

NORTH CAROLINA
FILED
CATAWBA COUNTY

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JURISDICTION
SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
JUDICIAL DISTRICT 25B

2021 MAY 17 A 8:57

FILE NO. 20-R-181

CATAWBA CO., C.S.C.

BY RB

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
AMENDING FACIAL MASK/COVERING REQUIREMENTS
AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS
AT THE CATAWBA COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER**

NOW COMES the undersigned Senior Resident Superior Court Judge for Judicial District 25B who HEREBY ENTERS the following Order related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

IT APPEARING TO THE COURT that the Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court declared in his May 10, 2021 order, as amended by order dated May 14, 2021, that although the Covid-19 pandemic remains a serious threat to the health and safety of the public, given the availability of the vaccine, the immediate threat of Covid-19 is lessening. The Chief Justice has further recognized that the Center for Disease Control recently modified its position regarding face coverings and social distancing with regard to those persons who have been vaccinated, that life is gradually moving toward pre-pandemic normal, and that local court officials are in the best position to address health and safety concerns for their unique facilities.

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE COURT that in order to allow the courts in Catawba County to respond to the backlog of cases caused by the pandemic, and to prevent a further backlog, it is imperative that we engage in efforts to increase the number of cases which can be handled in each session of court.

IT FURTHER APPEARING TO THE COURT that upon consideration of the emergency directives of the Chief Justice, the current state of the pandemic in Catawba County, the availability of the Covid-19 vaccine to all adults, the lessening nature of the threat of transmission, the CDC recommendations regarding face masks and social distancing, and the need to address the backlog of cases, the entry of the following order is necessary for the proper administration of justice in Catawba County.

WHEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED:

1. All persons who have received the Covid-19 vaccine or who have been diagnosed with Covid-19 and fully recovered shall no longer be required to wear a face mask upon entering the Catawba County Justice Center. Any and all persons who have either not been diagnosed with Covid-19 and fully recovered or have not received the Covid-19 vaccine shall continue to be required to wear a face mask upon entry to the Catawba County Justice Center pursuant to this Court's administrative order filed July 20, 2020, number 20-R-224.
2. The Catawba County Sheriff and the deputies of his office shall have the authority and power to greet persons at the entrance to the Justice Center, regardless of their purpose for entry, and

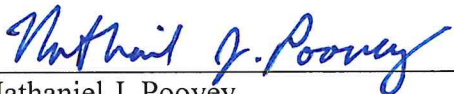
advise them of this Order and inquire of them as to whether they have received the Covid-19 vaccine or been diagnosed with Covid-19 and fully recovered.

3. The face covering requirement pursuant to this order does not apply to any person who is unable to wear a face covering due to health or safety reasons, who are actively eating or drinking, who are communicating with someone who is hearing-impaired in a way that requires the mouth to be visible, who are temporarily removing their face covering to secure medical services for identification or temperature taking purposes, or who are under eleven (11) years of age.
4. Each presiding judge of any courtroom retains the discretion to allow a facial covering to be removed if at any point during any court proceeding a speaker is unable to speak clearly or be heard, or for any other reason justice would require removal of a facial covering.
5. The Catawba County Sheriff is hereby charged with the responsibility and duty of the enforcement of this order. Any individual who is required pursuant to this order to wear a face mask but refuses to do so shall be removed from the facility immediately.
6. The social distance requirement of six feet in all areas of the Catawba County Courthouse is hereby amended to three feet. All areas of the courthouse which have previously been marked for six feet between persons shall be changed to three feet as soon as practicable.

THIS ORDER IS HEREBY ENTERED with the intent of protecting the health and well-being of the citizens of Catawba County and the employees who work within the Catawba County Justice Center while providing orderly access to our Judicial System and to prevent the further backlog of cases caused by the pandemic.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Administrative Order shall be in addition to all previous Administrative Orders entered concerning the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and shall expire when all Emergency Directives entered by the Chief Justice expire or upon further order of the Court.

Signed this the 17th day of May, 2021.



Nathaniel J. Poovey
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
Catawba County, Judicial District 25B