronavirus pandemic we strive to keep them that way.

The impartial and efficient administration of Idaho's judicial services often requires groups of people to spend extended periods of time in close proximity, in courtrooms or court facilities that were not built with virus mitigation in mind. Given this reality, **it is imperative** amid the pandemic that **the courts exercise heightened awareness and responsibility for public safety** for everyone involved.

The Idaho Supreme Court's orders governing judicial services during the pandemic were developed with close attention to current science and data. The orders' protocols and procedures — including regarding masks, social distancing, sanitation and personal hygiene — incorporate the most important actions that [federal](#) and [state](#) health officials advise to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

These precautions have been in place throughout Idaho's 44 courthouses and at the Idaho Supreme Court for months now. They are temporary and are under constant review by this Court as circumstances change. Importantly, **they have been key in ensuring that the courts remain open** to anyone wishing to make or defend a claim or who otherwise is compelled to participate in court proceedings. As jury trials resume across the state and as the pandemic continues, vigilant adherence to these steps remains vital for the health and safety of Idahoans seeking protection of their rights and resolution of their legal disputes.