



LOPD RESTORING SERVICES TO CLIENTS AND FULL REOPENING 4.1

As New Mexico has reopened fully, LOPD will follow suit. LOPD is restoring all client services fully reopening offices and services while also exploring a long-term telework policy. This plan is subject to change in response to the evolving national and local mandates and recommendations. Throughout this plan are links to provide you reference to additional resources and information related to COVID-19.

Following the resumption of jury trials in February 2021 and in-person hearings July 19, 2021, district defenders and division managers should assess operational and client needs and ensure in office staffing supports the resumption of in-person trials and hearings.

I. LOPD is fully open to clients and visitors.

All employees are required to take steps to reduce the transmission of coronavirus per [CDC recommendations](#). Pursuant to the NM Department of Health's most recent recommendations "[All Together New Mexico: COVID-Safe Practices for Employers](#)" (updated June 30, 2021).

1) Masks

- All employees wanting to wear masks are encouraged to do so.
- Fully vaccinated employees are not required to wear a mask or socially distance when not interacting with non-LOPD employees in LOPD offices.
- Unvaccinated employees are required to follow CDC guidelines, which currently recommend mask-wearing and social distancing when around others. (exception: when the unvaccinated employee is alone in their individual workspace or eating or drinking)
- **All visitors (i.e. non-LOPD employees) are required to wear masks. If a visitor does not have a mask, then a single use disposable mask will be provided by the local office.**
- **All LOPD employees are required to wear a mask when interacting with visitors (i.e. non-LOPD employees).**
- **Employees and LOPD contractors or vendors must comply with the LOPD safety practices, which is a minimum standard, and shall also follow more restrictive policies issued by local courts, jails, counties and other criminal justice partners.**

2) In-person meetings, trainings and travel

- In-person meetings and trainings may resume.
- Work-related travel is permitted within state.
- Work-related out of state travel is permitted, with district defender and deputy chief approval. Training related travel requires approval by training and recruitment director.

3) Cleaning Offices and Office Space – Building cleaning staff in local offices will continue to clean and dispose of waste. Cleaning once a day is sufficient to help maintain a healthy facility. However, disinfection will be completed by building cleaning staff if there is a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 in a space.

- Updated CDC guidance for cleaning and disinfecting is located [HERE](#).

- Offices shall provide hand sanitizer at reception desks and client service areas.

4) Telework

- Employees with an approved telework agreement that meets operational needs may continue to telework. If there have been substantial changes to the telework agreement since the original approval, or if an employee has not filled one out since March 2020, then managers must obtain, review an updated telework agreement, and email the approved agreement to [LOPD-HR](#). ([link to PDF](#))
- District defenders and division managers must decide which employees should work in office or will be eligible for telework. The assessment should be based on the following: District defenders and division managers shall assess the operational needs of the office and each employee's duties or responsibilities that are an essential job function and that require in-office work, including serving clients/visitors in office, in-person court appearances or work at the jail.

5) Visitor protocols

- a. **All visitors (i.e. non-LOPD employees) are required to wear masks. If a visitor does not have a mask, then a single use disposable mask will be provided by the local office. If a visitor declines to wear a mask due to a medical or other issue, please obtain approval from a district defender, managing attorney or office manager prior to the individual being permitted into the office space.**
- b. **All LOPD employees are required to wear a mask when interacting with visitors (i.e. non-LOPD employees).**
- c. Transports from jails or prisons is permitted.
- d. Evaluations, polygraphs, etc. of out of custody clients by experts in an LOPD office is permitted.
- e. LOPD employees are permitted to conduct in-person visits with clients in custody.
- f. Eligibility Screening:
 - a. Please follow procedures for collecting application fees that were in place prior to COVID. If you have questions about a specific eligibility issue, please contact your district defender or office manager.
 - b. Eligibility qualification may be conducted by phone or by email and documentation may be provided by email or fax. Please refer to the updated FY21 eligibility memo emailed February 25, 2021 for additional direction (located [HERE](#)).

REMINDER: Any employee experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms (including: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscles or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea) must stay at home, notify their supervisor and arrange for free testing through the NMDOH [HERE](#) or call the NMDOH at 1-855-600-3453.