



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Thursday, April 2, 2020

For immediate release

Johnson County Board of Supervisors limiting public access to Courthouse

Johnson County, Iowa – The Johnson County Board of Supervisors voted today, Thursday, April 2, 2020, to limit public access to the Johnson County Courthouse, 417 S. Clinton Street in Iowa City, to those members of the public who need to access the courts for the specific reasons specified in the Thursday, March 30, 2020, order of the 6th Judicial District Chief Judge Patrick Grady. This order will remain in effect until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020. All other Johnson County buildings have been closed to the public since 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17 and will remain closed until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020.

Per the order, the public is not allowed to enter the courthouse, except as follows:

The public may come to the courthouse to get a domestic abuse protective order. A person coming for a domestic abuse protective order or attending a domestic abuse hearing may bring one non-lawyer person with them.

The public may come to the courthouse to get an involuntary commitment on someone for mental health reasons or substance abuse. Persons seeking an involuntary commitment may also bring a person with them, as two affiants—persons who swear to an affidavit—are required for these orders.

The public may come to the courthouse for other emergency orders including:

- Hospitalization proceedings,
- Elder abuse proceedings,
- Dependent adult proceedings,
- Motions to quash garnishments,
- Landlord/tenant proceedings in which the landlord alleges that the tenant poses a clear and present danger.

Some of these require two affiants as well.

The public may need to come to the Clerk of Court's office to file something on the public terminal and/or leave payments or other documents with a Clerk staff member. Payments may also be mailed to the Clerk of Court at 417 S. Clinton Street, Iowa City, IA 52240, or paid electronically by going to www.iowacourts.state.ia.us.

The public may need to come to Magistrate Court for initial appearances. Any member of the public turning himself or herself in on a warrant may need to go to Associate Court to be seen by a judge for an initial appearance. Those coming for an initial appearance shall not be allowed to bring anyone in with them.

There also may be some hearings conducted that a person needs to appear for, such as a plea proceeding or sentencing.

No person under 16 years of age will be allowed in the courthouse unless they are a defendant in criminal or traffic court.

Anyone who comes to the courthouse should be prepared to tell security at the door why they are there. They may be directed to call the Clerk of Court or County Attorney. All who wish to enter the courthouse should be prepared to have their temperature taken by a digital thermometer and/or asked health screening questions. Sheriff's deputies have the discretion to refuse entry to those who are showing signs of sickness or do not comply with the order.

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