



**OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
ERIC M. HOFFMAN, PROSECUTOR
46TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
DELAWARE COUNTY, INDIANA**

100 W. MAIN STREET, ROOM 312
MUNCIE, IN 47305

TELEPHONE 765-747-7801
FAX: 765-747-7830

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Eric M. Hoffman, Prosecuting Attorney
Date: August 10, 2020 12:00 p.m.

Tentative re-opening of the Prosecutor's Office

Muncie Indiana – On Wednesday August 5, 2020 at 8:30 a.m., the Criminal Division of the Prosecutor's Office closed due to several employees testing positive for COVID-19. Due to multiple precautions that have already been in place for months, there is little to no risk of exposure by members of the public and little to no risk of exposure by county staff outside of our office. Any individuals identified as possible close-contacts requiring action be taken have already been or will be notified individually by Indiana State Department of Health contact tracers who will provide further instruction. I have been in communication with the Delaware County Health Department. Currently, all employees are working from home and all employees are in the process of being tested for the virus.

Pursuant to guidance from the Delaware County Health Department and the Delaware County Commissioners as well as publications issued by the Indiana State Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Prosecutor's Office employees will need to quarantine for fourteen (14) days from Tuesday August 4, 2020. Therefore, **the Criminal Division of the Prosecutor's Office is tentatively scheduled to re-open on Wednesday August 19, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.**

Until the office reopens:

- 1) The Prosecutor's Office will be closed and the doors to the offices will remain secured.
- 2) All Prosecutor's Office employees will be working from home so as to avoid becoming infected or infecting someone from the public. We are able to receive police reports digitally, review them from home, and then electronically file the appropriate charges with the court system.
- 3) The local judges are convening court on a regular basis. We do not appear in court in person. Rather, we call the court and represent the State at these hearings over the phone or through video conferencing.

- 4) Any and all appointments or meetings that are currently scheduled to take place in the Prosecutor's Office are hereby CANCELLED. A representative from the Office will contact you to either reschedule or simply conduct business over the phone.
- 5) Any depositions that are currently scheduled to take place in the Prosecutor's Office are hereby CANCELLED. The parties will reschedule.
- 6) If you have a question or concern or need to contact us please send an email to prosecutor@co.delaware.in.us Please include the following in your email:
 - Your name
 - Your phone number
 - The name of the prosecutor's office employee that you wish to speak to, if you know.
 - The case you are calling about – the Defendant's name or a cause number
 - The nature of your question.

A member of our staff will get back with you as soon as possible.

Once the office re-opens and all employees are back to work, in order to reduce contact with the public, the front door to the office will be closed and secured. In order to conduct business with the office you may do so by calling the Prosecutor's Office. If you need to come in person, there will be a video intercom system to the left of the door. Instructions on how to use the system are posted on the office door. The individual can then converse with the front desk without having any face to face contact.

Rest assured, the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office is continuing to prosecute crime, holding people accountable for their actions, and keeping people safe. The only difference is that we will be doing it from home for a short time period. Our staff is able to work from their homes. They can log into a secure site and access entire case files. We receive police reports electronically and have the ability to electronically file criminal charges, motions and pleadings with the court system.

I apologize for any inconvenience these precautionary measures may cause. Based on the information and guidance from the experts in the field, I believe these are responsible, proactive steps that our office can take to help curb the spread of COVID-19, protect our staff, our family, and the public, and ensure the continued functioning of our Office. The criminal justice system would come to a dangerous grinding halt if the prosecutors were to become infected. Moreover, we certainly do not want to take the chance of infecting any member of the public.

#