



Bennett J. Baur
Chief Public Defender

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Chief Public Defender Safe Workplace Directive

Dear LOPD Employees and Criminal Justice Partners:

The New Mexico Law Offices of the Public Defender has a responsibility to ensure our employees a safe workplace, free from serious, recognized hazards. The potential for the rapid spread of the deadly coronavirus presents a serious hazard where proper precautions are not followed. The Centers for Disease Control and the New Mexico Department of Health have issued guidelines and directives for preventing infection with and spread of the coronavirus.

We have directed our employees that they are not to work in an environment that does not meet CDC and DOH guidelines and directives for minimizing contact and preventing the spread of the coronavirus. LOPD employees may not enter or practice in spaces that do not meet these explicit and official CDC and DOH guidelines and directives:

Social distances measures

- No social contact as ordered by the Governor.
- Space to allow approximately 6 feet (2 meters) between individuals, per CDC and DOH. **NOTE: Attorneys must have access to spaces to speak confidentially with clients that meets this distancing requirement.**

Facility measures

- Ensure hand hygiene supplies are readily available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol, must be readily available throughout courtrooms and conference rooms.
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces (for example, microphones, podiums, doorknobs, keyboards, remote controls, desks) can be wiped down by employees before each use.
- Daily or more frequent disinfecting of all surfaces.

As exposure to the coronavirus is a workplace safety issue, this directive applies wherever LOPD employees are working, including courthouses. LOPD has worked proactively to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and will continue efforts to provide employees a safe work environment.

Attorneys and LOPD staff who encounter environments they believe do not meet the above CDC and DOH guidelines and directives shall immediately notify office or court personnel and request appropriate measures be taken to bring the environment into compliance before continuing. If not brought into compliance, they shall notify their LOPD supervisor and consult with the supervisor about further measures.

Questions or concerns that cannot be resolved with the local supervisor shall be directed to the district defender, deputy chief, or the Chief Public Defender.