

NOTICE

IMPENDING CHANGES IN PROCESSES IN THE 336TH DISTRICT COURT EFFECTIVE MAY 3, 2021

- A. Some types of hearings shall be held in person. (See below) The public may observe court proceedings via livestream on the Court's YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/UCCbUCdsct4wZL_GCSul6vKg

- B. **Security** will be installed, including an armed guard and screening at the East entrance of the building in which the 336th District Court is located at 210 S. Main Street, Bonham, Texas. **All persons entering the building shall process through the security screening.** The West door entrance is limited to court staff and will not be used as public access. Bond supervision is no longer located in this building.

- C. Use of masks required in upon entering the building, while in the building and while in the courtroom.

- D. Jury trials resuming. All jury trials are in person. To limit exposure to the coronavirus, only attorneys, litigants, court and clerk staff, jurors and witnesses will be allowed in the courtroom during jury trials. The Court shall broadcast all jury proceedings on the Court's YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/UCCbUCdsct4wZL_GCSul6vKg and may be viewed by the public. The Court hereby Orders that no broadcasts shall be recorded. Any copying or recording of the court proceedings is in violation of the Court's order. At the conclusion of a docket, but no later than the end of the day, any publication of the court hearings/jury trial will be removed and deleted by the court.

- E. Zoom hearings will continue for the remainder of case types.

IN PERSON HEARINGS RESUMING FOR 336TH DISTRICT COURT

Effective Monday, May 3, 2021, the following types of cases will be heard in person in the 336th District Court.

1. **Criminal case when the defendant is on bond.** (Inmate cases will continue to be heard via zoom. This is being done in an effort to not overcrowd our limited court space while pandemic conditions remain.)
 - a. Defendants shall be directed into the courtroom to be seated with some distancing. Anyone who is not a defendant, attorney, court staff, clerk staff, probation or bond officer or other person deemed directly involved in the scheduled hearing, will not be allowed to remain in the building. To comply with open courts requirements of the

Texas Constitution, the proceedings will be broadcast livestream on the Court's YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/UCCbUCdsct4wZL_GCSul6vKg. The public is welcome and encouraged to observe the proceedings via the Court's YouTube channel.

The foyer area is limited in space and security scanning equipment has been installed and will be manned with an armed security officer within 30 days. If an attorney needs a conference area to communicate with client, 2 rooms are available for use, unless in use as a space to conduct zoom hearing in an inmate case. Space is limited, but with good communication and working together, we can make this work!

- b. Defendant's shall remain in the courtroom and or building in a room conferencing with counsel, until and unless they have received a copy of their indictment(s), conditions of bond, signed a pass slip of which they have a copy, and been released by the bailiff or court clerk.
 - c. The number of defendants scheduled for hearing on any given day will be limited to not more than 15 defendants. Some defendants may have more than one case. The goal is to reduce the number of people in the building at any given time.
 - d. Monday morning settings are reserved for Jury Trials only and are scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m.
 - e. Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m. are reserved for criminal First Appearances only. This allows jury trials to proceed without interruption of hearings not related to the jury trial.
 - f. Wednesday and Thursday mornings at 9:00 a.m. are available for all criminal case settings, including First Appearances. Please note the third Thursday on a square calendar is not available for criminal docket. Please contact the court's coordinator, Brandi Todd for a copy of the Court's calendar to ensure selecting an available date on which to set a criminal case.
 - g. Friday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. are available for all settings of criminal cases, except First Appearances. Please check the court calendar, of which you may request from the court coordinator.
- 2. Protective Order hearings**
 - 3. Motions to enforce**
 - 4. SAPCR cases where a writ has issued for the child to be delivered to the Court**
 - 5. Child Protection cases** – All persons shall wear a mask, except children younger than 10 years of age.
 - a. The Department shall make the child present at court hearings, as required by the law. If the Department or Attorney Ad Litem desires to excuse the requirement a child attend the court hearing, please file the requisite motion as provided for in the law.
 - b. Parents will remain at Court until and unless they receive a copy of the court order with a date certain listed for the next court hearing in the case.
 - c. The Department shall have the proposed order ready for the Court's consideration at the conclusion of the hearing so that all attorneys may review said document and ensure the language comports with the court's ruling. Additionally, the Department shall distribute said order to each parent attending the hearing.

- d. If the hearing is the initial 14 day hearing, each parent who desires court appointed counsel shall complete the affidavit of indigency and return said affidavit to the Court prior to leaving the Court.
- e. Two rooms are available for attorney client conferences and or supervised visits by the department between the parent(s) and child(ren).

If you have questions, please contact the Court's Coordinator, Brandi Todd at (903)583-2863. We understand many courts are moving to in person hearings and others continue to hold hearings remotely using zoom technology. Good communication will reduce stress as we transition to our next new normal.

Effective this 28th day of April 2021.



Laurine J. Blake, Presiding Judge
336th Judicial District Court