

SAN PATRICIO COUNTY COURT AT LAW
REVISED INFECTIOUS DISEASE PROTOCOL AS OF 3/26/21

1. **STATEMENT AND POLICY**

In response to the threat of the Coronavirus and other infectious diseases, this Court hereby implements this Infectious Disease Protocol to minimize the risk of community transmission of COVID-19. This protocol covers persons with scheduled hearings, appearances, or trials in the San Patricio County Court at Law who have reason to believe that they, their attorney, client, or necessary witness have been **exposed to COVID-19** or are **experiencing flu-like symptoms** (hereafter referred to as a "***Covered Person***").

POLICY: No person who has been exposed to COVID-19 or is experiencing flu-like symptoms may personally appear in court while this protocol is in force without prior express permission of the Court. It is the sole and exclusive obligation of each attorney or self-represented litigant to comply with this protocol.

2. **CRIMINAL CASES**

Defendants and Attorneys in criminal cases may appear in person as summoned for each setting unless they have made prior arrangements to appear by video or have had their appearance waived by the Court after having filed the proper court motions. Approved forms for waivers of appearance, arraignment, and pre-trial hearings may be obtained via e-mail from the Court Coordinators or at **sanpatricioccal@gmail.com**. Any ***Covered Person*** who is a **defendant** in a criminal case must contact their attorney ***prior*** to their court date in order to request to be excused from court.

3. **CIVIL CASES**

A ***Covered Person*** in a ***civil hearing*** may appear by video conference or telephonically, if the Court has the availability. Video conference will be through the Lifesize video conference system currently in the Court at Law Courtroom. **Video conference or telephonic testimony in a bench trial requires agreement of counsel.** No video conference or telephonic testimony will be permitted in jury trials except as authorized by statute. For telephonic testimony, a notary public must be physically present with the witness to identify the witness by proper and legal ID and administer the oath to the witness on the record. ***Covered Persons*** not properly sworn in this manner will not be permitted to testify.

4. **CONTINUANCES**

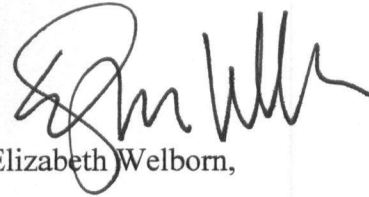
All requests for continuance under this protocol must comply with the Texas Rules of Civil Procedures or Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Motions for continuance will be set for a hearing as soon as the Court is provided with a copy of the filed motion. All motions for

continuance must state that it is asserted pursuant to the Infectious Disease Protocol, identify the Covered Person or Persons, and describe why they are necessary for the hearing in question.

5. **ALTERNATIVES TO IN-PERSON APPEARANCES**

The Court will continue to use the Court's Lifesize video system for those wishing to make their appearance by video. Please note when the Court is in session at the San Patricio County Civic Center the Lifesize call in number is 700150, and when the Court is in session at the San Patricio County Courthouse the call in number is 6077764.

Signed and Effective on March 29, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Welborn', written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth Welborn,

Judge Presiding