

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: John H. Graham, Clerk of Smyth County Circuit Court

March 17, 2020

**PRESS RELEASE: COURTHOUSE ACCESS LIMITATIONS**

Out of an abundance of caution surrounding coronavirus concerns, and in light of the declaration of a “judicial emergency” by the Supreme Court of Virginia, protective measures have been instituted at the Smyth County Courthouse. Housing three levels of courts and their respective clerk’s offices, in addition to the Commonwealth’s Attorney, Treasurer, Commissioner of Revenue, Victim-Witness Office, Recovery Court, and the Court Services Unit, the Smyth County Courthouse remains open but with new, health-related safeguards in place.

Effective immediately, people will be screened at the Courthouse main entrance for symptoms of sickness and recent travel to high-risk areas, and they may be denied entry, if warranted. People who are denied entry will be given contact information to call the office they had hoped to visit, so that alternate accommodations may be made.

Citizens are encouraged to use the internet, phone, and email for many courthouse services. You may pay county taxes, court costs and fines online. You may obtain the forms for many court-related petitions, including concealed handgun permit applications. You may request copies of court orders, deeds, marriage licenses, and most legal documents electronically. Moreover, each office has posted some helpful resources on the county website: [www.smythcounty.org](http://www.smythcounty.org).

Local judges entered an order affecting hearings in pending court cases. All in-person proceedings in all levels of our local courts (Circuit, General District, and Juvenile & Domestic Relations) have been continued until further notice, except for several time-sensitive or other critical matters. If you have a case on the docket of any Smyth County Court, or if you are otherwise supposed to appear between now until April 6<sup>th</sup>, please call the clerk’s office to obtain information about new hearing dates.

The Smyth County Courthouse remains open for essential services, but citizens are encouraged to go online and use other electronic means to access services when possible, helping us all adopt good social distancing practices during these extraordinary days.

**SMYTH COUNTY COURTHOUSE PHONE NUMBERS:**

Circuit Court Clerk	782-4044
Commissioner of Revenue	782-4040
Commonwealth’s Attorney	782-4042
Court Services Unit	782-4054
General District Court	782-4047
Juvenile & Domestic Court	782-4052
Recovery Court	706-8656
Treasurer’s Office	782-4059
Victim/Witness Program	782-4061

## **ATTENTION**

### **Individuals may not enter the Courthouse if they**

- a. Visited China, Iran, South Korea, any European countries, or any other high-risk countries identified by the CDC in the previous 14 days.
- b. Traveled domestically within the United States where COVID-19 has sustained widespread community transmission;
- c. Been asked to quarantine, isolate or self-monitor by any doctor, hospital, or health agency;
- d. Been diagnosed with, or have had contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with, COVID-19;
- e. A fever, cough, or shortness of breath; or
- f. Resided with or been in close contact with any person in the above-mentioned categories.

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If you are ill, or

if you are caring for someone who is ill, or

if you are otherwise in a high-risk category, as defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC),  
call or email the clerk of court to request an appropriate accommodation.

Per Order of the Supreme Court of Virginia “Declaring a Judicial Emergency” entered 3/16/2020